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How can you stop mound building by an Australian brush-turkey?

Once a male brush-turkey has started to build its mound it is extremely difficult to stop it. If a

mound has been established for several weeks and the male is maintaining it, you should wait 60 days to allow eggs to hatch and young to emerge before dispersing it. To deter nesting in your garden in the future, use a combination of the following:

1. Move the brush-turkey on

When the brush-turkey first shows signs of nesting at a site, spray it early in the morning with a short burst of water from a garden sprinkler, a hand-held hose or spray bottle to move the bird on. Never try to harm the bird. Aim only for the chest. Try to hide from view, so it is the location the bird is wary of, not the person. Do not continually squirt or chase the bird as this is considered harassment and not permitted under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. This is not to be done once eggs are laid because non-maintenance of the mound may result in the inhumane death of chicks.

2. Create a more suitable location

If a brush-turkey is raking up the mulch and building a mound somewhere you don't want it, then set aside an area of your garden where you don't mind if the turkey builds it. Start an open compost or grass clippings pile to encourage the brush-turkey to start building.

Ideally, the replacement mound should be next to at least one large tree providing 80 to 95% shade. Dismantle the first mound daily, before any egg laying can take place. The brush-turkey may be attracted to the new area and build there instead.

3. Peg a cover over the mound

To prevent the bird from working in an area, cover it in chicken wire or a heavy tarpaulin and weigh it down with large rocks or logs or use big tent pegs.

4. Prune overhanging branches

A brush-turkey prefers a shady place for its nest because the temperature is easier to control. By pruning overhanging branches, it increases sunlight in the area and also removes places the brush-turkey may choose to roost at night.

5. Peg chicken wire in hot spots

To keep your garden neat, use galvanised chicken mesh pegged about 20mm below the surface of the mulch.

6. Use a different ground cover

Put river gravel around the base of trees, and large eucalypt sticks, or other obstacles such as rocks in the ground around the plants. Plant low-growing, dense ground cover and remove overhanging branches so the area gets more sunlight.

7. Never provide an easy feed

Keep food scraps securely covered. To stop your vegetable garden being raked over, install a bird net over bamboo or wooden stakes to give it height. Peg the net down to make it taut so birds cannot become entangled. This may also keep possums out.

Courtesy of the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment