

# Status and distribution of Common Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*) in Florida

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Figure 1. Adult Common Myna at Seven Springs, Pasco County, Florida, 28 October 2006. This photograph documents one of the northernmost records of the Common Myna in Florida, and the northernmost record to date along the recently colonized Gulf coast. In addition to their distinct plumage—brown body with black head, wings, and tail, white wing and tail patches, and yellow soft parts—Common Mynas are distinguished from other mynas by their confiding manner, semi-terrestrial habits, and habitat preferences. Usually, as shown here, suitable myna habitat in Florida consists of parking lots of shopping centers or fast-food restaurants, where the birds search for French fries, potato chips, or similar fare. Photograph by Ken Tracey.

## Abstract

This paper summarizes the known status and distribution in Florida of the exotic Common Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*), focusing particularly on the species' range expansion in the past 25 years and on its current population size.

## Background

Common Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*; Figure 1) is native to the Caspian Sea region and Kazakhstan, south through the Indian subconti-

ment, and east through Indochina (Feare and Craig 1998). Two subspecies are recognized: *melanosternus*, which is endemic to southern India and Sri Lanka, and the widespread nominate subspecies, *tristis*, which has been widely introduced, either intentionally for insect control, or accidentally from the pet trade (Long 1981, Lever 1987). Exotic populations of Common Mynas are now found in Australia, Florida, Hong Kong, Madagascar, New Zealand, Polynesia, South Africa, island chains such as Hawaii, the Maldives, Mauri-

tius, New Hebrides, and the Seychelles, and elsewhere (Long 1981, Lever 1987, A.O.U. 1998, Kannan and James 2001).

Common Mynas were discovered in southern Florida during the early 1980s. Since that time, the population has been expanding in range and increasing in numbers. The species has been ignored by ornithologists and birders in Florida and so remains largely unknown except for anecdotal information compiled for this paper. The recent discovery of a roost of perhaps 400 Common Mynas at

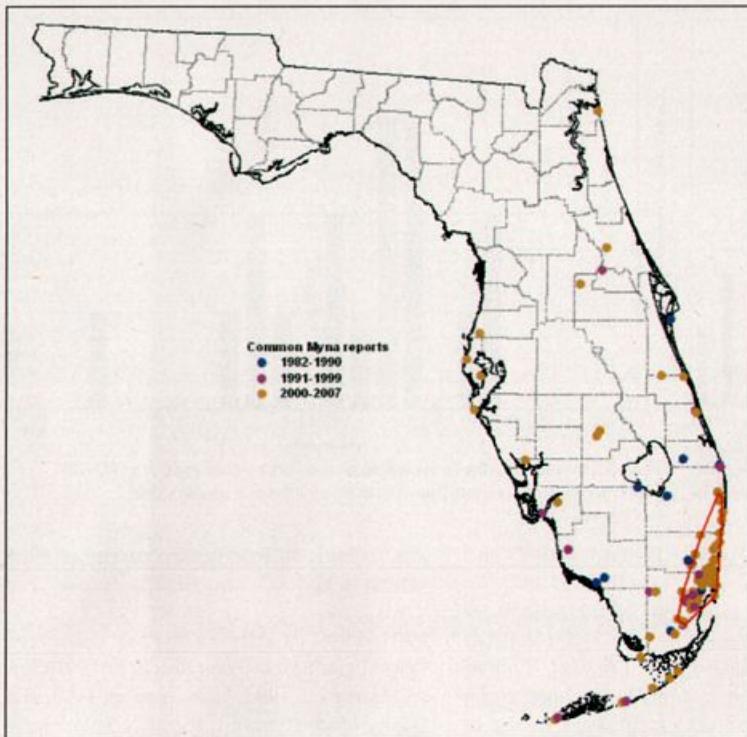


Figure 2. Distribution of the Common Myna in Florida, 1982–2007. Most locations within 0.8 km of one another are combined. Note that the myna's range has increased in extent and distance from Miami during each eight- or nine-year period. Each location mapped is colored according to the earliest report, so this map should not be used to gauge population persistence. The area shown bounded in red may be considered as the limits of the Common Myna's current core range. There is also a recent report of an apparent Common Myna at Sapelo Island, Georgia (see text).

Florida City, along with recent observations along the central Gulf coast, rekindled my interest in this species. This paper summarizes the past quarter-century of Florida records of Common Myna, its range expansion, and its current population size in the state.

## Methods

I compiled observations of Common Mynas from the seasonal bird reports published in *Florida Field Naturalist* and *American Birds/North American Birds*, from Stevenson and Anderson (1994), the Florida Breeding Bird Atlas project (1986–1991; Kale et al. 1992), observations posted to the three primary online birding lists in Florida: BrdBrain, FloridaBirds-L, and the Miami BirdBoard (T.A.S. 2007), and the Christmas Bird Count (C.B.C.) database (NAS 2007). Because the Common Myna is a conspicuous and unwary semi-terrestrial species that is closely associated with areas of human development, it is usually noticed, even by novice birders. I mapped all locations as specifically as possible, then entered them into a Geographic Information System (GIS) coverage. I combined most locations that were within 0.8 km. I presume that all Common Myna observations in

Florida represent dispersers from known populations rather than local escapees. I express abundance of mynas on Christmas Bird Countys as the number of individuals observed per 1000 party-hours to take advantage of whole numbers of mynas. All county names are listed in parentheses and italics, and sites where mynas have bred are marked with an asterisk.

