

12 MYNA BIRD CONTROL PROJECT SAVAI'I



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Introduction...

Indian myna birds were introduced in Samoa within different period for such reason to control cattle ticks. They have now spread to most parts of two main habitat islands of Samoa which is Upolu and Savaii. The two introduce species of myna now been commonly known are the Common Myna and the Jungle Myna.

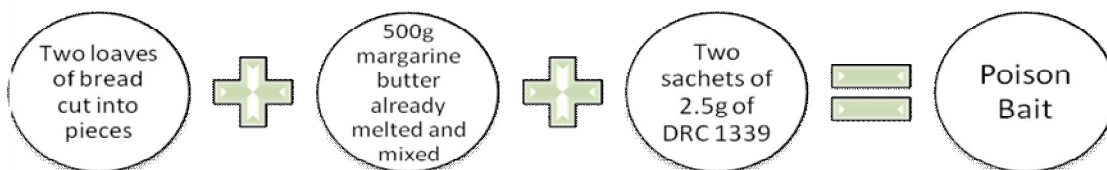
This report presents the outcome of the 12 Myna Bird Control Operations which has been carried out by the Terrestrial Section. This operation is a continuation of efforts to control and if possible to eradicate myna birds from the whole country. The operation takes place at Savaii on the 9th June 2014 and ends on 21st June 2014 in duration of two weeks. This operation is the third of its kind to occur in Savaii. The usual procedure used before in Savaii was employed during this operation with two sets of teams allocated throughout certain locations aiming to cover the whole island. This will allow easy access for distribution of poison baits from one area to another and for time consistency.

Objectives...

- Predominantly poison feed huge population of mynas with 100% certainty of exterminated once fed on the poison baits.
- Continue to control and/or eradicate mynas from Samoa.

Methods & Materials...

Poison baiting is the recommended method used throughout two weeks of the myna bird control operation and even strongly advised and informed by the Ministry during previous invasive species consultation been held in Savaii. Poison baits were hand baited with gloves for protection then handed out at certain areas and locations where mynas aggregated in numbers mainly alongside of the road and large open fields if necessary for poison baits to be given out. Mynas were also seen in front of houses associated with non-target species such as pigs, chickens, which operation cannot be occurred. Some standing on horses as well, thus makes these sites disregarded from poison baiting works been carried out by officers. Same procedures of poison bait production been used with three main components applied such as breads, margarine butters and the DRC 1339 chemical powder which further enlighten by the following chart;



Results...

Table 1: Team One baiting stations with the total estimated numbers of myna been fed on poison baits in two weeks

	Main distributed poison baiting Stations for Myna Birds	WEEKS		Total estimated numbers of myna birds been fed on Poison baits
		WEEK 1	WEEK 2	
	1. Lata	32	18	50
	2. Taga	78	69	147
	3. Gataivai	63	51	114
	4. Puleia	42	23	65
	5. Satuipaita	47	39	86
	6. Vailoa	75	55	130
	7. Tafua	35	48	83
	8. Maota	118	92	210
	9. Salelologa (Market compound)	73	41	114
	10. Salelavalu	55	38	93
	11. Fusi	110	84	194
	12. Samalaeulu	48	40	88
	13. Saleaula	36	28	64
	14. Safa'i	25	18	43
	TOTAL	837	644	1,481

TABLE 2: Team Two baiting stations with the total estimated numbers of myna been fed on poison baits in two weeks

Main distributing poison baiting stations for myna birds	WEEKS		ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF MYNA FED ON POISON BAITS
	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	
1. Salailua	46	22	68
2. Satuiatua	30	25	55
3. Foailalo	118	109	227
4. Fogasavaii	26	18	44
5. Faiaai	10	4	14
6. Fogatuli	19	11	30
7. Samata-i-uta (Primary School)	245	98	343
8. Fagafau	55	23	78
9. Falelima	28	36	64
10. Neiafu-uta	56	28	84
11. Tufutafoe	98	51	149
12. Falealupo-tai	-	82	82
13. Falealupo-uta	69	42	111
14. Sataua	9	4	13
15. Asau	48	31	79
16. Aopo	115	93	208
17. Letui	189	165	354
18. Sasina	65	54	119
19. Fagae	47	39	86
20. Safune	25	15	40
21. Samauga	22	13	35
22. Safotu	30	23	53
23. Avao	22	16	38
24. Manase (after resorts-cattle farm)	67	57	124
25. Satoalepai	17	11	28
TOTAL	1,456	1,070	2,526

Table 3: Total estimated numbers of myna birds fed on poison baits within two weeks by both teams.

TEAM (\$)	WEEK (\$)		TOTAL ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF MYNA FED ON POISON BAITS WITHIN TWO WEEKS
	Week 1	Week2	
TEAM 1	837	644	1,481
TEAM 2	1,456	1,070	2,526
TOTAL	2,293	1,714	4,007

Discussions..

