



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office
MIMAROPA Region

Bgy. Sta. Monica, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan

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March 3, 2023

MEMORANDUM

FOR : The Regional Executive Director
DENR MIMAROPA
1515 DENR By the Bay Bldg., Roxas Boulevard,
Barangay 668, Ermita, Manila

THRU : The OIC, ARD for Technical Services

FROM : The Provincial Environment and
Natural Resources Officer


SUBJECT : **SUBMISSION OF NARRATIVE REPORT ON THE CONDUCT
OF ASIAN WATERBIRD CENSUS (AWC) 2023 OF
TUBBATAHA REEFS NATURAL PARK (TRNP)**

Respectfully forwarded is a copy of narrative report on the conduct of Asian Waterbird Census (AWC) of Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park (TRNP) for 2023.


As reported, they had identified six (6) species present in the Bird islet with a total count of 5,383 heads.

For information and record.

For the PENRO


RONIE B. GANDEZA
DMO IV/OIC-CHIEF TSD
In-Charge, Office of the PENRO



DENR-PALAWAN
PENRO-RECORDS
RELEASED
By 
Date 09 MAR 2023 CN 23-590



Tubbataha Management Office
Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park & World Heritage Site

February 24 2023

**DENR PENRO
PALAWAN RECORDS
RECEIVED**

BY: [Signature]
DATE: 03.02.2023 CN 23-1818

PENRO FELIZARDO B. CAYATOC

DENR - PENRO

Sta. Monica, Puerto Princesa City

Dear PENRO Cayatoc,

We respectfully submit the narrative report on the conduct of the Asian Waterbird Census in the Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park.

Thank you.

Very sincerely yours,

[Signature]
ANGELIQUE M. SONGCO
Protected Area Superintendent



ASIAN WATERBIRD CENSUS IN THE TUBBATAHA REEFS NATURAL PARK

January 2023

Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park is the largest no-take marine protected area in the Philippines. It is a World Heritage Site, an ASEAN Heritage Park, a Ramsar site, and a member of the East Asian Australasian Flyway Network. Tubbataha has the largest known congregation of seabirds in the Philippines, with over 30,000 breeding individuals. It is home to the only family of Masked Booby in the Philippines and currently the only known breeding ground of the endemic Black Noddy subspecies *worcesteri*.

Since 2019, Tubbataha Management Office (TMO) participates in the Annual Water Bird Census (AWC), where citizens conduct bird counts in wetlands during the second and third week of January. Some of the objectives of AWC are to provide the basis for estimating waterbird populations, monitoring changes in distribution, and monitoring important waterbird sites such as Tubbataha, a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

The two islets in Tubbataha are home to seven (7) resident breeding seabird species that are regularly monitored. These are the Red-footed (*Sula sula*) and Brown (*Sula leucogaster*), and Masked Boobies (*Sula dactylatra*), the Great Crested (*Sterna bergii*) and Sooty Terns (*Onychoprion fuscatus*), and the Brown (*Anous stolidus*) and Black Noddies (*Anous minutus worcesteri*).

Per DENR Administrative Order 2019-09 (Updated National List of Threatened Philippine Fauna and their Categories) and the Philippine Red List of Threatened Species, the Brown Booby and Black Noddy are both categorized as Endangered. Meanwhile, the Sooty Tern, Great-Crested Tern, and Brown Noddy are Vulnerable species.

Due to rough sea conditions, only the Bird islet was surveyed this year. The census was conducted on January 15, 2023, at around 9:00 am and ended at 9:32 am. TMO Marine Park Rangers, Segundo Conales, Jr., and Noel Bundal, led the count while another two recorded the count. However, this census was only a distance count and did not include each species' sub-adult, juvenile chicks, and eggs.

Table 1. The seabird species present in the Bird islet and estimated count per species.

Species	2023
Red-footed Booby <i>Sula sula</i>	120
Brown Booby <i>S. leucogaster</i>	3365
Black Noddy <i>Anous minutus worcesteri</i>	1500
Brown Noddy <i>A. stolidus</i>	320
Sooty Tern <i>Onychoprion fuscatus</i>	75
Masked Booby (<i>Sula dactylatra</i>)	3

The Bird islet was dominated by Brown Booby this year, followed by Black Noddy. Compared to the previous year's AWC, the number of Brown Booby (2022 - 3,033 ind) and Black Noddy (2022 - 1,045 ind) were slightly higher this year. The Black Noddy now breeds exclusively in the nesting structures constructed by marine park rangers in the islets.

