

KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY October 2021 SUMMARY Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary and its environs, Narra, Palawan



19

Bilang ng nagawang
patrolya



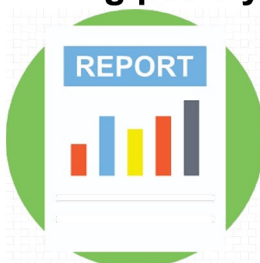
0

Bilang ng illegal na
kailangang aksyunan



94.3

Kabuuang kilometrong naabot
ng patrolya



0

Bilang ng mga issues na
nai-report sa PAMO



56.6

Kabuuang oras ng
patrolya



0

Bilang ng naaresto



201

Pinakamataas na bilang sa
tulugan ng Katala



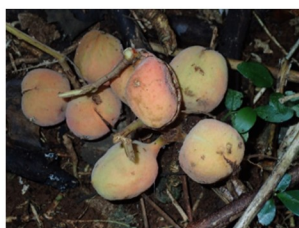
38

Bilang ng ibang uri ng
ibon na nakita



88

Pinakamataas na bilang
ng Katala sa kinakainan



9

Uri ng halamang namumunga



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KFI PATROL AND MONITORING REPORT ON FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY RASA ISLAND WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

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

Rasa is a small coral island of 8.34 km² land area situated in the Sulu Sea, just offshore of the Municipality of Narra, Palawan, Philippines (Fig. 1). About 1.75 km² are covered with coastal forest, mangrove (5.60 km²), cultivated areas (predominantly coconut; 0.39 km²), 0.60 km² are barren or sparsely vegetated sand and coral outcrops. In February 2006, the island became a Wildlife Sanctuary through Presidential Proclamation 1000 and since a Protected Area Management Board manages the Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary (RIWS). In 2008, RIWS was chosen as Top 13 Bird Watching Sites in the Philippines by the Department of Tourism.

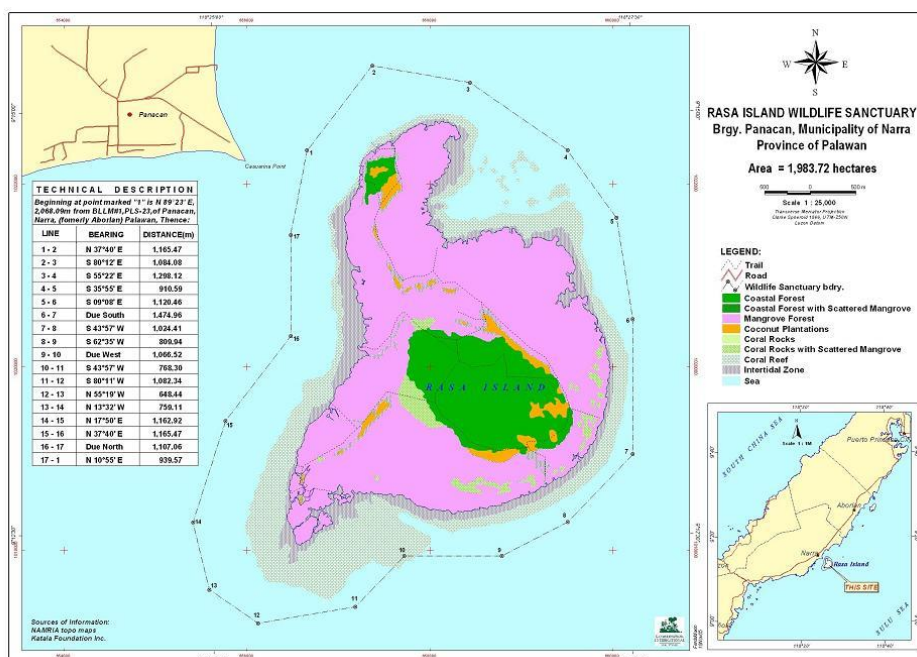


Figure 1. Landuse map of Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary in Narra, Palawan, Philippines

