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Birds of New Zealand - Locality Guide. 3rd edn.

Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.

Indian myna: pp 266-267.



INDIAN MYNA

Family Sturnidae

Species *Acridotheres tristis*

Common name Myna

Status Introduced

Abundance Common

Size 240 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm, Starling 210 mm)

Habitat A bird of towns, roadside verges and pastureland, seldom venturing into forests, although occasionally seen along forest verges.

Worldwide range Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. Introduced to many tropical countries.

New Zealand range North Island of New Zealand only. Largest populations are to the north of Lake Taupo but scattered numbers are found south to Wellington.

Discussion Mynas were introduced for pest control and many farmers claim they along with Starlings, are beneficial to pastures taking good numbers of pasture pests.

Description

Head and neck Glossy black with a bare yellow patch behind eye. **Upperparts** Cinnamon-brown. **Wings** Brown with black primaries and a prominent white patch. **Underparts** Light brown. **Underwing** White. **Tail** Black with white tip and white undertail. **Bill, legs and feet** Yellow. **Eye-ring** Yellow.

Conspicuous features

- White patches on wings.
- White on tail.
- Yellow bill.

Conspicuous characteristics

- Have a habit of feeding on tarmac roads in late afternoon, where they eat traffic-killed insect.
- Usually in pairs or in groups of up to ten.

Call Song, delivered by both sexes, is a loud bell-like assemblage of notes which is more conspicuous in the autumn months.

Nest A bundle of grass and sticks in a hole in a bank, or in an old building. Up to 5 greenish-blue eggs are laid.

Where to find

North Island only – Very common in any roadside situation in the north of the North Island.

Note The Jungle Myna (*Acridotheres fuscus*), which is found in Fiji, is not found in New Zealand. Although similar to the Indian Myna, the Jungle Myna lacks the yellow eye surround and has a small crest on the forehead above bill. It is a smaller and neater bird than the Indian Myna.