

**BARC Submission for Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*  
on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands in 2021-2022**

**Submitted by Geof Christie**

A Purple Heron was flushed from waist high grass just behind the sixth green of the West Island golf course. I was 4 wheel driving through this small patch of very thick, waist high grass hoping to flush a warbler when the Purple Heron flushed 1 metre from my elbow. Lots of practice with pintail snipe allowed me to get this first photograph. This was 13th November 2021.



The Heron was next sighted in the knee high grass in the main paddock at the Quarantine Station. This is the same paddock as a Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler had been photographed just days earlier. The warbler was never seen again presumed eaten.

The Heron was very flighty at this stage and usually flew to the back Qstation paddock that was very overgrown with vines, grass and weeds, waist high grass and fenced and a large water tank were other Egrets roosted.



The Purple Heron was then seen daily in the main paddock and over the next three months it became tamer to photographers.



No doubt it is a Purple Heron. The size is in incredible. Here it is with a white Tern



Hoping this young Purple Heron is young enough to overwinter. But the Qstation paddock was due to get mowed after I left island. The paddock will be used to stockpile bluemetal for the new super runway financed by the military.

