

ONOTOA ISLAND MYNA MANAGEMENT REPORT



ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION DIVISION [ECD]

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Prepared by:

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1. Acknowledgement:

ALD supports (Bio-security officer and Agricultural Assistant) for their commitment in participating, collaborating and conveying supportive information, Onotoa Island Mayor and Clerk are gratefully acknowledged for their contribution.

2. Executive Summary:

This report is based on official trip made to Onotoa early this year 2014. IAS project under ECD together with ALD from MELAD was made to fulfill the obligation of ECD as an implementing agency. In 2012, there is a survey trip made to confirm the distribution and number of mynah birds on Onotoa in order to set up appropriate actions to cease the disturbances and destruction this bird. Thus, the programs of this trip are to educate the locals how to construct mynah bird traps and to encourage instinctive knowledge for eradication using their own resources and conduct an outreach program on inter-island bio-security role. This report therefore will highlight activities, findings and data update on numbers, challenges and recommendations that will aim to improve upcoming responses.

3. Purpose:

The trip was carried out as the follow up with regard to one of the Onotoa's MP requested during the Parliament Session in December 2013. This trip involves of collecting information (updated) on sites, workshop and mynah trap construction and destroying feeding and nesting areas. According to the previous survey report (2012, p7) mynah bird was first introduced to Onotoa by a former KPC Otowae Pastor as a pest approximately 8-10 years back. From that time, these birds have feed on and pose to agricultural crops. There is common mynah (CM) species found on this island with the number of 3 pairs that means so far there are 6 mynah birds. Furthermore, these activities initiated by the MELAD where Environment and Conservation Division together with Biosecurity Office (Agricultural and Livestock Division) are collaboratively work to implement the management's actions or designed activities. The result of the previous survey has set up a scene for the GEF PAS-IAS, where it updated baseline data that will be needed when doing management and eradication plan.

4. Objectives:

The team has aimed to facilitate training and technical assistance to concern community and throughout the country. The team has laid out it tasks to support this trip from both division such as

- Raise awareness on mynah birds and management actions.
- Ability to construct mynah trap and eradication,
- Role of Bio-security to protect invasive species at border of entries.

5. Findings:

i) From previous Report:

Myna bird did presence in Otowae Village only. The *common mynah* is the only type existed in Onotoa perhaps the abundance confirmed to be less than 6. Further, these birds have fed on coconut spadhe, breadfruits, pumpkin including dried salted fish. They roosting and feeding commonly at KPC Otowae Maneaba (Otiawa,2012, p8).

ii) Recent surveillances;

The team has conducted 1 day surveillance to find the feeding and nesting place for these birds. The observation is carried out at early morning and late in the afternoon as detail in table 1 below. During the workshop, 1 pair of mynah seen on the KPC Chapel.

ONOTOA MYNAH OBSERVATIONS-Otowae Village- Morning Session

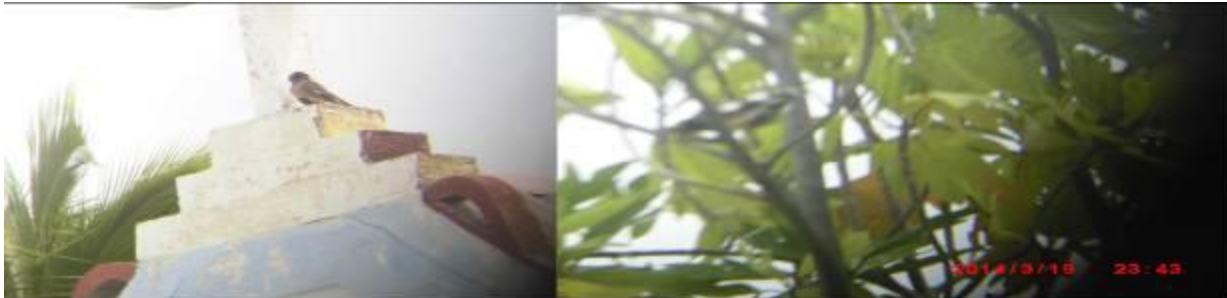
Location: Inside and Outside KPC Otowae compound, KPC Otowae.			
20 th March 2014	Time: 10:30 am.	Weather: Cloudy	
Observers : Keebwa, Burangke, KPC Otowae Pastor and workshop participants.			
Methods used: Binocular, digital camera, note book and pen.			
Summary of Observations			
Species	Common mynah (CM)	Unidentified	Total Mynah
Number of birds	2(1pair)	-	2
Nesting behavior	1	-	-
Feeding areas	KPC Otowae compound – KPC maneaba,.	-	-
Location: Inside KPC Otowae compound, KPC Otowae.			
21 st March 2014	Time: Morning session.	Weather: Cloudy and windy.	
Observers: Keebwa Teremita, Burangke Tabeibeti, AA.			
Instruments used: Binocular, digital camera, note book and pen.			
Summary of Observations:			
10: 45 am-- 2 mynah seen on coconut tree			
11:45 am—1 mynah seen and called a partner from the top of the church while another one rest on the nearby breadfruits tree (see diagram 2).			

