

KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY

October 2021 SUMMARY
IPPF-PPC, Palawan



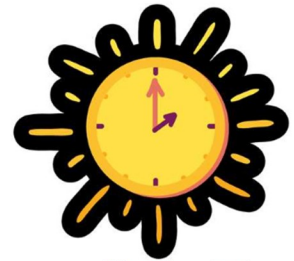
19

Bilang ng nagawang
patrolya



462.05

Kabuuang kilometrong naabot ng
patrolya



88.5

Kabuuang oras ng patrolya



2

Bilang ng illegal na
aktibidades



0

Bilang ng naaresto



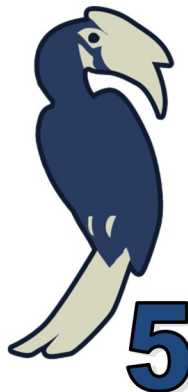
977

Bilang ng halaman sa nursery



110

Pinakamataas na bilang sa
tulugan ng Katala



5

Pinakamataas na
grupo ng Talusi na nakita



45

Pinakamataas na bilang ng
katala sa kinakainan



Anonymous
Donor



PHILIPPINE
COCKATOO
CONSERVATION
PROGRAMME



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

October 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

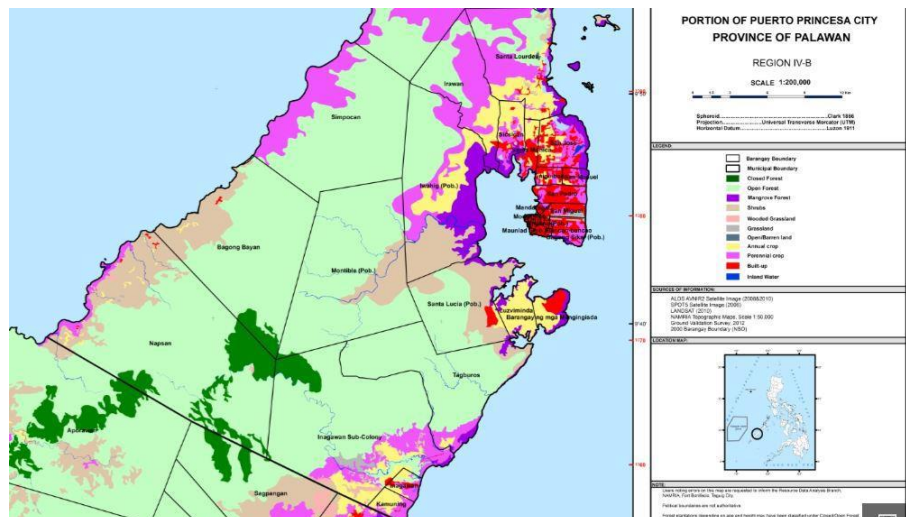


Figure 1. Land use of southern Puerto Princesa, including IPPF according to NAMRIA. Large areas were classified as open forest (bright green signature); this is not in line with observations on site, where large areas of closed forests were recorded particularly in portions of Iwahig, Tagburus ("Zigzag")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

Puerto Princesa City, particularly in the compound of the Western Command (WESCOM) and Bgy. Banca-Banca. 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

Deputized 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 comprises KFI, PCSDS, IPPF personnel, and wildlife wardens conducted synchronized counting and patrol monitoring. The main areas monitored were foraging areas in the city and the surroundings of the penal farm. The team conducted 19 patrols and covered a total of **462.05 Km** for October. Please refer to the list of team members on the last page.