The island is the pilot site of the Philippine Cockatoo Conservation Program since 1998. Due to intensive poaching, only 23-25 Philippine cockatoos were left on the island then. Key component of this project site is the warden scheme which involves ex-poachers as wildlife wardens whose main task is to patrol and protect the wildlife in particular the Philippine Cockatoo during and outside its breeding season. This scheme has proven to be efficient and lead to the dramatic recovery of the Philippine Cockatoo population to nearly 400 individuals as of to date. This makes RIWS the most important population of the species in the wild!

Not only Philippine Cockatoos live on the island, but a variety of other species, with an unusual high percentage of globally threatened and near-threatened taxa (IUCN 2019), considering the small size of Rasa. Noteworthy among the 112 recorded bird species are Red-headed Flameback *Chrysocolaptes erythrocephalus* (EN), Grey Imperial-pigeon *Ducula pickeringii* (VU) and Mantanani Scops-owl *Otus mantananensis* (NT).

Conservation Objectives

1. Maintain the species diversity and function of ecosystems and species within Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary.
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 in Rasa Island and vicinity by at least 3% from 2018-2021.
2. Increase viable population of endangered and endemic target cavity-nesters e.g. Blue-headed Racquet-Tail, woodpeckers (Red-headed Flameback), owls, kingfishers etc. in Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary from 2018-2021.
3. Monitor and reduce threats in the area by 50% from 2018-2021; if any.

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/ArcGIS. Patrols are coordinated with the concerned barangay and protected area office wherever it applies.

II. PATROL TEAM AND EFFORT

Nest checking and characterization could not pursue due to torrential rains in October 2021. Only few were checked where 16 data loggers were collected as well. Wildlife monitoring, patrol around Rasa and retrieval of camera traps were conducted this month. Fledglings are frequently observed with adult cockatoos both on Rasa and on mainland. This month, our monitoring covered **94.3kms**. Total precipitation in October 2021: **314mm** on Rasa, **424mm** on mainland.

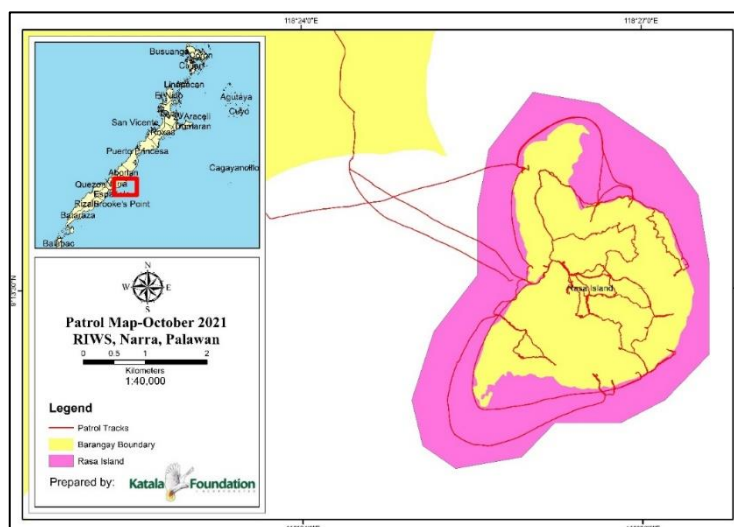


Figure 2. Patrol tracks in red marks in October 2021



Figure 3. Lucito and Reynaldo check on nest tree in coastal forest (left); Fresh feces, sign of recent visit on nest (right) ©KFI

In Oct. 8, Bernito and Loreto assisted five DENR personnel headed by J. Bautista to conduct monitoring on BAMS station in coastal forest. In Oct. 12, one boat was found on Rasa. Lucito planned to report it to barangay yet consequently, it was revealed that the owner of the boat was looking for it through social media. The boat was owned by Jerico Deig from Malinao, Narra. Tans Alisto and Lucito witnessed the hauling and turnover of the boat to Barangay Malinao on the same date. Moreover, many boats in Malinao, Narra including Katala boat was affected by the flood (Fig. 4). Mario and Bernito retrieved the impaired Katala boat. Fortunately, the engine is still in good condition. The boats of wardens are used for monitoring and patrol for the meantime.