## Results

I compiled 275 observations of Common Mynas in Florida since 1982. Of these, 171 (62%) had not been published formally; most represented recent posts to online birding lists. All observations represent 98 discrete locations (Figure 2). Overall, Common Mynas have been reported in 20 counties in Florida and have been reported to breed in 13 of these (Table 1). All but one report, from Neptune Beach (*Duval*), are from the southern two-thirds of the peninsula or the mainline Florida Keys (those traversed by US-1). There is also a recent report from southern Georgia (see below). The stronghold of the Common Myna in Florida is along the southern At-

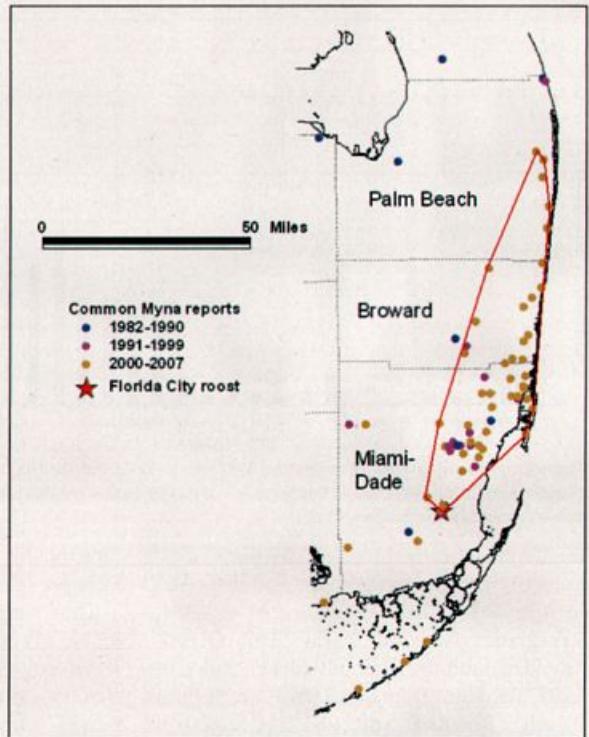


Figure 3. Distribution of Common Myna along the southern Atlantic coast of Florida, 1982–2007. Most locations within 0.8 km of one another are combined. Each location mapped is colored according to the earliest report, so this map should not be used to gauge population persistence. A much greater number of observers in *Miami-Dade* relative to *Broward* and *Palm Beach* may skew the apparent distribution of mynas along the southern Atlantic coast; 72% of the observations from these three counties are from *Miami-Dade*. The area shown bounded in red (minimum convex polygon), which may be considered as the known limits of Common Myna's current core range, is more than 1760 km<sup>2</sup> in size. The distribution of mynas within this core range is likely much greater than what it shown due to birder disinterest and traffic congestion. The red star marks the location of the Florida City roost, which was estimated to contain about 400 mynas in November 2006. The scarcity of reported observations around this roost is of interest: there is surely incomplete information of myna range, even where the birds are most numerous and presumably most widespread.

lantic coast in *Palm Beach*, *Broward*, and *Miami-Dade* (Figure 3).

## Summary of Observations

I have divided all observations of Common Mynas in Florida into one of three periods of nearly equal duration: the first nine years (1982–1990), the second nine years (1991–1999), and the most recent eight years (2000–2007).

1982–1990—The published literature indicates that Common Mynas were first observed in Florida on the *Dade County C.B.C.* (*Miami-Dade*) on 17 December 1983 (Robertson and Woolfenden 1992), and that they were first observed breeding at Homestead (*Miami-Dade*) on 22 May 1985 (Stevenson and Anderson 1994). However, Larry Manfredi (in litt.) first saw Common Mynas at Hialeah (*Miami-Dade*) in 1982, by which time

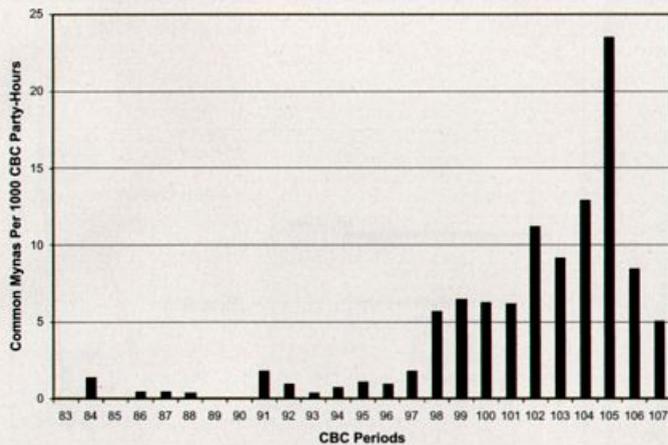


Figure 4. Common Mynas reported on Christmas Bird Counts in Florida, from the 84th (1983–1984) through 107th (2006–2007) C.B.C. periods. Numbers of mynas are graphed per 1000 party-hours to take advantage of whole numbers of birds.