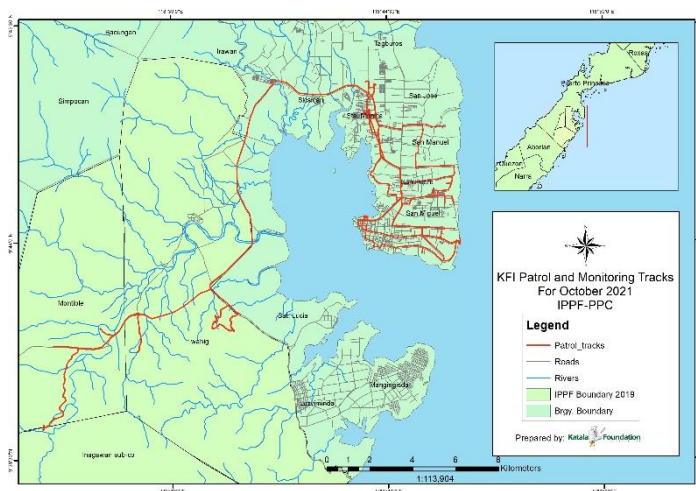


Figure 2. Patrol tracks for October 2021 ©KFI

III. PATROL OBSERVATIONS

A. WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS

- *Intensive monitoring on foraging and roosting area continued.* Roost counting of cockatoos in two roost sites in Montible and the city were done for this month. The highest recorded count is 103 and 12 in the city and Montible respectively. At day time, (5:30 am-5:20pm) cockatoos in the city were observed foraging in Pagatpat, Moringa, Fire tree and Bani before dispersing in different parts of the city. In Montible cockatoos were observed flying from Malabo Forest crossing Tagtalaba and Bacoco river to Iwahig central to forage on fruiting trees in the area. Meanwhile, some sightings were observed in San Miguel, WESCOM, San Pedro, and Libis. The team also mapped out possible food-providing plants in the city to improve the patrolling and predict the flight patterns of the cockatoos in Puerto Princesa City.



Figure 3. Some cockatoos in the city area. ©MBO-KFI

- *KFI and PCSDS conducted a three-day nest and habitat monitoring in IPPF.* During the monitoring, the team visited eight nest trees. We also flew the drone in the area to map out the nest trees and observe threats. Some cockatoo fledglings and their parent were seen roosting and foraging in their nest trees. Meanwhile, due to inclement weather, some trees were uprooted along the trails of Montible, Malabo, and Sta. Lucia. The team also couldn't visit some nest trees due to strong river currents, and water levels were high during the monitoring (see Fig 5.). Nevertheless, nest trees were just observed through drone footages.
- *Observation of wildlife and other cavity nesters monitoring.* Hornbills were seen in Sibakan area going to Montible and in Malabo Forest. Other parrot species like Blue-naped parrot and Blue-headed racket tail were seen in Montible and Malabo. Some notable species observed during the monitoring period were: Hair-Crested Drongo, Palawan Blue Flycatcher, Olive-backed Sunbird, Pale Spiderhunter, Palawan Babbler, Palawan Flycatcher, Blue-breasted Pitta, White-bellied Sea eagle, Common Sandpiper, Grey-Tailed Tattler, Pacific Reef-Heron, Eurasian Curlew, Whimbrel, Common Iora, Kingfishers, Palawan peacock-pheasant, Red junglefowl, White-vented Shama, Asian fairy-bluebird, Red-Headed Flameback. Non-avian species observed: Squirrels and Palawan Bearded Pig, Common mock viper, Paradise tree Snake; the team also observed some lizard species and a Palawan monitor lizard.

B. THREAT OBSERVATIONS

We observed tracks of carabao indicating that some trees were hauled; upon monitoring in Sta. Lucia no other signs of encroachment were recorded. Meanwhile roost trees in the city area were trimmed by the owner, on October 28, after counting the roosting cockatoos we noticed that at least four Coconut trees where the cockatoo roost were freshly trimmed even so cockatoos still roost in nearby coconut trees in the area.

IV. Other Highlights

For the past weeks Palawan was devastated by strong rains and gusty winds where the municipality of Narra was affected heavily. In-line with this KFI together with our partners arranged a small relief operation for the residents of the municipality and distributed 50 bags of relief packages that each includes 10kg of rice, 13 canned goods, sugar, coffee, candles, biscuits, 10-liter of potable water, and medicines etc. were given to the affected families and wardens in Narra.

V. ISSUES, CONSTRAINTS, AND ACTIONS TAKEN

- The increasing number of covid positive patients in Montible prevented us from monitoring the cockatoos inside the area.
- The continued and persistent destruction of lowland forests in these parts of Puerto Princesa is alarming and growing, and yet no concrete actions are done by authorities. We look forward to legal actions and prosecution happening before it is too late. Hunting of the Hornbill was reported in the past, yet we are not aware that the case was filed.
- Forest destruction and illegal occupation in IPPF grounds. Environmental laws, primarily PD 705 and RA 9147, should be enforced in full force, hoping prosecution can deter further unlawful activities.
- The COVID 19 restrictions should not be a reason for lax law enforcement. These times more than ever, we think enforcement should be thoroughly carried out because the violators are also using the same reason. We will continue our monthly patrols so long as we are able and allowed. We follow minimum health protocols.
- Persecution of birds within the city exists, and we hope we address this issue with conservation education and stricter law enforcement.

VI. 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, they should be protected against encroachment and further destruction.

City-wide campaign against persecution of wild birds should be pursued.