Meanwhile, no Great-Crested Tern was recorded in January since they usually leave the islet from the 4th quarter of the year and generally return for the breeding season starting in March.

Only 320 individuals of Brown Noddy out of the more than 2000 documented breeding individuals were recorded this year. They are usually absent from November to February, hence, the low numbers.

The offspring of the only pair of Masked Booby was around 7 months old during the census. She was the first of the many offspring to reach this milestone.

The Tubbataha Management Office continues to monitor the population of these seabird species to determine the trend in their population and implement management interventions when necessary.

Prepared by:




SEGUNDO F. CONALES JR
Marine Park Ranger/Researcher



NOEL A. BUNDAL
Marine Park Ranger

Noted by:



ANGELIQUE M. SONGCO
Protected Area Superintendent

Annex 1. Asian Waterbird Census - Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park

Asian Waterbird Census (Southeast Asia)		WETLANDS INTERNATIONAL	
Please return to your National Co-ordinator or Wetland International, 3A39, Kelana Center Point, No. 3, Jalan SS7/19, Kelana Jaya 47301, MALAYSIA (before March)		Country:	PHILIPPINES
Name of Site Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park and World Heritage Site		Date:	13-Feb-23
Province/State/Prefecture: Palawan		Site Code (only for official use):	
Nearest Large Town: Puerto Princesa City			
Type: A - Aerial, F - On foot , B - By boat, M - Mixed Coverage: V-25%, W-25-50%, X-50-75%, Y-75-99% , Z-100%		Has the site been counted before? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Waterfowl Counts _____ Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i> _____ CORMORANTS & DARTERS _____ Great Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> _____ Indian Shag <i>P. fuscicollis</i> _____ Little Cormorant <i>P. niger</i> _____ Unidentified cormorants _____ Oriental Darter <i>Anhinga melanogaster</i> _____ HERONS & EGRETS _____ Great Bittern <i>Botaurus stellaris</i> _____ Yellow Bittern <i>Ixobrychus sinensis</i> _____ Schrenck's Bittern <i>I. eurhythmus</i> _____ Cinnamon Bittern <i>I. cinnamomeus</i> _____ Black Bittern <i>I. flavicollis</i> _____ Japanese Night Heron <i>Gorsachius gossagii</i> _____ Malayan Night Heron (Tiger Bittern) <i>G. melanolophus</i> _____ Black-crowned Night Heron <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i> _____ Rufous Night Heron <i>N. caledonicus</i> _____ Indian Pond Heron <i>Ardeola grayii</i> _____ Chinese Pond Heron <i>A. bacchus</i> _____ Javan Pond Heron <i>A. speciosa</i> _____ Cattle Egret <i>Bubulcus ibis</i> _____ Striated (Little Green) Heron <i>Butorides striatus</i> _____ Eastern Reef Egret <i>Egretta sacra</i> _____ Chinese (Swinhoe's) Egret <i>E. eulophotes</i> _____ Little Egret <i>E. garzetta</i> _____ Intermediate Egret <i>E. intermedia</i> _____ Great Egret <i>E. alba</i> _____ Purple Heron <i>Ardea purpurea</i> _____ Grey Heron <i>A. cinerea</i> _____ Great-billed Heron <i>A. sumatrana</i> _____ Unidentified herons and egrets _____ STORKS _____ Milky Stork <i>Mycteria cinerea</i> _____ Painted Stork <i>M. leucocephala</i> _____ Asian Openbill <i>Anastomus oscitans</i> _____ Black