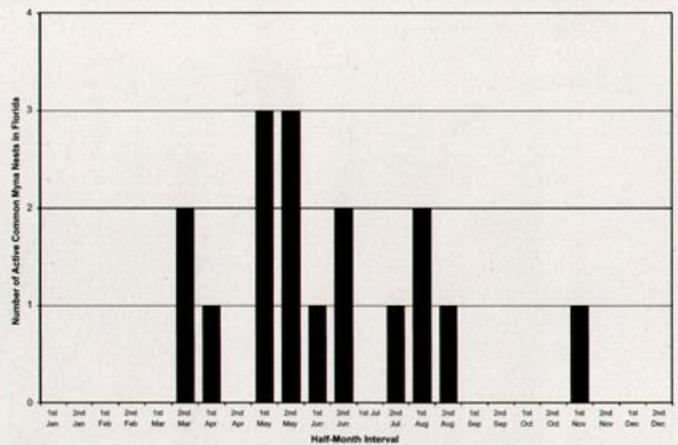


Figure 5. Chronology of active Common Myna nests in Florida with known dates, 1982–2007 ( $n=17$ ) by half-month intervals. Dates refer to the earliest sign of nesting activity.

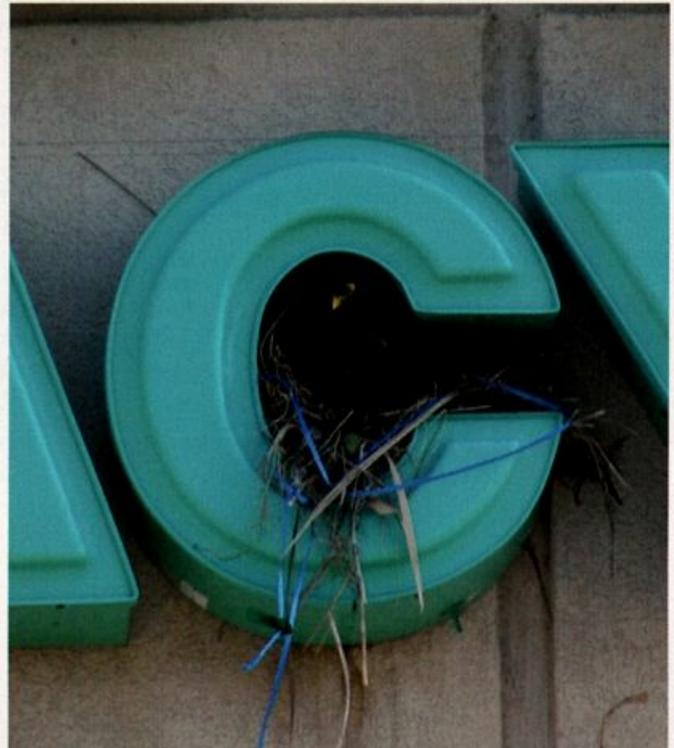
they were already breeding. Within a few years of their discovery, mynas had dispersed to near Belle Glade (*Palm Beach*) in 1984, Everglades National Park, \*Homestead, \*Kendall, and \*Miami (all *Miami-Dade*) in 1985, Tequesta (*Palm Beach*) in 1986, \*Cocoa Beach (*Brevard*) in 1987, \*Clewiston (*Hendry*) in 1988, near Indiantown (*Martin*), near \*Pembroke Pines (*Broward*), and at

\*Everglades City (*Collier*) in 1989?, and Ochopee (*Collier*) in 1990 (Table 1).

Thus within nine years of their discovery in Florida, Common Mynas had colonized seven counties (*Brevard, Broward, Collier, Hendry, Martin, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach*), with breeding confirmed in six of these (all but *Martin*; Table 1). The highest count of mynas obtained during 1982–1990

was 16 birds at Tequesta in November 1986 (Atherton and Atherton 1987).

1991–1999—Common Mynas colonized \*West Palm Beach (*Palm Beach*) in 1991, Stuart (*Martin*) in 1992, \*Iona (*Lee*) in 1993, and \*Hollywood (*Broward*), the Miccosukee Indian Reservation (*Miami-Dade*), and near Jonathan Dickinson State Park (*Martin* or



Figures 6 and 7. Two examples of Common Myna nests in Florida. Mynas build their nests “in any place that will hold a large pile of leaves, twigs, paper, and the like” (Kannan and James 2001). In Florida, one nest was placed in the crotch of a Black Olive, while others have been built in cavities in wooden utility poles or niches in street lights. Perhaps most Common Myna nests in Florida are built within letters of logos attached to commercial buildings. These two nests were built within lettering of Publix supermarkets, in the “d” of “food” and the “c” of “pharmacy,” respectively. The image at left shows a nest with three nestlings, from Kendall, Miami-Dade County, 1 June 2002, with the image at right, of an occupied nest with unknown contents, from Pompano Beach, Broward County, 21 July 2007. Photographs by John H. Boyd and Bill Pranty, respectively.



