



Setting the scene

Some pest birds can adapt to life in a school yard. There may be many reasons as to why a bird visits your school. It may be searching for food or a nest site or chase away other birds.

Too many pest birds can lead to problems such as droppings on a school bench or rubbish spread from a school yard bin. When these problems impact on students, teachers and people visiting the school, a solution needs to be found.

What to do

Create a plan to reduce the number of introduced pest birds that visit your school yard.

Identify the problem

- create a list of all the introduced (non native) birds that visit your school yard
- record the time of day each introduced bird is seen visiting your school yard
- record the number of introduced birds (individuals and flocks)
- observe and record what each introduced bird is doing when it visits your school yard

Create a database

- design a computer database
- enter all of the records you have collected on pest birds into the database
- highlight any behaviour that may affect people such as:
 - aggression towards people
 - aggression towards animals including other birds
 - the spreading of rubbish
 - the stealing of food
 - the pollution of school property (bird droppings)
 - damage to school property
 - high levels of noise
 - nesting and roosting around or in school property

What to do next

Talk about it

- discuss your findings with other students
- list ways you can reduce the presence of introduced birds in your school yard by changing the school yard environment
 - example:* you know birds are scared of snakes so you place rubber snakes in areas where the pest birds gather to see what happens – will this work or will the birds become used to seeing rubber snakes?
- **IMPORTANT** – your suggestions can not include killing, capturing or harming the birds or negatively affecting people who use the school yard

Make changes

- where possible, put into action changes to your school yard environment

Monitor and evaluate

- over a period of several weeks:
 - record the time of day each introduced bird is seen visiting your school yard
 - record the number of introduced birds (individuals and flocks)
 - observe and record what each introduced bird is doing when it visits your school yard
- create another database and compare with your first set of records

Have you been successful in reducing the number of introduced pest birds that visit your school yard?

Increase awareness

- design a poster to increase awareness around the school
- your poster should include the following:
 - problems introduced birds can cause in your school yard
 - problems introduced birds can cause Australia wide
 - helpful hints students and teachers can carry out to reduce the number of introduced birds in your school yard

FERAL FACT

Indian Mynas were deliberately released in Canberra in the late 1960s because people liked to listen to their musical bird song. They are now an established pest in the city and have begun to spread into bushland and neighbouring towns. There is currently no way to permanently remove this bird from Australia.