



# STARLINGS

**THE THREAT:** Western Australia is fortunately free of Starlings. The bird must be kept out. It is a serious pest overseas and in eastern Australia.

Starlings multiply rapidly. In California, with conditions similar to ours, flocks of 50,000 birds are common.

Starlings can

- \*devastate orchards and vineyards.
- \*damage other crops.
- \*eat large amounts of grain in poultry sheds, feed lots, bulk storages, etc.
- \*carry diseases and parasites of man and animals.
- \*contaminate buildings with droppings and nests.
- \*displace native birds.

Starlings are prohibited in Western Australia.

**WHAT TO LOOK FOR.** The Starling is about 17cm long. It looks only 15cm high when perched or feeding. The pale spottings can be seen close up, but are less conspicuous in summer. In sunlight, the plumage has a gun-metal blue sheen. Both sexes look similar. The darkish beak turns yellow in spring. Young birds are a dull grey-brown. Starlings do not hop, but waddle and run on the ground while feeding. When nesting, the birds take up a vantage point where they are often silhouetted against the sky. They fly with rapid wing movements, followed by short glides.

## SIGHTINGS OF SUSPECT BIRDS SHOULD BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY.

**Report sightings to the Agriculture Protection Board, telephone 67 0111, or to any country officer of the Agriculture Protection Board or Department of Agriculture.**