**Figure 8.** A flock of at least 188 Common Mynas at Florida City, Miami-Dade County, Florida, DATE. The recent discovery of a communal roost of perhaps 400 Common Mynas at Florida City in November 2006 provided the first proof that the myna population in Florida numbers at least in the hundreds of individuals. Photograph by Larry Manfredi.

*Palm Beach*) in 1995. Common Mynas reached \*Fort Pierce (*St. Lucie*) and Islamorada and \*Key West (both *Monroe*) in 1997, Golden Gate Estates (*Collier*) in 1998, and \*Pompano Beach (*Broward*), Sebastian (*Indian River*), and \*Sanford (*Seminole*) in 1999 (Table 1). The Sanford site marked the northernmost breeding site in Florida, approximately 350 km north-northwest of Miami.

During their second nine-year period in Florida, Common Mynas occupied 11 counties (*Brevard*, *Broward*, *Collier*, *Hendry*, *Lee*, *Martin*, *Miami-Dade*, *Monroe*, *Palm Beach*, *St. Lucie*, and *Seminole*), with breeding in eight of these (all but *Brevard*, *Collier*, and *Martin*). Mynas became extirpated from three counties (*Brevard*, *Collier* [1991 and 1998], and *Martin*), they recolonized one county (*Collier* [1999]), and they colonized four new counties (*Lee*, *Monroe*, *St. Lucie*, and *Seminole*). The highest count of mynas obtained during 1991–1999 was 22 birds on the Dade County C.B.C. in December 1994 (Cooper 1995).

2000–2007—Common Mynas colonized DeLand (*Volusia*), Boynton Beach (*Palm Beach*), and Flamingo, Everglades National Park (*Monroe*) in 2000, \*Lake Placid (*Highlands*) in 2001, the Ten Thousand Islands C.B.C. circle (*Collier*) in 2002, \*Goodwin Marsh Waterfowl Management Area (*Brevard* and *Indian River*) in 2003, Neptune Beach (*Duval*) and

Key Biscayne (*Miami-Dade*) in 2004, and Holmes Beach (*Manatee*) and Lake Apopka Restoration Area (*Orange*) in 2005. Mynas then colonized other areas along the central Gulf coast, at St. Petersburg (*Pinellas*) and Seven Springs (*Pasco*) in 2006, and Clearwater (*Pinellas*) and \*Port Charlotte (*Charlotte*) in 2007 (Table 1). The Neptune Beach myna was more than 500 km from Miami. Even more significantly, it accompanied two or three European Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) into a supermarket sign 1 May 2004 and was observed feeding a juvenile starling seven days later (Pranty 2004a). Nonetheless, I do not consider these behaviors to represent confirmed breeding; Kannan and James (2001) list two other observations of Common Mynas feeding the young of other sturnids.

By the end of 2007, Common Mynas occupied parts of 18 counties (*Brevard*, *Broward*, *Charlotte*, *Duval*, *Hendry*, *Highlands*, *Indian River*, *Lee*, *Manatee*, *Miami-Dade*, *Monroe*, *Orange*, *Palm Beach*, *Pasco*, *Pinellas*, *St. Lucie*, *Seminole*, and *Volusia*), with breeding in 11 of these (all but *Brevard*, *Duval*, *Manatee*, *Orange*, *Pasco*, *Pinellas*, and *Volusia*). Mynas recolonized one county (*Brevard*) and colonized seven others (*Charlotte*, *Duval*, *Manatee*, *Orange*, *Pasco*, *Pinellas*, and *Volusia*). The highest count of mynas obtained during 2000–2007 was a communal roost of perhaps 400 at Florida City (*Miami-Dade*) in November 2006 (Pranty 2007a).

## Range expansion

Since the early 1980s, Common Mynas have exhibited a nearly continuous series of dispersal events outward in nearly all directions from *Miami-Dade*. These dispersals continue to consolidate the myna's range along the southern Atlantic coast and to result in new colonization of areas inland, along the mainline Keys, the Gulf coast, and north along the Atlantic coast. Each of the three temporal periods listed above documents an increasing number of counties colonized, from seven during 1982–1990, 11 during 1991–1999, and 18 during 2000–2007. Between 1982 and 2007, Common Mynas had been observed in 20 counties in Florida—plus one county in Georgia—with all but *Collier* and *Martin* occupied during 2000–2007.