Figure 4. Carabao tracks in Sta. Lucia (Left) and trimmed cockatoo roost tree (Right).

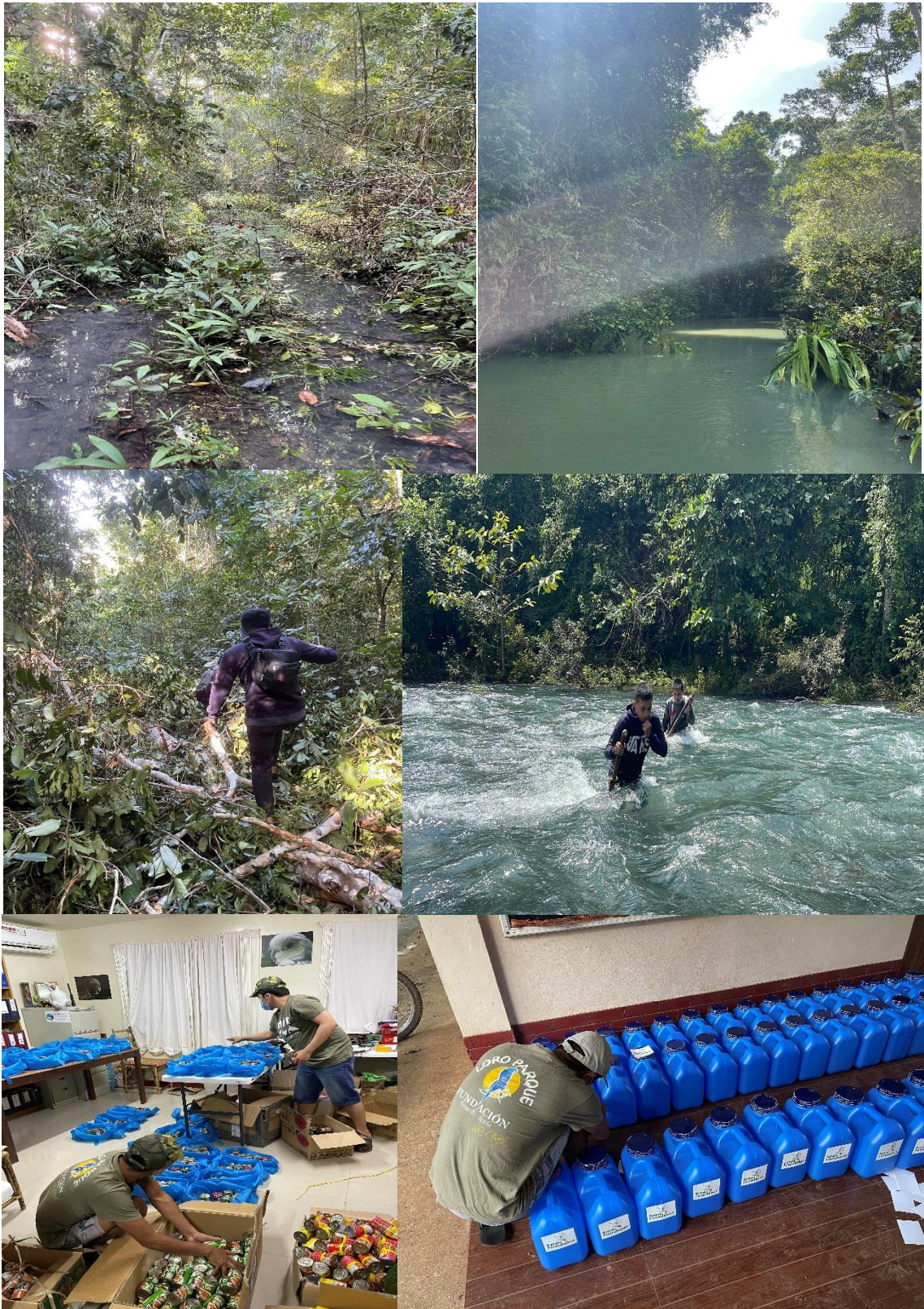


Figure 5. Flooded trail along Montible (Top), trails that were blocked by fallen trees (Mid-Left), strong river current in Malinao River crossed by patrol team (Mid-right), and packing of relief goods for people affected by the flood in Narra.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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

We would like to thank Mr. Gezer Lloyd Tuboc of PCSDS, we also appreciate the help of CTOIII Earl Jude A. Arias and CSupt. Joel R. Calvelo for his leadership from the IPPF.

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!



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