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Crested Myna *Acridotheres cristatellus*

The Crested Myna is native to southeastern China and Indochina. It was introduced into Vancouver, British Columbia, before the turn of this century. The population around Vancouver remains small, but is apparently stable (Long 1981).

The Crested Myna is only tenuously established in Dade County. Five individuals were found near the Miami International Airport during the 1983 Dade County Christmas Bird Count. Since that time the birds have been observed over a fairly large area around the airport, but their numbers have not increased substantially. By 1990 the birds were very difficult to find, and the population may already have died out. During the Atlas project the Crested Myna was observed nesting only in 1 site near the Miami airport. The success of that nest is unknown.

The habits of the Crested Myna in Florida are unknown. In China it is a bird of open country and human-altered environments. It frequents gardens, often in sizable flocks (Bent 1950). The Crested Myna is omnivorous. Bent (1950) describes the diet as approximately two-thirds animal matter and one-third vegetable. The animal matter includes a variety of insects, earthworms, and snails (Bent 1950, Long 1981). Kelley (in Bent 1950) reports that they regularly eat eggs of other small birds. The vegetable matter consists of fruits and berries of both wild and cultivated plants (Bent 1950). The species is a minor pest of orchards around Vancouver (Long 1981).

The Crested Myna nests in a variety of cavities and crevices, and the nest consists of a loose collection of sticks, leaves, paper, and other trash (Long 1981). La Touche (in Bent 1950) states that the nest invariably contains a snakeskin. The eggs are uniform "light Niagara green" (Bent 1950), although white or lightly spotted eggs have been recorded (Bent 1950). The usual clutch is 4 or 5 eggs, with up to 7 reported (Bent 1950). The breeding season in Vancouver is described as from April to June (Terres 1980), and they are probably double-brooded in China (Bent 1950). Incubation is said to be 14 to 15 days, with the young leaving the nest approximately 1 month after hatching (Bent 1950, Terres 1980).

Bruce Neville

Crested Myna