## Georgia report

Because a recent report of an apparent Common Myna in Georgia was not mentioned by Davis (2002) and was reported too late for inclusion in Beaton et al. (2003), I include it here. On 11 May 2002, two observers noted “a most unusual bird” at the ferry parking lot on Sapelo Island (*McIntosh*) about 80 km north of the Georgia/Florida border. The bird was described by Cohrs (2002) as “... a little smaller than a Blue Jay, it was mostly black with a yellow pointy beak and had yellow eye ring and a yellow spot behind the eye. When flying, there was a white flash on the wing [that] showed up as a white streak on the side when sitting. The breast was robin-orange. The legs were yellow. The tail was wedge shaped with white edging [and] ... looked like an arrowhead. The bird walked as opposed to hopping. Posture was fairly erect.” This description of a “mostly black” body and “robin-orange” breast are incorrect for Common Myna, but the rest of the descriptions of plumage, habitat, and behavior accord well with the species. Indeed, the yellow soft parts, white wing and tail patches, and terrestrial feeding habits point to an *Acridotheres* myna, and none of the world's 10 species of *Acridotheres* mynas has an orange breast (Feare and Craig 1998). I believe that the Sapelo Island myna was a Common Myna, and, coupled with its location on a largely uninhabited barrier island, was more likely to have been a disperser from one of the Florida populations than a local escapee.

## Population size

While the size of the Common Myna population in Florida is unknown, it numbers in the several hundreds of individuals at least. The discovery in November 2006 of the Florida City roost that contained perhaps 400 mynas

**Table 1.** Distribution of Common Mynas in Florida by county. Mynas have been observed in 20 of Florida's 67 counties and have bred in 13 of these. The Panhandle is the only region not yet known to be colonized by mynas. Infrequent reports cloud the current status of some breeding populations (i.e., those in *Indian River*, *St. Lucie*, and *Seminole*), which are here considered to be extirpated but that may be extant but recently unreported or not observed.

County	Duration	Breeding status	Comments
Brevard	1987–1991, 2003–2005	Extirpated	Single pairs at Cocoa Beach and along the <i>Indian River</i> line
Broward	1999–present	Current	Fairly widespread
Charlotte	2007	Current	One pair at Port Charlotte
Collier	198 __, 1990, 1998	Extirpated	Single pairs (?) at Everglades City and Golden Gate Estates, and one bird at Ochopee
Duval	2004	No	One bird at Neptune Beach
Hendry	1988–present	Current	Up to 8 birds at Clewiston
Highlands	2001, 2002	Extirpated	One pair at Lake Placid and one bird near there
Indian River	2000, 2003–2005	Extirpated	One pair along the <i>Brevard</i> line
Lee	1993–1997, 2005–2007	Current	Two or three pairs at Fort Myers
Manatee	2005–2006	No	One bird at Holmes Beach
Martin	198 __, 1992–1995	No	One pair near Indiantown
Miami-Dade	1982–present	Current	Widespread; roost of perhaps 400 at Florida City
Monroe	1997–present	Current	Fairly widespread along mainline Keys; none on the mainland
Orange	2005	No	One bird at Lake Apopka
Palm Beach	1984, 1986, 1999–present	Current	Fairly widespread
Pasco	2006	No	One bird at Seven Springs
Pinellas	2006, 2007	No	Singles at Clearwater and St. Petersburg
St. Lucie	1997–2002	Extirpated	One pair at Fort Pierce
Seminole	1999–2002	Extirpated	One pair (?) at Sanford
Volusia	2001	No	One bird at DeLand

**Table 2.** Common Mynas on all Florida Christmas Bird Counts (C.B.C.s) between the 84th (1983–1984) and 107th (2006–2007) count periods. Vertical lines separate the three temporal periods (1982–1990, 1991–1999, and 2000–2007) used in this paper. A "0" (zero) indicates that no mynas were seen; "nc" denotes that no C.B.C. was conducted, and "cw" denotes that one or more mynas were seen during count week but not on count day. Count names (abbreviated) and the counties in which they are located are as follows: CO=Cocoa (*Brevard*); DC=Dade County (*Miami-Dade*); FP=Fort Pierce (*St. Lucie*); JD=Jonathan Dickinson State Park (*Martin* and *Palm Beach*); KA=Kendall Area (*Miami-Dade*); KL=Key Largo–Plantation Key (*Monroe*); KW=Key West (*Monroe*); RP=Royal Palm–Homestead (*Miami-Dade*); SB=South Brevard County (*Brevard* and *Indian River*); ST=Stuart (*Martin*); TT=Ten Thousand Islands (*Collier*); and WP=West Palm Beach (*Palm Beach*). \*The 2 mynas on the Cocoa C.B.C. during the 91st count period were listed as Crested Mynas. However, given that Crested Myna had never previously been reported outside of the Miami area, and further considering that Common Mynas had been observed at Cocoa Beach (within the Cocoa C.B.C. circle) between 1987 and 1993, it seems clear that these "Crested Mynas" were misidentified Common Mynas. Source of all data: the online C.B.C. database (NAS 2007).

