

## SOME ADDITIONAL NOTES ON MOVEMENT AND LONGEVITY OF THE COMMON MYNA *Sturnus tristis*

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### INTRODUCTION

In August 1990 we began a small study to investigate the potential movements of the introduced Common Myna *Sturnus tristis* in the urban environment of Canberra. An initial report on a movement of 9.5 kilometres by an individual bird over a period of nearly three years was reported by Nicholls *et al.* (1996). The present short communication presents some additional movement data and reports some observations of longevity for individuals of this species including extending the longevity from that reported in Higgins *et al.* (2006).

Over the period August 1990 to May 1996 we captured and banded a total of 55 individuals at our home in de Chair Street, Deakin, ACT. Trapping was initially undertaken using a standard mist net located in the back garden of our home. Subsequently we used a walk-in trap; approximate dimensions 1 metre by 1 metre by 1.8 metres. After the Common Mynas became competent at walking in and out of the funnel shaped entrance we tried a top drop through entry (or modified house trap, McClure 1984), which the Common Mynas also became skilled at exiting. Mist netting was conducted on at least 28 days during the period August 1990 to early 1992 and yielded a total of nine Common Mynas. From August 1992 to May 1996 the trap caught a total of 46 Common Mynas, of which two were re-traps.

Each bird was banded with a metallic numbered band on the right leg and a red plastic band on the left leg. Of these individuals only two were re-captured at the banding site. The intervals between banding and re-capture were 11 weeks and 58 weeks. A total of six individuals were recovered dead during the study or in subsequent years, with the last recovery in April 2007.

The majority of the longevity and movement data were derived from recovery of the band from dead individuals by members of the public who submitted the bands to the Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme (ABBBS) office in Canberra. In addition, opportunistic observations were made of flocks of Common Mynas as we walked around the local suburbs or visited the local shops.

We observed banded Common Mynas around the two nearest shopping centres, Deakin and Yarralumla, during the study period, representing movements of 500 metres and one kilometre respectively. One further individual was sighted in Jensen Place, Hughes some four kilometres from the banding site. Further movement data were provided by five individuals that were recovered dead by members of the public who reported their findings to the ABBBS. Two were recovered from the suburb of Deakin, another from the corner of Weston and Newman Streets, Yarralumla, the fourth from the YMCA Building in Muller Street, Yarralumla and the fifth from the

southern end of Strickland Crescent, Deakin. The minimum distances moved by these individuals were in the range of one to three kilometres. A sixth individual was recovered dead from an adjacent garden in de Chair Street at a distance of less than 50 metres from the banding site.

The majority of reported movements of Common Mynas represent local movements with distances generally less than three kilometres. Two known movements of greater distance were from Deakin to Hughes (this study) and from Holt to Kaleen (Nicholls *et al.* 1996). This sample size of movements is very small and some of the recovery sites not well defined so we consider it inappropriate to estimate a mean movement distance from this study. However, these data are in general agreement with the observations of range extensions within the Canberra urban area (Purchase and Purchase 1991; Wright and Wright 1991) and the summary of movements of banded birds reported by Higgins *et al.* (2006). The longer distance movements show the potential for colonisation and reestablishment of populations following removal of individuals by trapping. There has been an extensive Common Myna trapping program undertaken by the Canberra Indian Myna Action Group (see <http://www.indianmynaaction.org.au/> for details) so these data highlight the importance of continual trapping over a relatively wide area.

The six band recovery events and the two re-trap events, plus the observation reported by Nicholls *et al.* (1996), provide observations on the longevity of Common Mynas. Adjusting the elapsed times (time between banding and recovery) by the estimated age of the individuals at the time of banding, the range of minimum ages of the recovered individuals was from one year to in excess of 12 years and two months. Together with the band recovery reported by Nicholls *et al.* (1996) we have eight recorded mortality events; two of individuals less than two years old, three aged two to three years and one individual at four to five years, one at five to six years and one at 12 to 13 years.

As with the movement data, concerns can be expressed about the small sample size for the longevity records but it is noteworthy that one of the records presented here extends the known longevity of the Common Myna from over seven years one month reported by Higgins *et al.* (2006) to over 12 years two months for a bird originally captured as an immature.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the contribution of those members of the public who recognised the potential knowledge to be gained from birds carrying bands and reported their findings to the ABBBS and to the ABBBS for the provision of bands.

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## RECOVERY ROUND-UP

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*This section is prepared with the co-operation of the Secretary, Australian Bird and Bat Banding Schemes, Australian Nature Conservation Agency. The recoveries are only a selection of the thousands received each year; they are not a complete list and should not be analysed in full or part without prior consent of the banders concerned. Longevity and distance records refer to the ABBBS unless otherwise stated. The distance is the shortest distance in kilometres along the direct line joining the place of banding and recovery; the compass direction refers to the same direct line. (There is no implication regarding the distance flown or the route followed by the bird). Where available ABBBS age codes have been included in the banding data.*

*Recovery or longevity items may be submitted directly to me whereupon their merits for inclusion will be considered.*

*Hon. Editor*

The following abbreviations appear in this issue:

- AWSG – Australasian Wader Study Group.  
 NSW NPWS SP – NSW NPWS Seabird Project.  
 SOSSA – Southern Ocean Seabird Study Group.

