



Magpies *Gymnorhina tibicen*

Identification

Size: Magpies are large birds, about the same size and build as a rook, and can grow to between 36-44cm in length.

Appearance: There are two subspecies, the white backed, which is the most common, and the black backed. The two interbreed and produce birds with varying amounts of black and white feathers.

Nesting: Magpies prefer to live in open grasslands and cultivated paddocks with trees nearby for nesting and shelter. They usually live in pairs and also form family groups of up to 30 birds, usually building nests in tall trees.



Unless otherwise stated, the photos used in this publication have been sourced from the world wide web. Copyright approval has been sought where possible and appropriate.

Why are they a pest?

Magpies rob the nests of smaller birds, taking eggs and nestlings. They are territorial and aggressive and are known to attack, kill or drive off other birds including native species. Nesting magpies may attack humans and can cause serious harm, especially to children.

Control

Magpies learn very quickly, so there is usually only one chance to capture or destroy a bird. If an attempt fails, the magpie will be very difficult to get the second time round.

Some successful methods have been developed: magpies are attracted to a taped call of another magpie or to a trapped bird or bait, and can then be shot or trapped.

Contact us on free phone 0508 800 800 if you would like help controlling magpies on your property. We can provide free advice and information and have a limited number of traps available to lend out. If needed, we can offer user-pays assistance.