C.B.C.	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	
CO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2*	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
DC	6	0	2	2	2	0	0	7	2	0	2	22	19	5	10	22	12	14	30	33	39	84	27	13	
FP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	nc	nc	0	0	0	0	4	cw	0	0	0	0	0	0	
JD	nc	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0												
KA	nc	nc	nc	2	4	19	nc	2																	
KL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	5	5	4	11	
KW	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	2																
RP	nc	cw	6	6	6	6	14	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc													
SB	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
ST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
TT	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc																	
WP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	6	6	5	2	7	7	4	5	7	3	4	2	
# CBCs	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	3	2	2	2	4	3	3	3	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	5	
Non-DC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	2	2	4	9	6	11	8	21	13	19	12	16	27	11	17	
DC	6	0	2	2	2	0	0	7	2	0	2	22	19	5	10	22	12	14	30	33	39	84	27	13	

(Pranty 2007a) verified that the current myna population in Florida numbers in the hundreds of individuals (e.g., Figure 8). It should be noted that the location of this roost is far from the mapped locations of most mynas, even those elsewhere in *Miami-Dade* (Figure 3), suggesting that numerous locations occupied by Common Mynas in the region have not been reported.

### Population increase

The limited data on the size of the local myna populations in Florida make it difficult to document overall population trends. However, two sources of data are available. The first is simply the highest number of mynas reported at any one site during the three temporal periods: 16 during 1982–1990, 22 during 1991–1999, and perhaps 400 during 2000–2007 (Table 1). A better index for gauging population growth is the C.B.C. database (NAS 2007). C.B.C. data show a dramatic increase in the number of Common Mynas reported per party-hour beginning with the 98th count period (Figure 4). These data also show a nearly equally dramatic decrease beginning with the 106th count period, but this "decline" is thought to be the result of inconsistent surveying on Christmas Bird Countys in *Miami-Dade* (see Discussion).

### Population persistence

Common Mynas have persisted—indeed, they have thrived—in *Miami-*

Dade since their discovery in 1982 (Table 1), and they have expanded their range northward into Broward and Palm Beach (Figure 3). Although some colonization events failed to produce stable populations, even where breeding occurred (e.g., Everglades City and Lake Placid), other colonizations have succeeded, and some areas have been repeatedly colonized (e.g., Brevard, Collier, and Lee). Furthermore, the Miami-Dade population survived the effects of Hurricane Andrew, a Category 4 storm that devastated the Homestead area in August 1992. Smith (in Pranty 1995) stated that the Common Myna population was "seriously impacted" by Andrew but had recovered by spring 1995. The Clewiston population has persisted for 20 years (Table 1), and it represents the most persistent population outside of Miami-Dade.

### Breeding observations

Common Mynas have been breeding in Florida since 1982, and breeding reports exist from 13 counties. Each of the temporal periods listed above documents an increasing number of counties in which breeding has occurred, from six during 1982–1990, eight during 1991–1999, and 11 during 2000–2007. I have compiled a list of 42 observations of breeding by Common Mynas in Florida (Table 3), representing nest-building activities (2), active nests (33), or fledged young or juveniles (5).

Because most nests are placed in cavities or niches, few eggs or nestlings have been observed. Most breeding observations are of oc-

cupied nests, where one or both adults was seen to enter a cavity into which material had been placed. Except for one nest in Miami-Dade that was placed in the crotch of a Black Olive (*Bucida buceras*), all nests in Florida

have been placed in artificial structures (Table 3). Some myna nests were located in cavities in utility poles or niches in street lights, while others were built within letters of logos attached to commercial buildings (e.g., Figures

**Table 3.** All known breeding observations of Common Mynas in Florida ( $n = 42$ ). Because mynas nest almost exclusively in cavities, the nest contents are rarely observed. As a result, most observations of nests in Florida are of occupied nests: adults observed entering or leaving a cavity or niche.

