

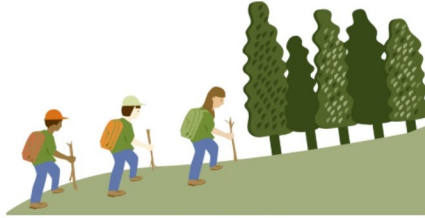
KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY

MAY 2021 SUMMARY IPPF-PPC, Palawan



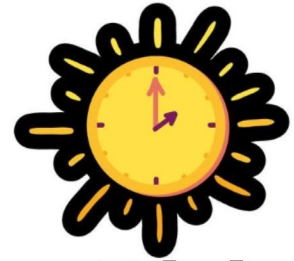
8

Bilang ng nagawang
patrolya



145

Kabuuang kilometrong naabot ng
patrolya



54.4

Kabuuang oras ng patrolya



6

Bilang ng illegal na
aktibidades



0

Bilang ng naaresto



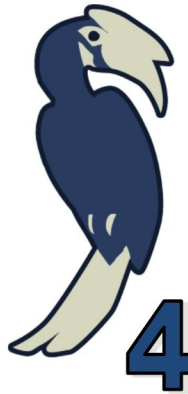
765

Bilang ng halaman sa nursery



58

Pinakamataas na bilang sa
tulugan ng Katala



4

Pinakamataas na
grupo ng Talusi na nakita



15

Bilang ng mga inakay ng
Katala



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KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY IWAHIG PRISON AND PENAL FARM (IPPF)

May 2021

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I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE CONSERVATION AREA, CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES, CONSERVATION TARGETS AND METHODS

IPPF is part of a larger landscape, the Sulu Sea plain, which comprises the lowlands of central Palawan facing the Sulu Sea and including areas of Puerto Princesa City, and the municipalities of Narra and Aborlan. The area is bordered by the Victoria-Anepahan Range to the west and the Sulu Sea to the east; the northern edge runs roughly along 9° 47' N, the southern along 9° 9' N.

Philippine Cockatoos have long been known to persist in the IPPF south of Puerto Princesa City. More recent are flocks of cockatoos from Rasa feeding on the mainland of Narra, and from Iwahig Penal Colony feeding in coastal areas of

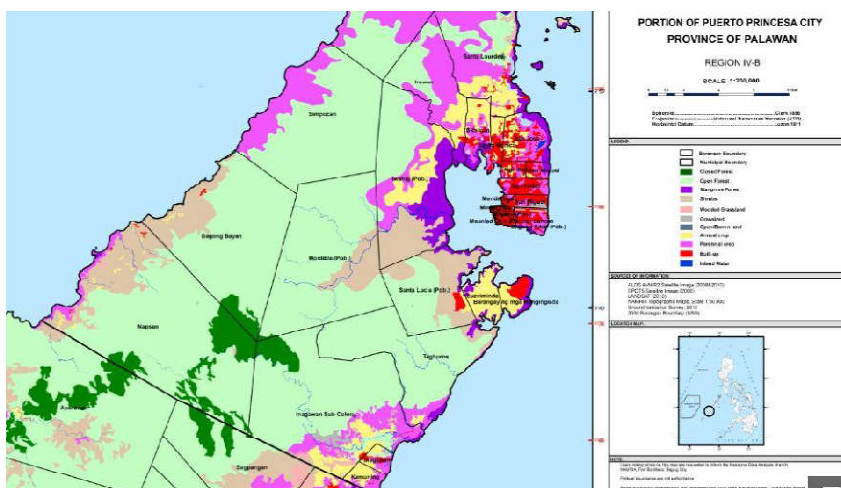


Figure 1. Land use of southern Puerto Princesa, including IPPF according to NAMRIA. Large areas were classified as open forest (bright green signature); this is not in line with observations on site, where large areas of closed forests were recorded particularly in portions of Iwahig, Tagburus ("Zigzag") and Montible (Source: NAMRIA)

Puerto Princesa City, particularly in the compound of the Western Command (WESCOM) and Bgy. Banca-Bancao. Large parts of the coastal plains are cultivated, mainly with coconuts and rice paddies, particularly in Narra and Iwahig, where irrigation is available. Extensive areas of disturbed grassland-forest mosaics persist, which are habitats for a surprisingly high number of Palawan endemics. One explanation for this phenomenon could be that the present vegetation resembles that of some periods in the Pleistocene. These areas are used as pastures, but also for the collection of a wide variety of forest products. Grass fires are a regular occurrence and partly the vegetation is adapted to these occurrences (*Antidesma* fire savanna). Extensive evergreen and semi-evergreen lowland forests exist at the foot of the Victoria Anepahan Range, on fossil limestone reefs in Narra and Aborlan, south of the Bay of Puerto and in the Iwahig Penal Colony. Particularly the latter area is of outstanding

conservation importance. All endemic lowland bird species are recorded from the area. Globally threatened species, aside from the cockatoo, include Palawan Peacock-pheasant *Polyplectron napoleonis*, Blue-headed Racquet-tail *Prioniturus platenae*, Palawan Hornbill *Anthracoceros marchei*, Red-headed Flameback *Chrysocolaptes erythrocephalus*, Great Slaty Woodpecker *Mulleripicus pulverulentus*, Falcated Wren-babbler *Ptilocichla falcata*, and Palawan Flycatcher *Ficedula platenae*. Because of the abundance of brackish and freshwater wetlands Iwahig Penal Colony is an important wintering ground for waterbirds, including the endangered Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor*.