### **Black-browed Albatross** *Thalassarche melanophris*

121-49320 plus Readable Band: Silver with black 040. Nestling banded by R.P. Gales on Macquarie Island, Tas. (54°30'S 158°55'E) on 17 Mar. 2005. Band number and colour markings sighted on bird at nest on Bird Island, South Georgia, Antarctica (54°00'S 38°02'W) by British Antarctic Survey on 25 Feb. 2010. 7849 km S.

### **Shy Albatross** *Thalassarche cauta*

280-04192. Nestling banded by N.P. Brothers at Padra Banca, Tas. on 12 Mar. 1984. Recovered dead west of Airley Inlet, Vic. on 11 Mar. 2010, over 25 years, 11 months after banding. 647 km NNW.

### **Southern Giant-Petrel** *Macronectes giganteus*

(a) 130-22412. Nestling banded by G.G. Robertson at Langdon Point, Macquarie Island, Tas. on 14 Mar. 1970. Recovered dead near banding place by R.P. Gales on 8 July 2009, over 39 years, 3 months after banding.

(This is the oldest recorded for the species.)

(b) 132-01069. Nestling banded by N.P. Brothers on Macquarie Island, Tas. (54°30'S, 158°55'E) on 27 Feb. 1998. Band number read on bird at nest (sitting on chick) on Ile du Prince de Monaco, Archipel de Kerguelen, Terres Australes et Antarctiques, France (49°36'S 69°14'E) on 27 Dec. 2009, over 11 years 10 months after banding. 5729 km SW.

(c) 132-27645. Nestling banded by R.P. Gales on Macquarie Island, Tas. (54°30'S, 158°55'E) on 2 Mar. 2009. Recovered dead on the shoreline of the Pan de Azucar National Park, Atacama's Region, Chile (26°08'S, 70°40'W) on 22 Dec. 2009. 9874 km SE.

### **Little Penguin** *Eudyptula minor*

190-39888. Nestling banded by R.D. Wooller on Penguin Island off Rockingham, WA on 30 Aug. 1990. Recovered injured, later died at Warnbro Sound, Safety Bay, WA on 19 Mar. 2010, over 19 years, 6 months after banding. 5 km ESE.

(This bird had been a regular breeder in the nest boxes on Penguin Island.)

### **Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*

042-43859. Immature (1) banded by AWSG on the shores of 80 Mile Beach, WA (19°15'S, 121°20'E) on 16 Nov. 2006. Recovered dead (shot for food or sport) at Bytantay River, Kustur, Verkhoyanskiy Dist. Yakutia, Russia (67°55'N, 131°25'E) on 28 May 2007. 9725 km N.

### **Brown Skua** *Stercorarius antarcticus*

111-20065. Adult (2+) banded by SOSSA at sea east of Wollongong, NSW (34°25'S, 151°00'E) on 21 Aug. 2005. Recorded at:

- (1) Recaptured, released alive with band, tangled in fishing line at Arakoon near South West Rocks, NSW on 6 June 2006.
- (2) Recovered dead at Sandy Bay, Macquarie Island, Tas. (54°30'S, 158°55'E) by R.P. Gale on 8 Dec. 2009. 2316 km SSE

### **Little Tern** *Sternula albifrons*

041-78318. plus Colour Bands: Left: Green/White Right: Mauve/metal. Nestling banded by NSW NPWS SP at Towra Point, Botany Bay, NSW on 5 Jan. 1993. Colour markings sighted in field, band number inferred 14 times as follows:

- (1) Twice at Towra Point in 1993.
- (2) Once at Kingscliff, NSW by C. Minton on 26 Sept. 1994. 680 km N.
- (3) Ten times in the Botany Bay area from 1998 to 2002.
- (4) At Karagi Point, The Entrance, NSW by A.K. Morris on 30 Jan. 2010, over 17 years after banding. 83 km N.

### **Australian Magpie** *Cracticus tibicen*

091-24065. Adult (1+) male banded by the WA Rehabilitation Group at Sawyers Valley, WA on 7 June 1993. Recovered injured, mercy killed at Mundaring, WA on 13 Feb. 2010, over 16 years, 8 months after banding. 4 km W.

### **Silvereye** *Zosterops lateralis*

018-71310. Adult (1+) banded by F. Matter at Mount Annan Botanic Gardens, Campbelltown, NSW on 28 Jan. 2002. Recaptured, released alive with band at banding place twice, the last occasion by A.J. Leishman on 20 Feb. 2010, over 8 years 1 month after banding.