

Agriculture Protection Board
Advisory Leaflet No. 81
March 1982
Agdex No. 675
111520/2/82-10M-L/3178

INDIAN CROW



THE INDIAN crow (*Corvus splendens*) is also known as the House crow, Ceylon crow and Colombo crow. It is a native of southern Asia from Iran to Thailand but has been introduced to many coastal areas surrounding the Indian ocean. It is a declared bird in Western Australia and may not be kept under any circumstances.

Significance:
Indian crows raid wheat and maize crops in India and cause considerable damage to fruit crops. They fly boldly in and out of houses taking

anything edible. They may have some value as scavengers and probably eat many pest insects. Where Indian crows have been introduced they have frequently attacked the eggs and nestlings of native birds. Over fifty birds are known to have reached Western Australia on ships this century, but all have been destroyed. Like all other birds introduced from overseas they are potential carriers of virulent strains of Newcastle disease which if it becomes estab-

lished in W.A. may have a disastrous effect on wild and domestic bird populations.

Habits:
Indian crows are gregarious birds forming flocks of up to several thousand in communal roosts. Small flocks congregate round food sources such as abattoirs and markets. They are omnivorous and will pilfer anything edible including insects, grain, fruit, meat, carrion, eggs and young birds. They breed throughout most of the

(continued overleaf)

INDIAN CROW

year in India where groups of nests are often built in one tree.

From three to five eggs are laid in a fibre-lined hollow in a nest consisting of an untidy mass of twigs. The eggs are large, 36 x 27mm, blue-grey in colour, speckled and blotched with brown and grey.

Appearance:

Indian crows are large birds up to

44cm in length. Their feathers are mainly black glossed with green, blue or purple sheen. They have a variable sized collar of grey to white feathers around the neck, breast and upper back. The bill and legs are black.

It is essential that Indian crows are not allowed to become established in W.A. Any suspicious looking bird should be reported to the Agriculture Protection Board, Jarrah Road, South Perth, (09) 367 0111 or any country office of the Agriculture Protection Board or the Department of Agriculture.