

REGION 2 SENSITIVE SPECIES EVALUATION FORM

Species: Black-crowned night heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

Criteria	Rank	Rationale	Literature Citations
1 Distribution within R2	B	The species is found in all states of Region 2.  Confidence in Rank <b>High</b> or <b>Medium</b> or <b>Low</b>	•
2 Distribution outside R2	C	BREEDS: Washington, southern Idaho, Saskatchewan, Michigan, and Nova Scotia south to southern South America, including Antilles; also Hawaii (Niihau to Hawaii). See Spendelow and Patton (1988) for information on distribution and abundance of coastal U.S. breeding populations (most coastal breeders are along Gulf Coast and Atlantic coast north of Florida). NORTHERN WINTER: north to Oregon, Utah, New Mexico, Texas, lower Ohio Valley, Gulf Coast, and southern New England. In the U.S., the highest winter densities occur in the vicinity of inland wildlife refuges near the California-Oregon border, along the northern California coast (Humboldt Bay), in the San Joaquin Valley of California, along the lower Colorado River, near Galveston Bay in Texas, and along the coast near Jacksonville, Florida (Root 1988). Also occurs in the Old World and on other Pacific islands.  Distribution is spotty and associated with wetlands with emergent vegetation.  Confidence in Rank <b>High</b> or <b>Medium</b> or <b>Low</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• see citations in references section</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.natureserve.org">www.natureserve.org</a></li> </ul>
3 Dispersal Capability	C	Confidence in Rank <b>High</b> or <b>Medium</b> or <b>Low</b>	•
4 Abundance in R2	D	There are no abundance estimates for this species.  Confidence in Rank <b>High</b> or <b>Medium</b> or <b>Low</b>	•

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<p><b>5</b> Population Trend in R2</p>	<p><b>A</b></p>	<p>Stable or increasing in most areas of North America, but has declined in some areas (Herkert 1992). Populations in the south-central U.S. may be benefiting from crayfish aquaculture; bird population increases may be related to favorable foraging opportunities afforded by expanding crayfish aquaculture (Fleury and Sherry 1995). Hawaiian population was a few hundred and increasing in the mid-1980s (Scott et al. 1988); summer counts declined in the mid- and late 1980s, apparently due to a control program instituted by federal and state agencies at the request of aquaculture farmers on Oahu (Engilis and Pratt 1993).</p> <p>Nationwide there has been a slow increase in population according to the Breeding Bird Survey. The species is viewed as vulnerable in Colorado, South Dakota and Wyoming; and imperiled in Kansas and Nebraska.</p> <p>Confidence in Rank <b>High</b> or <b>Medium</b> or <b>Low</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• citations in references section</li> </ul>
<p><b>6</b> Habitat Trend in R2</p>	<p><b>B</b></p>	<p>Habitat: Marshes, swamps, wooded streams, mangroves, shores of lakes, ponds, lagoons; salt water, brackish, and freshwater situations. Roosts by day in mangroves or swampy woodland. Eggs are laid in a platform nest in groves of trees near coastal marshes or on marine islands, swamps, marsh vegetation, clumps of grass on dry ground, orchards, and in many other situations. Nests usually with other heron species.</p> <p>Confidence in Rank <b>High</b> or <b>Medium</b> or <b>Low</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

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<p><b>7</b> Habitat Vulnerability or Modification</p>	<p><b>B</b></p>	<p>Has declined in some areas due to disturbance, degradation, and/or destruction of nesting and foraging areas (Herkert 1992). Particularly sensitive to disturbance just before and during laying (Tremblay and Ellison 1979). Certain U.S. breeding populations in the intermountain west have high DDT levels and exhibit low productivity; DDT may be accumulated in southwestern U.S. wintering areas. Custer et al. (1983) found that environmental contaminants had a minimal impact on overall reproductive success of U.S. Atlantic coast populations. Little is known about threats to the species in Region 2 except general comments on the loss and degradation of Great Plains wetlands.</p> <p>Confidence in Rank High or Medium or Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• citations in references section</li> </ul>
<p><b>8</b> Life History and Demographics</p>	<p><b>B</b></p>	<p>Confidence in Rank High or Medium or Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
<p>Initial Evaluator(s): John Sidle</p>			<p>Date: 6/28/01</p>

**National Forests in the Rocky Mountain Region where species is KNOWN (K) or LIKELY(L)<sup>1</sup> to occur:**

<b><u>Colorado NF/NG</u></b>		<b><u>Kansas NF/NG</u></b>		<b><u>Nebraska NF/NG</u></b>		<b><u>South Dakota NF/NG</u></b>		<b><u>Wyoming NF/NG</u></b>	
Known	Likely	Known	Likely	Known	Likely	Known	Likely	Known	Likely
Arapaho-Roosevelt NF	K	Cimmaron NG		Samuel R.McKelvie NF	L	Black Hills NF		Shoshone NF	L
White River NF	K			Halsey NF	K	Buffalo Gap NG		Bighorn NF	
Routt NF				Nebraska NF		Ft. Pierre NG		Black Hills NF	
Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, Gunnison NF				Ogalala NG	K			Medicine Bow NF	L
San Juan NF	L							Thunder Basin NG	
Rio Grande NF									
Pike-San Isabel NF	K								
Comanche NG	L								

<sup>1</sup> Likely is defined as more likely to occur than not occur on the National Forest or Grassland. This generally can be thought of as having a 50% chance or greater of appearing on NFS lands.

## References

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