Same routine been carried out in previous operations on handing out of poison baits within certain times of the day has also been in practice during this operation. Thus with the first distribution of poison baits takes place in the early morning and the second distribution occurred at the late afternoon. It base on huge numbers of myna birds to be seen or observed within the two mentioned time of the day particularly spotted alongside of the road.

Table 1 indicates results with numbers of myna birds recorded by Team One with birds been fed on poison baits within two weeks of operation throughout the eastern side of Savaii. Thus in a total of fourteen (14) main sites or stations identified for feeding where myna birds amassed in huge numbers. The first week of operation, it has recorded a good start in numbers been fed on poison baits whereas, Maota recorded with the most numbers and the village of Fusi became second in huge numbers of myna birds at sight. The forestry compound in the village of Maota considered as one of the areas seen with huge populations of myna bird within the first week.

Furthermore, it was also reported by some staff of the Forestry Division that myna birds tend to thrived in numbers around the compound in the early morning and late afternoon mainly on house roofs and the green house as well. Later, baits were applied at recommended areas where myna birds were commonly seen from one day to the other. The result from the second week appeared that number of myna birds is decreased within each baiting stations by Team One. Only one station indicates an increase with the numbers of myna from week 1 to week 2 which it is the village of Tafua.

Table 2 indicates data recorded by Team Two in duration of two weeks of poison baiting operation mainly on the western side of Savaii. It recorded quite a numbers of main distributing baiting stations of feeding myna birds. In a total of 25 feeding station with the

estimated diverse myna population recorded within each station from the First Week to the Second Week of operation. There are 4 stations recorded with huge myna bird population been fed on poison baits in the first week by Team Two. Other stations noted quite a few numbers of myna birds fed on poison baits but only one station with no myna bird been recorded on the first week. Moreover, every station noted a decrease in myna population fed on poison baits from the first week to the second week of operation. Similar results been recorded in Table 1 by Team One with a decline of myna population recorded on the second week as well.

In addition, a verbal conversation with some staff of the forestry office at Maota in terms of previous operation which takes place at Savaii has experienced the same. After first week of operation, there was hardly any myna birds to be seen around the compound but upon completion of the second week, they have recorded no mynas at the compound a long period perhaps two months then myna bird are starting to come back to the same area. With the recent operation, after the first week, same observation was noted on site in terms of hardly any myna birds were seen on compound. We assumed that this is due to myna birds have been completely eradicated from this compound or they move to another area where there is less/no disturbance.

Team 2 also received positive feedbacks from one of the residents in the village of Aopo with results of myna birds were hardly seen or none present at his land. This happened after the second operation in Savaii. According to him during verbal communication, he stated that myna birds were normally roost on his property but once the operation took place, he has recorded less or no mynas at his compound until this operation. Few positive results found from the communities in Savaii with such experience from previous operations but more work is recommended to control and eradicate myna birds in every parts of Savaii.

Table 3 indicates the overall estimated population of myna birds fed on poison baits within two weeks of operation by both teams. There is a declined in the total population of mynas recorded on the second week of operation. A decrease in numbers of mynas from the first week to the second week is recorded. Collection of dead myna birds is unsuccessful but there is a high possibility of dead myna birds to be found at any unidentified roosting sites which could hardly inaccessible by both teams. In contrast with the previous operation which took place in Upolu thus recorded huge numbers of dead mynas with roosting sites been able to locate.

Issues...

- Problems seem to be more identical been observed within previous operations and the recent one as well. In terms of raining conditions caused delay of poison baits from time to time throughout allocated stations.
- Most likely with quite numbers of villages or certain areas been disregarded from poison baits dispersal with safety conditions. Specifically, in front of families' lawn or any location where most people roam any time of the day even with those likely areas where myna birds were seen all muddle up with pigs and chickens. Hence, even with huge numbers of myna birds seen in these areas but still strongly disregard by giving out any poison baits so as for the wellbeing of all people.
- Dead mynas are normally collected at their roosting area. However, the two teams were not be able to locate any roost in Savaii resulting at zero number of dead mynas collected on hand during this operation

Recommendations...

It is recommended:

- Thorough monitoring works should be carried out for identifying and locate any myna bird roosting sites in Savaii so that the estimated population on the island could be recorded so as for detecting dead mynas within any operation in progress. To identify any roosts in order to record an exact number and the species of dead mynas.
- To increase the bonus scheme from .20cents/dead myna to \$5 or \$10 as per recommended by the local communities.
- To consider other possible methods to deal with mynas birds

Conclusion...

