

Kingfisher Park

Report, January 30, 2011

(Pictures in: <http://picasaweb.google.com/lornamyluv/KingfisherParkVisitedByKatalaFoundationStaffJanuary13To162011#>)

Visit of Katala Foundation Inc. (KFI)

A team of four from Katala Foundation (www.philippinecockatoo.org) visited Kingfisher Park for three days. Manny Reyes was with them. We accomplished a lot and the following are some of the highlights:

1. The visiting team liked what they saw. The forest they visited that Manny has not seen was surprisingly dense forest cover. The trees were like candlestick, a good indication that the rainforest is untouched. There were some evidences of illegal logging in the past but recoverable. Given more time and had the team walked further, a dense and closed canopy virgin forest would have been witnessed. This place was the one next in line to be illegally logged if we did not do the Alay Lakad May 2007. And of course we are ever grateful to Niko and Borge for a concerted 'strong' and 'unbending' follow-up of insuring that the illegal loggers left Kingfisher Park.



2. KFI team took several survey spots in differing vegetation types e.g. mangrove and lowland forests. They measured tree diameter, tree height and identified potential trees. At least 14 mangrove species were initially identified during the kayak mangrove activity 'tour'.



3. KFI team saw a nest of a Pikoy (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue-naped_Parrot, the bird at the back of Philippines newly designed Twenty pesos bill). It was known through surveys and interviews that poaching of birds is still on-going in the park. We opted it is best to contact the poachers and eventually provide them with disincentives and incentives not to poach. We are currently doing that so by April I hope we will be able to guard at least 20 nests of Hill mynah and Pikoy (Blue-naped parrot). We will do a concerted effort of protecting more nests and will offer 'nest watching from afar' as an activity in KP in the near future.



4. Based on preliminary assessment, KP is a potential translocation site for the critically endangered Philippine cockatoo or locally known as Katala. KP's lowland forests provide a good habitat for the species; however, several issues yet have to be addressed in particular the security and safety from poaching of the birds. KP is one of the many sites being assessed by the KFI for such purpose. So it will take years of study if ever they will reintroduce the Katala at KP. One individual of Katala has an on-going price of \$2000 each and is very tempting to poach. However, the doors are not closed. KP will educate the community and seek the collaboration of the community. When KP is



convinced that most in the community are prepared and all other issues and concerns are ironed out then the Katala Foundation can be more confident to reintroduce the Katala at KP.

5. We (KP and KFI) agree to adopt the Blue-headed racquet-tail or Kilit-kilit as locals call it



(picture on left taken at KP, by Ms. April Son), (<http://www.avianweb.com/blueheadedracquettailparrots.html>) as KP's flagship species. KP has a lot of Kilit. It is classified vulnerable (VU) species according to the IUCN and only present in Palawan not like the Katala which is endemic to the Philippines. There are very little studies about the Kilit. KFI has initial studies on the species and is willing to teach KP on nest protection. We are hoping the Kilit won't be poached. I am acting on this recommendation. I hope I can go to the Parrot International Symposium at Miami, Florida in June 3 to 5, 2011, so I can get contacts of potential funding agencies.

6. Katala Foundation advised to continue our tree seedlings nursery project but they encouraged and taught us how to capitalize on the endemic trees growing after a slash and burn (kaingin) practice. Also KP was shared the knowledge on how to harvest the narra seedlings growing under Narra trees. They taught us how to do both, specifically giving instructions to KP staff how to implement them. KP will implement these recommendations and started in a hill facing Malbato Bioluminescence Bay. The bicycle trail in that hill will be planted with two rows of indigenous trees in both sides of the trail and the forest will be managed and regularly monitored.



7. With permission from school authorities, KFI team visited the students from Grades 4 to 5 children of the Malbato Elementary School. Interactive lecture was about the status of the Philippine cockatoo and the concept of "Everything is interrelated". The students were very responsive as well as the teachers.