Figure 4. Collapsed Katala boat due to torrential rain, flooding and strong river current at Malinao, Narra

III. PATROL OBSERVATIONS

A. WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS

201 individuals in total (192 and 9ind) were recorded at traditional roost site and on some nest trees on Oct. 18 by Loreto and Lucito respectively. Loreto monitored at the traditional roost site from 4:35pm on Oct. 18 where cockatoos started gathering from 5:15pm and dropped at 7:01pm. No cockatoos were roosting at Borbon, Panacan and around Rasa mangroves except on nest trees. During synchronized counting, **88 individuals** in total were recorded from Panacan, Panacan 2, Antipuluan and Batang-Batang on Oct. 22, in the morning. Less cockatoos were noted foraging this month probably because of frequent rain in addition to the onset of northeast monsoon. The highest foraging count at Marcelo area was 35ind recorded in the morning of Oct. 8. Cockatoos flight to mainland in October 2021: Earliest 5:50am and latest 5:37pm recorded at Borbon station.

In October 2021, beside Philippine Cockatoo these bird species were also noted: Tabon Scrubfowl, Blue-headed Racquet-tail, Red-headed Flameback, Nicobar Pigeon, Palawan Tit, Great-billed Heron, Western Osprey, White-bellied Sea-eagle, Changeable Hawk-eagle, Egret sp., Spotted Wood-owl, Rufous Night-heron, Pied Imperial-Pigeon, Blue-Paradise Flycatcher, Quail, Fruit-dove sp., Common Tern, Green Imperial-Pigeon, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Oriental Dwarf-kingfisher, White-collared Kingfisher, Whimbrel, Large-tailed Night-jar, Sunbird sp., White-vented Shama, Ashy Drongo, Swiftlet sp., Common Koel, Reef egret, Rufous-tailed Tailor-bird, Emerald Dove, Greater Coucal, Pipits, Asian Glossy Starling, Dollarbird and Zebra Dove. Blue-naped Parrot was still observed on Rasa on Oct. 9, 25, and on Oct. 30, it was observed with 5ind of Blue-headed Racquet-tail flying from Panaguiton near nest 81 to Villanueva area by Lucito. Moreover, Monitor Lizard was also frequently encountered.

Additionally, on Oct. 16, 10:00pm, Lucito heard 2ind of Spotted Wood-owl, calling around campsite. On Oct. 23, one Changeable Hawk-eagle and 13 crows fought at Villarias area. Crows went due coastal forest instead. Bernito noted 2ind of Palawan Tit perching from tree to another and calling at 4:20pm around campsite in Oct. 29. 17ind of Pied Imperial-pigeon flew due Caguisan from Satina area at 12pm in Oct. 30.

Monico observed Green Imperial-pigeon, Blue-headed Racquet-tail and Palawan Hornbill in Oct. 4, at Catel, Princess Urduja, Narra. Meanwhile, Danilo captured photos of Palawan Hornbill near his station at Panacan Pier, Panacan, Narra on Oct. 31 at 2:58pm (Fig. 6). It perched and stayed on a barren tree for a minute and flew due south.