Stork <i>Ciconia nigra</i> _____ Woolly-necked Stork <i>C. episcopus</i> _____ Storm's Stork <i>C. stormi</i> _____ Black-necked Stork <i>Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus</i> _____ Lesser Adjutant <i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i> _____ Greater Adjutant <i>L. dubius</i> _____ Unidentified storks _____ IBISES & SPOONBILLS _____ Black-headed (White) Ibis <i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i> _____ White-shouldered Ibis <i>Pseudibis davisoni</i> _____ Giant Ibis <i>Thaumatibis gigantea</i> _____ Glossy Ibis <i>Plegadis falcinellus</i> _____ White Spoonbill <i>Platalea leucorodia</i> _____ Black-faced Spoonbill <i>P. minor</i> _____ Unidentified Spoonbills _____ Moorhen <i>Gallinula chloropus</i> _____ Purple Swampphen <i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i> _____ Common Coot <i>Fulica atra</i> _____ FINFOOT & JACANAS		GEESSE & DUCKS _____ Spotted Whistling Duck <i>Dendrocygna guttata</i> _____ Fulvous (Large) Whistling Duck <i>D. bicolor</i> _____ Wandering Whistling Duck <i>D. arcuata</i> _____ Lesser Whistling Duck (Lesser Tree Duck) <i>D. javanica</i> _____ Greylag Goose <i>Anser anser</i> _____ Bar-headed Goose <i>A. indicus</i> _____ Ruddy Shelduck <i>Tadorna ferruginea</i> _____ Common Shelduck <i>T. tadorna</i> _____ White-winged Wood Duck <i>Cairina scutulata</i> _____ Comb Duck <i>Sarkidiornis melanotos</i> _____ Indian Cotton Teal <i>Nettapus coromandelianus</i> _____ Eurasian Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i> _____ Falcated Teal <i>A. falcata</i> _____ Gadwall <i>A. strepera</i> _____ Common (Green-winged) Teal <i>A. crecca</i> _____ Grey Teal <i>A. gibberifrons</i> _____ Mallard <i>A. platyrhynchos</i> _____ Spot-billed Duck <i>A. poecilorhyncha</i> _____ Philippine Duck <i>A. luzonica</i> _____ Northern Pintail <i>A. acuta</i> _____ Garganey <i>A. querquedula</i> _____ Northern Shoveler <i>A. clypeata</i> _____ Red-crested Pochard <i>Netta rufina</i> _____ Common Pochard <i>Aythya ferina</i> _____ Baer's Pochard <i>A. baeri</i> _____ Ferruginous Duck <i>A. nyroca</i> _____ Tufted Duck <i>A. fuligula</i> _____ Goosander <i>M. merganser</i> _____ Unidentified ducks _____ CRANES _____ Common Crane <i>Grus grus</i> _____ Sarus Crane <i>G. antigone</i> _____ RAILS, GALLINULES & COOTS _____ Water Rail <i>Rallus aquaticus</i> _____ Slaty-breasted Rail <i>R. striatus</i> _____ Banded Rail <i>R. philippensis</i> _____ Barred Rail <i>R. torquatus</i> _____ Red-legged Crake <i>Rallina fasciata</i> _____ Slaty-legged Crake <i>R. eurizonoides</i> _____ Baillon's Crake <i>Porzana pusilla</i> _____ Ruddy Crake <i>P. fusca</i> _____ Band-bellied Crake <i>P. paykullii</i> _____ Spotless Crake <i>P. tabuensis</i> _____ White-browed Crake <i>P. cinereus (Poliolimnas cinereus)</i> _____ Brown Crake <i>Amaurornis akool</i> _____ Bush-Hen <i>A. olivacea</i> _____ White-breasted Waterhen <i>A. phoenicurus</i> _____ Watercock <i>Gallicrex cinerea</i> _____ Grey-tailed (Grey-rumped) Tattler <i>Heteroscelus brevipes</i> _____ Ruddy Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i> _____ Red-necked Phalarope <i>Phalaropus lobatus</i> _____ Eurasian Woodcock <i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	