County	Location	Date(s)	Substrate	Status	Reference
Broward	Fort Lauderdale	12 Nov 2001	Building signage	Occupied nest	Pranty 2002b
Broward	Oakland Park	3 Apr 2007	?	Pair with nesting material	T. Eakins to BirdBoard
Broward	Parkland	17 Sep 2004	Traffic light	Family; occupied nest observed earlier	"Paul" to BirdBoard
Broward	Pembroke Pines	18 Mar 2007	Building signage	Building a nest	D. Humeston to FloridaBirds-L
Broward	Pompano Beach	May 1999	Building signage	Two occupied nests	Pranty 1999
Broward	Pompano Beach	21 Jul 2007	Building signage	Occupied nest	Figure 7
Broward	Sunrise	5 Jan 2002	?	2 adults and 1 juvenile	G. Feuss to FloridaBirds-L
Charlotte	Port Charlotte	18–20 May 2007	Building signage	Occupied nest	Pranty 2007b
Hendry	Clewiston	~1988	Street light	Occupied nest	J. Orsenigo in litt.
Hendry	Clewiston	19 Jun 1995	Building signage	Occupied nest	Pranty 1996
Hendry	Clewiston	7 Jun 1999	Building signage	Occupied nest	P. Bowen in litt.
Hendry	Clewiston	13 Aug 2000	Building signage	Nest with $\geq 2$ nestlings	Pranty 2001b
Hendry	Clewiston	2001	Sign cavity	Occupied nest	D. Humeston in litt.
Hendry	Clewiston	1 Nov 2003	?	Flock with 2 juveniles	Pranty 2004b
Hendry	Clewiston	8 Aug 2004	Street light	Occupied nest	B. Pranty pers. obs.
Highlands	Lake Placid	2002?	Street light	Nestling on ground	F. Lohrer in litt.
Lee	Fort Myers	6 May 2007	Building signage	Occupied nest	Pranty 2007b; G. Hampton to FloridaBirds-L
Lee	Iona	6 May 1994	?	One adult with a fledgling while the other adult was incubating an apparent second brood	Pranty 1994
Miami-Dade	Coconut Grove	Jun 2005	Building signage	Occupied nest	S. Benedetto to BrdBrain
Miami-Dade	Coral Gables	Mar 2003	Black olive	Occupied nest	R. Diaz in litt.
Miami-Dade	Hialeah	1982	Building signage	Occupied nest	L. Manfredi in litt.
Miami-Dade	Hialeah	Spring 1985	Building signage	Occupied nest	Kale 1985
Miami-Dade	Homestead	22 May 1985	Building signage	Occupied nest	Kale 1985, Stevenson and Anderson 1994
Miami-Dade	Kendall	31 May–2 Jun 2002	Building signage	Nest with $\geq 3$ nestlings	Figure 6
Miami-Dade	Miami Shores	2003	Light pole cavity	Occupied nest	A. Harper to BirdBoard
Miami-Dade	Miami Shores	Jul 2004	Light pole cavity	Occupied nest	A. Harper to BirdBoard
Miami-Dade	Miami Shores	13 Aug 2005	?	Pair with one juvenile	A. Harper to BirdBoard
Miami-Dade	Perrine	annually 1995–2006	Building signage	Occupied nests	T. Mitchell to BirdBoard
Miami-Dade	Pincrest	—	Light pole cavity	Occupied nest	L. Manfredi to BirdBoard
Miami-Dade	Westwood Lake	ca. 1999	Building signage	Occupied nest	S. Paez in litt.
Miami-Dade	West Kendall	10 Apr 2004	Building signage	Occupied nest	P. Bithorn to BirdBoard
Monroe	Islamorada	17 Aug 2002	Light pole cavity	Nest with nestlings	L. Manfredi to FloridaBirds-L
Monroe	Key West	26 Jun 2000	Power pole cavity	Occupied nest	Pranty 2001c
Monroe	Key West	24 Mar 2001	Power pole cavity	Occupied nest	Pranty 2001d
Monroe	Key West	31 Jul 2001	?	Pair and 5 juveniles	Pranty 2002c
Palm Beach	Tequesta?	8 May 1988	?	Pair feeding young	Langridge 1988, Stevenson and Anderson 1994
St. Lucie	Fort Pierce	11 May 1997	Building signage	Nest with 2 nestlings	Pranty 1997
St. Lucie	Fort Pierce	May 1998	Building signage	Occupied nest	Pranty 1998
St. Lucie	Fort Pierce	1999	Building signage	Occupied nest	J. Brooks in litt.
Seminole	Sanford	24–31 Mar 2002	Sign pole cavity	Occupied nest	Pranty 2002d; M. Wilson to FloridaBirds-L

6 and 7). Active nests with known substrates ( $n=34$ ) represented building signage (22; 64%), cavity in wooden utility pole (6; 17%), niche in street light (5; 14%), and tree (1; 2%; Table 3). The temporal distribution of active nests in Florida with known dates ( $n=17$ ) ranges from 24 March to 17 August, with one potentially anomalous active nest (video-taped; pers. obs.) on 12 November (Figure 5). Most nests (9 of 17; 52%) were active from early May through late June, while all nests but one were active from late March through late August (Figure 5). Double-brooding has been observed once in Florida (Pranty 1994, Table 3) but likely occurs often (and perhaps regularly); three broods are raised annually in the countries of the former Soviet Union (Kannan and James 2001). A much larger sample of Common Myna nests from Florida undoubtedly will clarify the primary breeding season and the average number of broods produced annually by each breeding pair.

### Christmas Bird Count Trends

Common Mynas have been reported on 12 Christmas Bird Counts in Florida since the 84th C.B.C. period (1983–1984). They have been seen on nearly every Dade County C.B.C. (*Miami-Dade*) since the 84th count period and on all but one West Palm Beach C.B.C. (*Palm Beach*) since the 92nd count period (Table 2). The number of Florida counts with Common Mynas has increased from one through the 1980s to four or five counts annually in recent years (Table 2). An analysis of Common Mynas reported on Florida counts per party-hour (Figure 4) yields interesting—and perhaps misleading—results. After remaining relatively stable at 0–2 mynas per 1000 hours during their first 13 C.B.C. periods (84th–96th), the number of mynas increased steadily and perhaps exponentially over the next nine count periods (97th–105th) to peak at 24 mynas per 1000 party-hours during the 105th period (Figure 4). The myna population then appears to decline dramatically to 5 mynas per 1000 party-hours by the 107th count period (Figure 4).

