

# Blackheaded Myna

*Sturnus pagodarum*

Order:  
Sturnidae

Family:  
Passeriformes

Genus:  
*Sturnus*

Species:  
*pagodarum*



## STATUS

Resident/ Common

## MORPHOLOGY

- Size: Smaller than the Common Myna.
- A typical Myna, grey above reddish-fawn below, with glossy black head and long crest; black wing-quills and brown tail, the latter with whitish edging at tip which is conspicuous as the bird spreads it before alighting. Sexes alike.
- In the young the head is sooty brown and crestless, and the general colouration dull. Small flocks, in thinly wooded country

## DISTRIBUTION

- Ceylon and the whole of continental India east to Bengal.
- In the Himalayas commonly upto 4,000 ft. in summer, and occasionally up to 8,000 ft.
- Absent or patchy in the arid portions of the North & West, as also in evergreen forest. Mainly resident, but also local migrant.

## HABITS

- This Myna is a dweller of open, lightly wooded country and often associates with the Grey-headed and common species.
- It freely enters gardens, and makes itself at home on and about houses in towns and villages. It is neither so overwhelmingly arboreal as the former nor so terrestrial as the latter.
- Flocks of 6 to 12 birds may usually be met with feeding on Banyan, Peepal, Ber, Lantana and other fruits and berries in the usual mixed frugivorous company.
- It is partial to moist grassland such as on the edge of village tanks, where it hops or stalks along amongst the feet of grazing cattle hunting the grasshoppers and other insects they disturb.
- It is likewise very fond of the nectar of flowers like those of the Silk Cotton, and also feeds largely on the fleshy blossoms of the Mhowa (Bassia).
- The bird has several merry creaking or chattering notes and, at the breeding season, a pleasing little song in the nature of a soliloquy.
- When uttering this, the crest is partially erected and the whole plumage frowzled.

## NESTING

- The principal breeding months are from May to July.
- The nest is a pad of grass, rags, feathers, etc., placed in some hollow in a tree, ruined wall or even in those of inhabited houses, frequently in the midst of noisy bazaars.
- The eggs—3 or 4— are pale-blue, unmarked.
- Both sexes share in building the nest, incubation and care of the young.