Table 1: Observation on Mynah to see and update abundant population and its disturbance.

Other surveillances is based on the faces laid and the left over nest inside the KPC Otowae Maneaba. This supports that mynah birds have been around in that compound as their breeding and feeding site (see diagram 3).



Diagram 1: Mynah faces and left over nest inside KPC Otowae.



Seen mynah birds calling for a partner from the top of KPC Chapel justified the presence of this species on Otowae.

Diagram 2(above): Mynah bird calling for a partner-1pair.

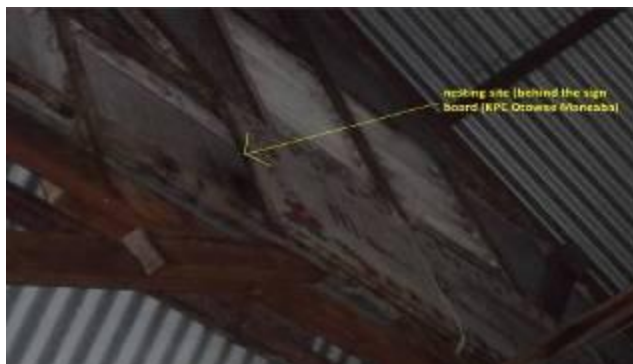


Diagram 3: nesting area for mynah birds

iii) **Rapid Response- Eradication by Locals.**

The previous mynah trip survey had been brought awareness to infested villagers perhaps they had started eradicating them. Pr Kawaniti (2014, pers. Comm., 19 March.) kindly told that they have killed one on November 2013 while they practicing their items before the Christmas functions. They used the strong light of touch the eyes when suddenly felt and beat it. Villagers have destroyed the nest and eggs behinds sign board (see diagram 3) inside the mwaneaba. Those responses support the declining in number of mynah birds.

iv) **Workshop and Training:**

The workshop and training to the infested community as well as other village is the first step to initiate the implementation plan. This workshop aims to clearly discuss the following;

- behavioural characteristics of the mynah bird,
- pathways of introduced species,
- role of bio-security act enforcement,
- highlighted the AA's role in inspecting incoming plant products
- to demonstrate the construction of mynah trap.
- to reduce the number by breaking their life cycle.

This is the 1 day workshop- the 20th March 2014 where each participant represents each wards. The concerned village- Aiaki has 5 participants. The total number participants are 17. This meeting is held at KPC Aiaki Maneaba. In addition, during the workshop, participants have divided into 2 groups in order to construct their own trap using the guide provided (see diagram 2).

The MELAD team also demonstrated how to implement these traps using baits and other useful instructions and procedures to be followed of the Pee Gee's trap instruction.



Diagram 4- Team 1- constructing trap during the workshop.

v) Extreme Weather:

During the observation, there is an extreme weather such strong winds and rainy. Due to the bad weather, most of the birds have been hidden where mynah might do. The observation was made when the wind and rain are stopped (cloudy).

6. Recommendations:

- Prior planning of trips to avoid clash of events.
- Follow up needed for update of abundance and distribution of mynah birds.
- Since the number is very low, air pressure guns is more suitable rather than using poisons and making traps which is taking more time and might cause other non-target organisms to be affected.

7. Conclusions:

From the findings above, this concludes that the mynah birds has been decline from 3 pairs to 1 pair (see table 1) in number and could be found on KPC Otowae compounds. They might hide themselves from stormy weathers and hence it needs further surveillance. There is no other mynah species seen on Otowae only Common Mynah remains. Since the number of mynah birds has small hence the impacts also less. From that number, air pressured guns is the recommended tool to eradicate them over the short period of time. This more suitable since the population of Otowae Village is also very small, school is very far, only one family living close to the roosting and nesting site including KPC Pastor and his family.

8. References:

Elder, J (n.d), 'Hasting-Macleay Indian Mynah Control Project: Pee Gee's Mynah Trap', NSW Environmental Trust, NSW.

Otiawa, T, 2012. *Onotoa Island Survey Report*, Office report, ECD, Tarawa.