

# Swooping Birds

## FACTSHEET

November 2024

### Peak swooping season is August to October, but birds may swoop from June to December.

Some native birds swoop during their breeding season as a defence mechanism to protect their nest, eggs and young. Magpies are well-known for their swooping behaviour, but other species may also swoop, including (but not limited to):

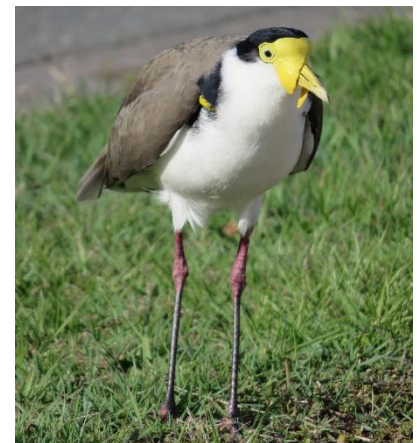
- Plovers (masked lapwings)
- Butcherbirds
- Crows
- Noisy miners
- Peewees (magpie larks)
- Noisy friarbirds

Not all birds of these species swoop. In fact, it is estimated that less than 10% of magpies show this defensive behaviour. Birds usually swoop for six to eight weeks; while they have eggs, and the chicks are unable to leave the nest.

Native birds are protected under the State Government's *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, and it is illegal to harm them or interfere with their nests and eggs.

### If there is a swooping bird in your area:

- Avoid the defence zone or take an alternative route - the best way to avoid being swooped is to avoid the bird's territory.
- Wear a wide brimmed hat and sunglasses or carry an umbrella to protect your face and eyes.
- Dismount from bicycles/scooters/skateboards etc. and walk through the area.
- Don't wave your arms, yell or throw objects at the bird - this will likely make the bird more defensive.
- Remain calm and walk quickly through the area. Don't run - injuries often occur when people panic and run from a swooping bird.
- Undertake activities such as checking the mail and putting bins to the kerb in the evening when the birds are less likely to swoop.



Above: Australian magpie (top),  
Plover (masked lapwing)

Council does not manage swooping birds on private property or State controlled land. Residents who are concerned with swooping birds on their property may engage a licensed bird relocater for a fee. For further information on swooping birds please visit the State Government website: [Stay safe from swooping magpies | Environment | Department of Environment and Science, Queensland \(des.qld.gov.au\)](https://www.des.qld.gov.au).