Figure 5. Foraging cockatoos at Purok Bagong Pag-asa, Panacan 2 (left); foraging cockatoos at Sunrise Beach Resort, Antipuluan (right) ©KFI



Figure 6. Palawan Hornbill observed around wharf at Panacan, Narra on Oct. 31, 2021 ©D. Villaruz

Vegetation assessment

Due to torrential rains this month and recent months, greener vegetation is observed on Rasa (Fig. 7). However, flowering trees are also affected which might result to less production of honey. Fruiting trees and vines: Buntot-daga (most abundant) (Fig. 7), Ginlalid, Barenben, Binunga, Magtalisay, Balete, Pagatpat, *Rhizophora* sp. and other mangrove species. Flowering trees: Bogo, Tulang pagi, Binunga, Lomo-lomo, Pagatpat, *Rhizophora* sp. and other mangrove species.



Figure 7. Green vegetation on boundary and inside coastal forest (top); fruits of Buntot-daga (left) and vine (right) on Rasa coastal forest ©KFI

THREAT OBSERVATIONS

No adverse human activities observed on Rasa during monitoring.

III. OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

On Oct. 17, Tantan and Jonathan Garbo harvested 40kgs of fish around Rasa for 5hrs (interviewed by Lucito at Satina area). On Oct. 21, Boyeng Bonales Sr. and son caught 20kgs of fish around Rasa for 4hrs. On Oct. 22, Charlito Basio and Armando Olusan gathered 18kgs of mangrove crabs at Alisto and Villarias area in two days. On Oct. 25, Jhing and Jennifer Noquera gleaned 10kgs of Lato on northeast Rasa in 4hrs. On Oct. 31, one person gathered 3kgs of mangrove crabs at Deig area in 12hrs. On Oct. 31, 13 persons related to Darvy Paragatos from Panacan, Narra (on two boats) collected 5kgs of Lato from 10am to 1pm in front of mangrove entrance to camp (Fig. 8).

This month, all wildlife wardens secured processing of National ID. Three have completed 2-dosed vaccination (against COVID-19) while three have 1st dose vaccine.

Sherwin Corpuz requested 25 seedlings on Oct. 1 for rehabilitation at Mariwara, Princess Urduja, Narra. On Oct. 4, Andrea Socrates asked for five seedlings in preparation of her

compliance to Katala “Do” Challenge, an online intervention through PCCP Fb page (Fig. 8). On Oct. 28, Mario and Edwin attended meeting initiated by Protected Area Management Office (PAMO)-RIWS in connection to permission to survey claimants’ coconut areas. Wardens assisted monitoring and collected wildlings at Apis, Aborlan in Oct. 20 and 27 to raise in Katala Institute nursery at Antipuluan, Narra.

Torrential rains due to Typhoon Maring brought damages in Narra, Palawan. KFI through the help of partners and donors donated relief goods which were distributed to affected families from Bgy. Batang-Batang and Princess Urduja, Narra by Municipal Social Welfare Development (MSWD) on Oct. 15. Wardens and volunteers also received donations (Fig. 9).



Figure 8. Gleaning of Lato on Oct. 31 by 13 persons on west Rasa tidal flat (left); Andrea equipped to plant food-plant for cockatoos for Katala “Do” challenge (right) ©KFI



Figure 9. Turnover to MSWD and distribution of relief goods to Bgy. Batang-Batang and Princess Urduja, Narra on Oct. 15, 2021 ©KFI & MSWD-Narra

IV. ISSUES, CONSTRAINTS AND ACTIONS TAKEN

Owners of lobster traps at Borbon, Panacan must be informed to not encroach inside Rasa boundary. Prescriptions for each zonation must be finalized and disseminated by PAO and with other PAMB members to encourage more active role in protection. Case filed against establishment of fish corral on Rasa must progress. Collection of fossilized Taklobo shells has been rampant even in other municipalities of Palawan hence intensive monitoring around Rasa at night is also encouraged.

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The PCCP acknowledges the key players on the ground: our wildlife wardens and mainland volunteers: REYNALDO ALBELAR, LORETO ALISTO, BERNITO BASIO, EDWIN BATAAC, MARIO BATAAC, LUCITO DANGIS, Veronica Marcelo, Danilo Villaruz, Monico Beleg and Antonio Marcelo.

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