

Common Garden Bird 10: Common Myna (Gembala-Kerbau Rumah) *Acridotheres tristis*
Amar-Singh HSS

There are a number of mynas species present locally with the Common Myna featured here. Sadly, they are becoming less common as the Javan Myna *Acridotheres javanicus* has overrun much of Peninsular Malaysia and appears to be doing the same for parts of Sabah and Sarawak; the Javan Myna appear to be displacing the Common Myna.

The Common Myna is easily distinguished from the other mynas by its yellow patch of naked skin around the eye. A closer look will also reveal the wonderful 'stars' that are present in the iris.



Mynas are great opportunists and will use grazing cattle or human grass cutters to flush out insects for them to eat.

Common Mynas are often seen in our housing estates, parks or foraging in grassy fields; often walking in pairs or small family groups.

The Common Myna has a strong male-female pair bonding and are quite affectionate to each other. I have occasionally seen one partner refuse to leave the mate that was killed by a passing car – repeatedly going up to the dead body to try and get the partner up.

The Common Mynas are like 'wise elders' - they have a habit of sitting in the cool shade of a tree during the heat of the day and talk for long hours. We suspect that they may be discussing serious issues that plague the planet.