Conservation Objectives

1. Maintain the species diversity and function of ecosystems and species within Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm (IPPF).
2. Identify and preserve priority sites for conservation and maintain their ecological functions.
3. Prevent or report to enforcing agencies illegal activities that compromise the integrity of the conservation area.

Conservation Targets

1. To increase Philippine Cockatoo population within Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm (IPPF) by at least 3% from 2018 to 2021.
2. Increase viable population of endangered and endemic target cavity-nesters e.g. Palawan Hornbill, Blue-naped Parrot, Blue-headed Racquet-Tail etc. in Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm from 2018-2021.
3. Reduce threats in the area by 50% from 2018 to 2021.
4. Establish critical habitat for Philippine Cockatoo and other threatened wildlife species within Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm.

Methods

Deputised wardens patrol by foot or by boat monthly within site. Patrol members use a technology-based system to register all observations (threats, status and wildlife data) in the android and transferred to a smart application to generate report (Critchlow et al., 2017; Teacher et al., 2013). Species to be monitored are based on their red-list status and their value as bioindicators (IUCN, 2019). Ease of identification in the field was considered as well. The maps are generated and analyzed through QGIS.

Patrols are coordinated with the concerned barangay, prison farms, protected area office wherever it applies.

II. PATROL TEAM AND EFFORT

The patrol team composed of KFI, PCSD and wildlife wardens conducted habitat monitoring of wildlife and biodiversity and continued city monitoring. The main areas monitored were foraging areas in the city and surroundings of the penal farm. A total of **145km** were covered for the month of April. Please refer to list of team members in the last page.

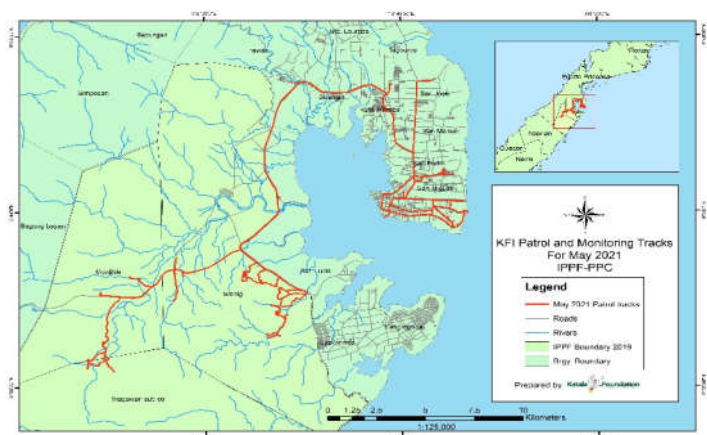


Figure 2. Patrol tracks for May 2021 ©KFI

III. PATROL OBSERVATIONS

A. WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS

- *Intensive monitoring on foraging and roosting area continued.* For this month the highest number of cockatoos recorded roosting in Montible was 58. No cockatoos were observed roosting in the city area this month. At day time (5:45am-6:20pm) they were observed crossing Montible to Iwahig and Sta. Lucia. They were observed foraging in various trees like Moringa, Sahing, Amugis and Dau in Luzviminda.



Figure 3. Cockatoos observed in Montible roost. ©KFI

- *Breeding season of Philippine Cockatoo and other cavity-nesters.* Ten active cockatoo nest trees from last year and four new nest trees were visited this month. As of May, for the cockatoos we recorded 22 eggs, 15 of which hatched successfully; nine were banded; two were not yet ready for banding and unfortunately, four hatchlings were lost to possibly poaching in Menor and Tagtalaba forests in Montible. We also recorded four hatchlings of Palawan Hornbill and Oriental Dollarbird, eight hatchlings of Blue-naped parrot and tow hatchlings of an owl and Hill Myna. Two active cockatoo nest trees were filled with water, while one nest tree is already dead and potentially dangerous for climbing. Meanwhile, Balete and Bayoso seeds were observed at the base of one artificial nest box that was set up in Montible; a gecko and a monitor lizard were also observed inside the nest box.