### Discussion

Little information has appeared in the literature on Common Mynas in Florida. Between 1984 and 1999, only 14 observations were published in *American Birds*, with nine of these during 1984–1987. An overall disinterest in “uncountable” exotics by birders and ornithologists has played a primary role in the scarcity of published reports. Traffic congestion in the Miami metropolitan area has also played a role in the lack of formal myna sur-

veys (J. Boyd, in litt.). This paper would not exist without the dozens of observations posted to the three primary online birding lists in Florida—especially the Miami BirdBoard. Observer bias may influence the number of myna reports in *Miami-Dade* relative to *Broward* or *Palm Beach*, which each have very few resident birders; 72% (120 of 167) of the observations in these three counties are from *Miami-Dade*. Despite this potential geographical bias, the temporal pattern of myna expansion is well documented. With the exception of Cocoa Beach, which was colonized in 1987, all sites north of Lake Okeechobee have been colonized since 1997, most since 2000 (Table 1, Figure 2). Mynas observed far from their core range were reported at Sanford in 1999, DeLand in 2000, Sapelo Island, Georgia in 2002, Jacksonville in 2004, Lake Apopka in 2005, and along the central Gulf coast beginning in 2005.

Bates and Busenbark (1970) claimed that importation of any species of *Acridotheres* into the United States was illegal. If correct, then this restriction must have been lifted at some point—the Florida population had to have begun from birds intentionally imported into the state and that then either escaped or were released. Small (1994, in Kannan and James 2001) stated that Common Mynas were one of the most frequently observed exotic birds in California. During November 2007, several online vendors, including three in Florida, offered to sell Common Mynas at prices ranging between \$200–500 each (e.g., <www.softbillsforsale.com>). Despite their presence in aviculture, Common Mynas cannot possibly escape so frequently as to drive the pattern of numbers and distribution in Florida (Figures 2–4). I believe that the increase in the Common Myna population in Florida over the past 20+ years is largely if not exclusively the result of successful breeding of birds outside of captivity.

There is a report of Common Mynas evicting Purple Martins (*Progne subis*) from a martin house somewhere in Florida in the mid- or late 1980s (Neville 1988, 1992), but this report is seemingly the only such observation in the state. In fact, I am not aware of another observation describing Common Mynas interacting with any native species in Florida. Elsewhere, Common Mynas have been lauded as agents for seed-dispersal, pollination, and insect control, and blamed for depredating crops and the eggs and young of other birds, and for being a nuisance in urban areas (Kannan and James 2001). The Common Myna's habitat preferences in Florida exclude contact with most native species and agricultural areas; I

don't consider the myna to represent a serious threat to native species or ecosystems or to human health or commerce in the state.

Numbers of mynas on the Dade County C.B.C. have ranged from 5 to 39 birds since the 95th count period, excepting the 84 mynas tallied during the 105th C.B.C. (Table 2). This single figure greatly influenced the C.B.C. results during the 105th count period (Figure 4). The numbers of mynas reported on the 10 C.B.C. circles outside of *Miami-Dade* are far more consistent: 0 during 1982–1990, 2–11 during 1991–1999, and 11–27 during 2000–2006 (Table 2). Although C.B.C. data are valuable in documenting the long-term trend in the Common Myna population in southern Florida (Figure 4), short-term trends may be biased by the numbers of mynas observed or overlooked from one or two key C.B.C. circles. Unfortunately, the Royal Palm–Homestead C.B.C. was discontinued in December 2002; this C.B.C. circle would have included the recently discovered Florida City roost. Even if the decline in Common Myna numbers during the two most recent C.B.C. periods (Figure 4) is accurate, C.B.C. data clearly show that numbers of mynas observed per C.B.C. party-hour since the 98th period (9.51, range 5.1–23.5) has increased more than 1300% over myna numbers per party-hour for the previous 15 C.B.C. periods (0.71, range 0–1.8). Graphed by the three temporal periods used elsewhere in this paper, the numbers of mynas observed in Florida per 1000 C.B.C. party-hours are 0.31 (range 0–1.4) during 1982–1990, 2.23 (range 0.4–6.5) during 1991–1999, and 10.36 (range 5.1–23.5) during 2000–2007.

The range of Common Mynas in Florida is extensive and increasing, encompassing parts of 18 counties since 2000 (Figure 2). A minimum convex polygon drawn around the bulk of recent myna observations in *Broward*, *Miami-Dade*, and *Palm Beach* approaches 1760 km<sup>2</sup> of mostly suitable habitats (Figure 3). Although the unpredictable history of exotic bird populations in Florida (e.g., Pranty 2001a, 2002a) should make one hesitant about predicting the long-term trends of particular species, at the present time, there seems little reason to doubt that range expansion of Common Mynas in Florida will continue. In January 2008, the Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee voted unanimously to accept the Common Myna as an established exotic species (A.W. Kratter, pers. comm.).

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