

**FIRST DOCUMENTED NESTING OF THE BLACK BUTCHERBIRD
IN IRIAN JAYA**

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Two nests of the Black Butcherbird *Cracticus quoyi* were found on Kimaan Island, Merauke District in Southern Irian Jaya. The first nest, with one young, was found on May 20 1984, at the Bugeran River ($7^{\circ}36' S$, $138^{\circ}08' E$) on the western side of Kimaan Island. The second nest, with two eggs, was found on May 23 1984 at Tabonji ($7^{\circ}32' S$, $138^{\circ}50' E$) on the River Manggumas on the north coast of the island. These two nests represent the first documented information on the nesting of the Black Butcherbird in Indonesia.

The first nest was in the crotch of a divided trunk at a height of 5 metres, halfway up the tree. The nest was a loose construction of coarse twigs, with an inner cup of fine twigs; the height, cup depth, outside and inside diameters of the nest were respectively 40 cm, 10 cm, 22 cm and 15 cm.

The second nest was in the crotch of a tree leaning against another, at the height of 10 metres, three-fifths of the height of the tree; the nest was similar to the first, but its height was only 10 cm.

The eggs from the second nest had a ground colour of pale green, thickly flecked with pinkish brown and grey over the whole egg but more densely around the broader end. They were moderately incubated. The width of the first egg was 25.5 mm. The measurements of the second egg, which has been deposited at the Museum Zoologicum Bogoriense in Bogor, were 33.0 X 25.8 mm.

The feathers of the nestling from the first nest were still in sheaths. The legs and bill were pale blue-grey and the iris was brown with a dark blue pupil. The exposed culmen was 26.5 mm, the wing 87 mm, the tail 29 mm and the tarsus 40 mm.

At the first nest location, the parents were very agitated and both birds attacked the observer, calling incessantly. At the second location, the two parents were first seen chasing a small accipiter. Later, while one adult was sitting at the nest, its mate came to the nest carrying a large white grub in its bill, then flew to a nearby branch. The incubating adult joined the other bird and, after eating the grub, returned to sit on the nest. Notably, the pair was silent.

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(Editor's note: K.D.Bishop reports finding nestlings in three nests near Kimaan in September 1983 in tops of trees in the scrubby woodland edge of tall mangroves. He notes that this species is remarkably more conspicuous and apparently common in SE Irian Jaya than elsewhere in its range).