



Magpies swooping

Magpies are characteristic of the Australian urban environment and their social behaviour and distinctive song provide enjoyment for many people.

Magpie pairs breed in Spring (August – October) and with this comes the magpies' natural behaviour to defend the territory around their nesting site. This may result in magpies swooping either people or pets who they perceive as a threat to their nest.

Swooping generally takes place for less than an 8 week period in spring (August to October) commencing when the adult pair is nesting and concluding when the young fledge (leave the nest).

Magpies and the law

Magpies are protected throughout NSW, and it is against the law to kill the birds, collect their eggs, or harm their young. If you feel a magpie is a serious menace, it should be reported to the local council or nearest National Parks and Wildlife Service office.



Reduce your chances of being swooped!

People can take the following precautions during the period when birds are actively protecting their territory.

- Do not deliberately provoke or harass the birds as this may make them more aggressive
- Take care as injuries can occur as a result of the birds striking
- Walk out of the birds territory immediately
- Avoid the swooping area by taking an alternative route.
- Wear a large, wide brim hat and sunglasses or carry an open umbrella; you can place eyes on the back of hats and umbrellas which may reduce the likelihood of the birds swooping
- Keep an eye on the bird as this may discourage attack
- Make a temporary sign to warn others

Bike riders

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

