

**THE OCCURRENCE OF NESTS OF
NANKEEN NIGHT HERON
NYCTICORAX CALEDONICUS IN EAST JAVA**

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Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* and Nankeen Night Heron *Nycticorax caledonicus* are considered to be largely allopatric, the former with a wide distribution in North and South America, Eurasia and Africa, the latter occurring in eastern Indonesia, New Guinea, The Philippines, southwest Pacific Islands and through Australia (Hancock and Kushlan, 1984). In Indonesia and The Philippines, however, some overlap in their distribution has been reported. On Java, where Black-crowned Night Heron is common, Nankeen Night Heron is occasionally reported (Schoenmakers, 1933; Hoogerwerf, 1966).

The present note records the observation of two nests of Nankeen Night Heron found in waterbird breeding colonies in East Java in February and March 1988. One nest was found in a large colony of ca. 10,000 nests of various species of waterbirds breeding in remaining patches of mangrove vegetation (mainly *Avicennia* sp.) in fishponds at Ujung Pangkah near the delta of the Solo River. The other nest was found in a colony of ca. 2,700 waterbird nests at Tambak Bangkok near Ngemplak (northwest of Surabaya). On both occasions, only a single bird was seen occupying a nest, whilst no other Nankeen Night Herons were observed in the colony. The colony at Ujung Pangkah was visited three times in February and March, but during each of the visits not more than a single bird of this species was observed. It is therefore believed that the species was interbreeding with Black-crowned Night Heron, which was breeding in considerable numbers at both colonies.

Interbreeding of Nankeen Night Heron and Black-crowned Night Heron on Java has previously been reported by Hoogerwerf for Pulau Dua (Hoogerwerf, 1952) and suspected for the Brantas Delta (Hoogerwerf, 1935). In fishpond areas south of Surabaya, Schoenmakers (1933) found three nests of *Nycticorax caledonicus* and Hoogerwerf (1935) recorded the species nesting there during several subsequent years. Subsequently, however, no recent observations of the species on Java have been recorded (MacKinnon, 1988). In The Philippines, both species are common breeders and interbreeding is strongly suspected (Hubbard, 1976).

More recently a mixed breeding colony of the two species was found in a *Nypa* swamp forest in South Sulawesi, with several intermediate plumages showing a continuum between the two species, with each individual displaying a different selection of characters (Uttley, 1987).

Present observations were made during a two-months survey of waterbirds and mangrove habitat in East Java, a cooperative project of Asian Wetland Bureau/INTERWADER and the Indonesian Directorate General of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation

(PHPA). For further details on this Survey, see Erftemeijer and Djuharsa (1988). The survey was subsidized by the Greshoff's Rumphius Fund, International Council for Bird Preservation, Van Tienhoven Foundation and World Wide Fund for Nature, The Netherlands.

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RINGKASAN

Dua buah sarang Kowak Merah *Nycticorax caledonicus* di Jawa Timor dipertelakan. Ada dugaan bahwa telah terjadi perkawinan silang antara Jenis ini dengan Kowak Kelabu *N. nyctioorax*.