



Biosecurity alert: Starlings

(*Sturnus vulgaris*)

The pest and its impacts

European starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) are not native to Australia and are among the world's 100 worst invasive species. The birds are a prohibited declared pest in Western Australia.

A destructive agricultural pest, starlings consume and spoil livestock feed and wool. The birds also severely impact horticulture crops. Fruit damage can begin up to six weeks prior to harvest.

Often living in close association with people, starlings cause considerable nuisance. The constant, high level of noise generated by large roosting flocks is disturbing to people living nearby.

Soiling garden trees, outdoor furniture, footpaths and vehicles, starlings' droppings can spread disease. Starlings also damage property, industry and infrastructure with their roost and nest sites. Starlings form very large, dramatic flocks that move together.



Juvenile starlings



LOOK for this pest

Starlings are small, plump birds. Their glossy black feathers have an iridescent green and purple sheen, and their blackish-coloured beak turns yellow in spring when they're mating.

Key points:

- very social birds, frequently living closely with people
- may be seen perching and preening in prominent places, such as powerlines, building roofs, and aerials
- often seen around grain storage and feedlots, and with livestock, perching on their backs or feeding on any insects disturbed during grazing.



Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) are aggressive birds



Starlings on sheep

Image credit Tina Bentz



REPORT suspected sightings

- Be aware of any new or unusual birds
- Note the date, time and location of the bird
- Take photographs, if possible



Report your observations

MyPestGuide® Reporter
via app or online
mypestguide.agric.wa.gov.au

Pest and Disease Information Service
08 9368 3080
padis@dpird.wa.gov.au

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