Figure 4. Cockatoo hatchlings for this year that were banded in Montible and Sta. Lucia. ©KFI

- *Other wildlife.* Some notable species that were observed during the monitoring period were: Palawan Hornbill, Blue-naped Parrot, Blue-headed Racket-tail, Palawan Blue Flycatcher, Crested Serpent Eagle, Oriental Honey Buzzard, Large-tailed Nightjar, Spot-throated Flameback, Great Slaty Woodpecker, White-vented Shama, Philippine

Megapode, Green Imperial Pigeon, Hill Myna, Dollarbird, Palawan Scops Owl, Palawan Peacock-Pheasant, Frigatebird. Non-avian species that were observed were Green Vine snake, Palawan Rock Frog, Philippine Toad, Asian leaf turtle, Palawan flying squirrel, tracks of Palawan Porcupine, Palawan Stink Badger, and Palawan Bearded pigs.

- Some tree species like Bayoso, Panau, Kandis, Garisan, Maramamaan, Manggachapui, Bakulot, Apitong and Daligan were observed fruiting in Montible and Inagawan forest during the duration of patrol. Mangrove species like *S. alba* were also recorded fruiting in the coastal area of the city. Other Fabaceae species like Malunggay and Fire tree were observed fruiting as well. Seed and wildlings of Taluto and Banaran were collected and will be propagated in Montible Nursery.



Figure 5. A female Palawan hornbill protecting its babies (left) and hatchlings of Blue-naped parrot (right) ©KFI

B. THREAT OBSERVATIONS

- About one hectare of land was underbrushed in Montible km32. We observed new sites that were being cleared in the area near one of a known nest tree of Philippine Cockatoo. Construction of shanties were also recorded along the highway. We weren't able to monitor the whole area, so this needs to be confirmed on the ground. Illegal encroachment in Montible is persistent especially in this pandemic time and we hope immediate action could be taken to prevent the degradation of the vast forest in the area (See fig. 5).
- Four Philippine Cockatoo hatchlings and one Hill myna hatchling were possibly poached. We recorded two Philippine cockatoo hatchlings each from two separate nest trees in Montible last month, but upon monitoring this month, the said hatchlings were missing from their nest cavity. There were also signs that the nest trees had been climbed prior to our monitoring.
- One Bushnell camera trap with a 32gb memory card was stolen in Montible. This camera trap was position where it couldn't be seen by climbing the nest tree. We didn't see any marks or signs in the tree where the camera was mounted. We suspect that the poacher was well aware that the camera was present in the first place.
- Illegal activities/encroachment are rampant in Sta. Lucia and Luzviminda. During our monitoring of the area, we discovered trees that were cut down with chainsaw, as well as kaingin and charcoal making in some areas. Our informant told us that the timber will be sold as furniture in Luzviminda. Meanwhile shanties and rubbish were seen along the riverbanks of Luzviminda. Tracks of motorcycle were also observed on the

trails in Sta. Lucia; allegedly this pathway was used by illegal loggers for hauling timber. Some markings/guides were also observed inside the trail (See fig. 5).

IV. ISSUES, CONSTRAINTS AND ACTIONS TAKEN

- The continued and persistent destruction of lowland forests in these parts of Puerto Princesa are alarming and growing and yet no concrete actions are done by authorities especially DENR. The IPPF are also doing its rounds and reporting and yet no action. We look forward to legal actions and prosecution to happen before it is too late. There was also hunting of the Hornbill reported in the past and yet we are not aware if case were filed.
- Forest destruction and illegal occupation in IPPF grounds. Environmental laws especially PD 705 and RA 9147 should be enforced in full force hoping prosecution can deter further similar illegal activities.
- Unavailability of uniformed personnel during the patrols in Luzviminda and Sta. Lucia could help in apprehending violators within the IPPF area.
- The COVID 19 restrictions should not be a reason for lax law enforcement. These times more than ever, we think enforcement should be fully carried out because the violators are also making use of the same reason. We will continue our monthly patrols so long as we are able and allowed. We follow minimum health protocols.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Policies on and better enforcement of lowland forest protection and conservation must be implemented and sustained especially within IPPF and the Victoria Anepa'am Mountain Range (VAMR)! Lowland forests harbor more biodiversity than montane forests; thus, should be protected against encroachment and further destruction.



Figure 5. Clearing in Montible Km 32 (top); Some trees that were logged from Luzviminda forest. ©KFI

VI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are grateful and appreciative to our partners from the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff (PCSDS), DENR-CENRO Puerto Princesa City, Western Command and Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm (IPPF) for their unrelenting support.

We appreciate the participation of representatives from these offices: Mr. Nerben Salazar and Richard Ballena of PCSDS and from the IPPF we thank CTOIII Earl Jude A. Arias and CSupt. Raul P. Levita for his leadership.

We also want to thank those community members who send us their cockatoo sightings in the City. To all those who in one way or the other had contributed to the achievement of our shared vision for the conservation of biodiversity in the IPPF, great thanks!

We are indebted and grateful for the support of the following organizations and agencies for supporting patrols in our four project sites in Pandanan/Bugsuk, Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary, Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm and Dumaran Island Critical Habitat:



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