

FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHTER FOR PHILIPPINE COCKATOO

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Endangered Philippine cockatoo now numbering about 180 after conservation efforts start working

By Alex Villanueva Jr. PUERTO PRINCESA CITY, June 19, 2008



There is bright hope of increasing the number on the endangered Philippine cockatoo, an intelligent and comical bird specie that likes to show off its talking and dancing ability.

From near extinction ten years ago, the population of the Philippine cockatoo, found in the wilderness of the municipality of Narra some 90 kilometers south of this city, has increased to 180, thanks to the Philippine Cockatoo Conservation Program (PCCP) and Katala Foundation.

Cockatoos are also known for being demanding and affectionate to their caretakers, especially if the latter devote more time and attention to the bird.

Once put inside a cage, cockatoos can easily be taught how to talk and once they learn the language, they can converse like humans.

When the number of cockatoos declined to near extinction, the PCCP launched a program to boost their numbers through conservation of this precious bird specie locally known as “Abucay.”

Its favourite diet is “malunggay”, a Filipino vegetable food rich in vitamins .

Indira Dayang Lacerna-Widmann, PCCP program manager, said the birds frequent the mainland coast adjacent to Rasa Island to forage.

She attributed to the increase of cockatoos in Narra to the cooperative effort of town officials led by Mayor Clarito Demaala and the local residents.

Widmann said that Katala Foundation is pushing for increased awareness and knowledge on biological conservation and protection of environment.

She said the foundation has initiated several activities and programs to heighten the importance of biodiversity conservation.

One of the most effective learning approaches that capture a wider audience is the celebration of nature festivals that promote environmental learning through fun activities.

The Katala Foundation is spearheading to increase further the number of cockatoos in Palawan in the years to come.

(PNA)