

BARC SUBMISSION

Malayan Night Heron *Gorsachius melanolophus* – Blowholes Track, Christmas Island, 26–28 December 2020

Richard Baxter, Damian Baxter, Lynda Collett, Hugh Crisp, and Michella Crisp

Date and time of sighting: The Malayan Night Heron was first spotted on the Blowholes Beach Track by Richard and Damian Baxter on the 26 December 2020. It was subsequently observed by Lynda Collett and Hugh and Michelle Crisp on the 28 Dec 2020.

Description: a small, short-legged, stout billed *Gorsachius* heron with finely vermiculated greyish upperparts, a distinctive, white-spotted black crown and coarsely white spotted nuchal crest.

The yellowish lores, finely vermiculated grey upperparts (lacking any rufous tones), and coarsely white spotted nuchal crest suggest this is a juvenile or immature bird.

The only really similar species is the Japanese Night Heron *Gorsachius goisagi*, however it is readily distinguished at this age by the long and coarsely white-spotted nuchal crest.



Figure 1. Malayan Night Heron (Hugh Crisp) from the Blowholes Track, Christmas Island (28 Dec 2020).