Masked Fintail *Heliopais personata*
 Comb-crested Jacana *Irediparra gallinacea*
 Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus*
 Bronze-winged Jacana *Metopidius indicus*
SHOREBIRDS- WADERS
 Painted Snipe *Rostratula benghalensis*
 Crab Plover *Dromas ardeola*
 Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*
 Australian (White-headed) Stilt *H. leucocephalus*
 Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*
 Great Thick-knee *Esacus recurvirostris*
 Beach Thick-knee *E. magnirostris*
 Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum*
 Little Pratincole *G. lactea*
 Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*
 River Lapwing *V. duvaucelii*
 Grey-headed Lapwing *V. cinereus*
 Red-wattled Lapwing *V. indicus*
 Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*
 Grey Plover *P. squatarola*
 Long-billed Plover *Charadrius placidus*
 Little Ringed Plover *C. dubius*
 Kentish Plover *C. alexandrinus*
 Malaysian Plover *C. peronii*
 Mongolian Plover *C. mongolus*
 Greater Sand Plover *C. leschenaultii*
 Oriental Plover *C. veredus*
 Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*
 Bar-tailed Godwit *L. lapponica*
 Little Curlew *Numenius minutus*
 Whimbrel *N. phaeopus*
 Eurasian Curlew *N. arquata*
 Far Eastern Curlew *N. madagascariensis*
 Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*
 Redshank *T. totanus*
 Marsh Sandpiper *T. stagnatilis*
 Greenshank *T. nebularia*
 Nordmann's Greenshank *T. guttifer*
 Green Sandpiper *T. ochropus*
 Wood Sandpiper *T. glareola*
 Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*
 Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Pintail Snipe *Gallinago stenura*
 Swinhoe's Snipe *G. megala*
 Common Snipe *G. gallinago*
 Asiatic Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus*
 Red Knot *Calidris canutus*
 Great Knot *C. tenuirostris*
 Sanderling *C. alba*
 Red-necked (Rufous-necked) Stint *C. ruficollis*
 Temminck's Stint *C. temminckii*
 Long-toed Stint *C. subminuta*
 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *C. acuminata*
 Dunlin *C. alpina*
 Curlew Sandpiper *C. ferruginea*
 Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*
 Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus*
 Unidentified shorebirds
GULLS, TERNS & SKIMMERS
 Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*
 Brown-headed Gull *L. brunnicephalus*
 Black-headed Gull *L. ridibundus*
 Saunders' Gull *L. saundersi*
 Unidentified gulls
 Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*
 White-winged Black Tern *C. leucopterus*
 Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*
 Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*
 Indian River Tern *Sterna aurantia*
 Common Tern *S. hirundo*
 Black-naped Tern *S. sumatrana*
 Black-bellied Tern *S. melanogaster*
 Little Tern *S. albigrons*
 0 Great Crested Tern *S. bergii*
 Lesser Crested Tern *S. bengalensis*
 Unidentified terns
 Indian Skimmer *Rynchops albigollis*

ADDITIONAL SPECIES

120 Red-footed Booby *Sula sula*
 3365 Brown Booby *S. leucogaster*
 1500 Black Noddy *Anous minutus worcesteri*
 320 Brown Noddy *A. stolidus*
 75 Sooty Tern *Onychoprion fuscatus*
 3 Masked Booby (*Sula dactylatra*)

USEFUL SITE INFORMATION: (please circle the relevant figures)

CONDITION OF WETLAND: 1. Wet (water present), 2. Totally dry, 3. Totally frozen

PROTECTION: The whole park is protected under a no-take policy

THREATS AND USES: 0 Unknown, 1 None, 2 Sedimentation, 3 Excessive overgrowth of vegetation, 4 Cutting/clearance of vegetation, 5 Eutrophication, 6 Agriculture along drying margins, 7 Excessive cattle grazing, Pollution by: 8 domestic sewage, 9 solid waste, A industrial waste, B oil, C pesticides, D fertilizers, E Mining, F Hunting/trapping/poaching of birds, G Little fishing, H Large scale fishing, I Partial reclamation, J Complete reclamation, K Dam/barrage construction, L Tourism/recreation

TIME OF COUNT: Bird Islet START 9:00 am FINISH : 9:32 am 15-Jan-23

PARTICIPANT(S) NAME (S) AND ADDRESS(ES):

Segundo Conales Jr. and Noel Bundal, Tubbataha Management Office Puerto Princesa City

Amado Cayabo and Rogelio Quilojano, LGU Gagayancillo, Palawan

CG SN1 Gilbert Jhun Cayapas, CG SN1 Alfred Leonard Libungan and CGNO Jinnasir Alani, Philippine Coast Guard, Palawan

SN2 Jerico Ramos and SN2 Ronnel Paiton, Philippine Navy, Palawan