All in all, two weeks of operation indicates huge population of myna birds been fed on poison baits administered by both teams. Especially, positive results with numbers altered by both teams from one week to the other even with great optimistic feedback obtained by several residents in lights of the operation in place. Thus ensures countless constructive results of myna control operations Savaii. Still further operations must be in place in order to control and minimize myna bird population so as with their negative impacts as well. Especially, by working together with the communities for their continuous support for further operations for the wellbeing of all people and the environment as a whole.

Appendix 1: Pictures from the 12 Myna Control Operation 2014 – Savaii



Picture 1: Poison baits



Picture 2: Distributing poison baits alongside of bush areas where mynas usually aggregated in numbers



Picture 3: Road at Aopo covered under the poison operation



Picture 4: DEC members ready for work



Picture 5: Papaya fruits in good shape recommended by the land owner with hardly any myna birds at sight



Picture 6: More papaya trees in good conditions been recommended by the land owner because mynas were never seen at site



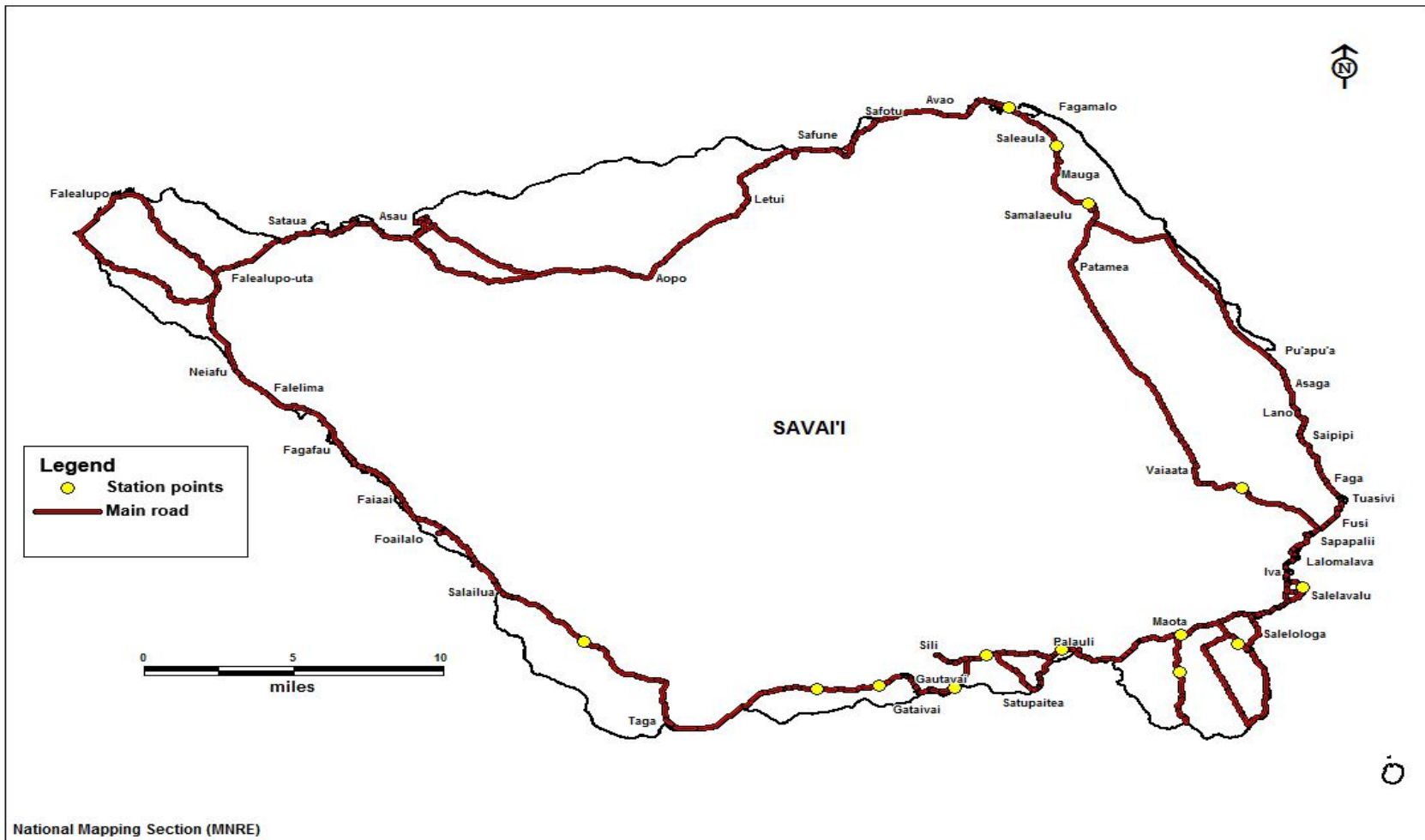
Picture 7: Poison baits container



Picture 8: Poison baits bucket

Appendix 2: Maps of Main distributed poison baiting Stations for Myna Birds by both teams

Map 1: Team 1



Map 2: Team 2

