



Living with Magpies

Parks and gardens with tall trees and mown grass provide perfect habitat for the Australian Magpie, where a pair may claim their territory for up to 20 years.

Magpies may swoop passers-by between July and November to protect their young

Magpie benefits

Magpies are a native, protected species and their iconic warbling call is part of the Australian landscape.

They help control pests in our gardens and urban areas. Magpies are a protected species and it is an offence to harm them.

Magpie facts

- Magpies feed on small insects and animals that live on, or just under, the surface of the ground.
- Our urban landscape with cleared undergrowth benefits their feeding habits
- They are territorial and group in family tribes of up to 10 birds.
- They breed in their own territory, which they defend against other birds and assumed predators.
- Nesting takes place between July and November – so chances of being swooped in this time are highest.



Tips to avoid swooping

- Avoid the area if possible.
- Magpies have great memories and will target the same people if they continue to enter their nesting area.
- Notify neighbours and Council of swooping areas so that warning signs can be installed.
- Stay calm. Accidents can occur when people, particularly children, panic.

Pedestrians:

- Walk through the Magpie's territory quickly, but don't run. Placing folded arms above your head to protect your head and eyes can be effective. Protect your head with a large, wide brim hat or carry an open umbrella.
- Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes.
- Watch the Magpie while walking from the area. Magpies are less likely to swoop if you look at them.
- Do not deliberately provoke or harass the birds or tamper with nests as this may make them more aggressive.

Cyclists:

- If possible take an alternative route.
- Get off your bike and walk through the bird's territory.
- Wear a helmet and sunglasses
- Fit a flag to your bike.