The Occurrence of Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis* and White-vented Myna *A. javanicus* in Kalimantan

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Ringkasan: Kerak Ungu *Acridotheres tristis* dan Kerak Kerbau *A. javanicus* adalah dua jenis Kerak yang diintroduksi dan umum terdapat di Asia Tenggara. Walaupun umum terdapat di Asia Tenggara, tetapi hanya sedikit catatan untuk kedua jenis ini sebelumnya di Kalimantan (Borneo kawasan Indonesia). Catatan lapangan terbaru diantara tahun 2011-2013 mengkonfirmasi keberadaan kedua jenis Kerak ini di Kalimantan.

Introduction

The Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis* and White-vented Myna *A. javanicus* are possibly the most common introduced mynas in Southeast Asia (MacKinnon & Phillipps 1993; Robson 2008; Craig & Feare 2009). Naturally distributed from Central Asia to Southwest China, the Common Myna has been introduced to Southeast Asia and is now a common resident throughout (Robson 2008). Similarly, the White-vented Myna has become widely naturalised in Southeast Asia, greatly extending its natural range of Java and Bali (MacKinnon & Phillipps 1993; Robson 2008). Both species are now expanding rapidly in the Malay Peninsula, including Singapore (Wells 2007; Seng 2009).

There are many records of Common Myna and White-vented Myna, as well as Crested Myna *A. cristatellus* in northern Borneo, but only few or unconfirmed records in southern Borneo (Smythies 1999; Mann 2008; Myers 2009; Phillipps & Phillipps 2009). The only previous record of Common Myna in Kalimantan was made in Central Kalimantan during 1981, while records of White-vented Myna in November 1978 and February 1983 at Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, remain unconfirmed (Holmes & Burton 1987). Mann (2008) stated that Wilkinson *et al.* (1991) had sightings in September 1989 of up to ten White-vented Mynas at Banjarmasin, but these data are absent from that paper. Since these records, there have been no further published records for either species in Kalimantan (Holmes 1997; Smythies 1999; Mann 2008; Myers 2009; Phillipps & Phillipps 2009). Here we summarize and discuss our observations of both species in Kalimantan.

Observations

On 4 October 2011, MI observed eight Common Mynas in an palm oil plantation at PT Swakarsa palm oil plantation, Muara Wahau sub-district, Kutai Timur (Kong Beng) district, East Kalimantan province (1°17'18"N, 116°46'08"E). The habitat was 2-3 year old palm oil trees bordered by secondary forest. At first sight, the bird was obviously a myna, and it was identified as Common Myna by the mostly brown

body with greyish black head, neck and upper breast, combined with yellow bill and skin, white patches on primary coverts, and yellow legs. MI is familiar with this bird in Sumatra.

On 30 and 31 May 2013, in same sub-district and district as above, MI and FL observed at least six White-vented Mynas (Plate 1) within PT Karya Primaagro Sejahtera (PT KPS; in the same company group as PT Swakarsa) palm oil plantation (1°10'38''N, 116°55'11'E).

On 27 June 2012, BS saw two White-vented Mynas feeding on the back of a cow at Raja Seberang village (2°33'S, 116°06'E), Kota Waringin district, Central Kalimantan province (Plate 1). The habitat was degraded secondary forest bordering a village. The birds were identified by their blackish body, white wing patches and white outer tail tips, small tufted crest on forehead, yellow bill and legs (Plate 2).

During 2011-2012, HSJ observed White-vented Mynas regularly (almost daily) in groups of 3-5 birds at Tabalong, Murung Pudak sub-district, Tabalong district, South Kalimantan province (2°25'S, 115°47' E). The bird was easily identified by having the same characters as White-vented Myna above. On one occasion, the bird was observed up to 30 birds in November 2012 (Plate 3). The habitat was secondary vegetation and gardens around a village, typical habitat for this species.

MUHAMMAD IQBAL

Plate 1: A White-vented Myna perched on a tree at Kutai Timur district, E Kalimantan.

BAMBANG SETYAWAN

Plate 2: A White-vented Myna perching on a cow at Raja Seberang village, Kota Waringin district, C Kalimantan.

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Plate 3: A group of up to 30 White-vented Mynas on November 2012 at Tabalong district, S Kalimantan

Discussion

The Common Myna has been known in northern Borneo since 1975, with the first record in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, after which populations were widely reported (Smythies 1999). The only confirmed record of Common Myna in Kalimantan refers to a single presumed escapee that was present in September 1981 on Sungai Sampit, at Hanjalipan, Central Kalimantan province (Holmes & Burton 1987). This species was overlooked for Kalimantan in the recent Indonesian avian checklist (Sukmantoro *et al.* 2007). The occurrence of up to eight birds in Muara Wahau, East Kalimantan in October 2011 suggests an established population rather than recently escaped birds. Smythies (1999) stated that populations appearing to be self-sustaining occur in Brunei and Kuching, Sarawak. Considering distances from these locations, the Muara Wahau population possibly originated from Brunei rather than Kuching. The distance between Muara Wahau to Brunei is approximately *c.*250-300 km, while Muara Wahau to Kuching is about *c.*500-600 km.

The White-vented Myna was first recorded in Borneo near Kuching during the 1980s, but after 1988-89, increased substantially in abundance and distribution (Smythies 1999). However, previous records from Kalimantan were unconfirmed, involving a single *Acridotheres* sp near Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, in November 1978, and another in February 1983 (Holmes & Burton 1987), which may have been this species, initially imported from Java as cagebirds (Smythies 1999). The recent observations of White-vented Mynas in Tabalong during 2011-2012 confirm the occurrence of the species in South Kalimantan. The two White-vented Mynas sighted in Central Kalimantan and six birds in East Kalimantan during 2012-13 may have originated from an established self-sustaining population in Kuching, and subsequently reached South Kalimantan. The distance from Kuching to Kota Waringin is *c.*500 km, and from Kota Waringin to Tabalong only *c.* 100-150 km.

Both Common Myna and White-vented Myna are still rare in Kalimantan. However, it will not be surprising if both birds become widely distributed and common in the future. Interestingly a large flock of about 200 White-vented Mynas was seen daily around Sanggau, West Kalimantan on 13 March 2007 (Kim Chye *et al.* 2013). In the last decade, many forested areas in Borneo have been converted to oil-palm or *Acacia* plantations (Koh 2008; Sheldon *et al.* 2010), resulting in the creation of extensive open habitat and short grass which provides suitable feeding habitat for mynas.

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