



Kimberley Land Council

MEDIA RELEASE

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Bardi Jawi rangers discover Nicobar pigeon on Kimberley coastline

A bird native to South East Asia and the South Pacific has been discovered in Western Australia's Kimberley region by Indigenous ranger group, the Bardi Jawi rangers.

First spotted at Chile Creek on the Dampier Peninsula, the bird has been identified as a Nicobar pigeon.

The colorful pigeon is normally found on small islands and in coastal regions, including the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India, east through the Malay Archipelago, to the Solomons and Palau.

The Nicobar pigeon is classified as near endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and is reported to be the closest living relative to the extinct dodo.

Bardi Jawi Senior Ranger Kevin George said the Bardi Jawi rangers first spotted the bird in April. Since then there have been numerous sightings before the bird was captured in a One Arm Point front yard earlier this week.

"We immediately knew it wasn't a native species, but we had no idea how far it had actually come from to get here," Kevin said.

"Following some of our own research we've been able to identify the species as a Nicobar pigeon, an island dwelling bird.

"We don't know how the bird got here – whether it flew all the way from Indonesia, India or the Solomons, if it island hopped or came by boat."

Bardi Jawi Ranger Coordinator Phillip McCarthy said the find is an important example of the biosecurity work Kimberley Ranger Network rangers are undertaking all along the Kimberley coastline.

"As Indigenous rangers we have responsibility for looking after some of the most remote and pristine coastline in the state," Phillip said.

"We take the biosecurity of our area very seriously and are strengthening our links with the Australian Government to ensure it is protected.

"We are the eyes and ears for Bardi Jawi country and will continue to work hard to look after this amazing coastline."

As part of biosecurity protocol the capture was reported to quarantine services and the bird has now been removed by Department of Agriculture officials.

The Bardi Jawi rangers are part of the Kimberley Ranger Network – a network of 13 ranger groups facilitated by the Kimberley Land Council. To find out more about the work of Indigenous rangers in the Kimberley visit www.klc.org.au