

LOCKDOWN TALES OF SIX DISTRESSED EAGLES

In a span of six months since April, 2020, we have rescued six Philippine eagles. And of the six, three were successfully rehabilitated and released back to the wild, one died, and the rest are still undergoing rehabilitation. With a rescue rate of one eagle per month, this is by far the highest rescue rate ever recorded in the history of eagle conservation. p.2



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PHILIPPINE EAGLE SIOCON

On April 16, 2020 Faz Weble of DENR Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte phoned the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) about a captured eagle. A farmer had allegedly found the weak bird hiding in the bushes at the forest edge. He cradled the animal, hopped on a tricycle, and surrendered the feeble bird to DENR. But it was the peak of lockdowns and Siocon is a long, 20-hour drive from Davao City. We could not get to the bird. Yet treatment and rehabilitation must be made on-site.

The DENR team quickly built a spacious holding cage inside their office yard. And as advised, they covered the area around the enclosure to keep away curious onlookers. Isolation is crucial to keep this bird from mal-imprinting on humans.

We cooperated remotely with the DENR team in Zamboanga to restore Siocon's health via video conferencing, phone calls, and text messages. With DENR's Matt Sailela. Siocon's caretaker at that time, and the Department of Agriculture's veterinarians following our rehab protocols to the letter, the eagle was soon nursed back to health and green lighted for release.

With the help of many officials, we were able to obtain travel passes from five provinces and two cities as lockdowns eased up. We drove 20 hrs through 15 quarantine checkpoints to attach a backpack radio transmitter and a solar-powered GPS/GSM tracker on the bird. These trackers allow monitoring of the eagle's movement for the next 3-4 years.







On the morning of May 21, a day before the world celebrated "International Biodiversity Day", Siocon flew to his freedom. Siocon has now settled inside the protected forests of Baliguian town, some 3 km away from his release site.

PHILIPPINE EAGLE PALIMBANG

The call came all the way from Quirino Province in Luzon. On April 17, Star Passion, Quitino Provincial Environment Officer reported a captive eagle in Palimbang, Sultan Kudarat — a coastal town 103 km west of General Santos City. We got the bird's whereabouts, and remotely organized a rescue with DENR and Palimbang town officials. Amia Rose Damka, Palimbang Environment Officer and her team saved the bird from a mob of curious residents who poked and taunted the poor animal while it was tied by the leg at the center of the village plaza.

The bird was a juvenile eagle — a little over a year old who still depended on its parents for food. A local saw the bird on the forest floor a few days back. This is our first record of the Philippine eagle within this part of Sultan Kudarat.

Palimbang is just a 7-hr drive from Davao, but transboundary movement was very difficult because of the pandemic. On-site rehabilitation was the only option. Palimbang Mayor Joenime Kapina took custody of the eagle at his residence, and the local DENR engaged Kalamansig town veterinarian Cris Deo Donguinis to help with the bird's recovery. DENR staff and Donguinis drove two hours to Palimbang twice - on April 19 to administer first aid, and April 27 to monitor her progress.





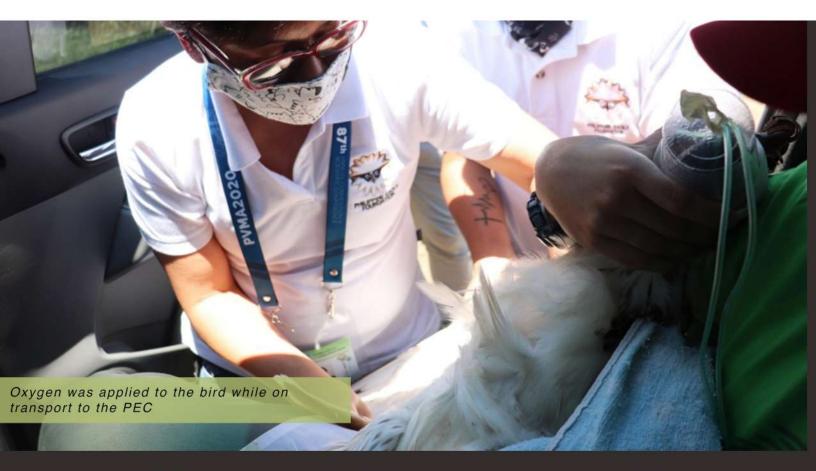
But the bird soon lost a lot of weight and was not eating well. During the second visit, the vet had to mix dextrose solution with its food and "hand-feed" the bird. On site rehabilitation did not work well for eagle Palimbang, as Mayor Kapina's team was mostly out of reach during the rehabilitation period.

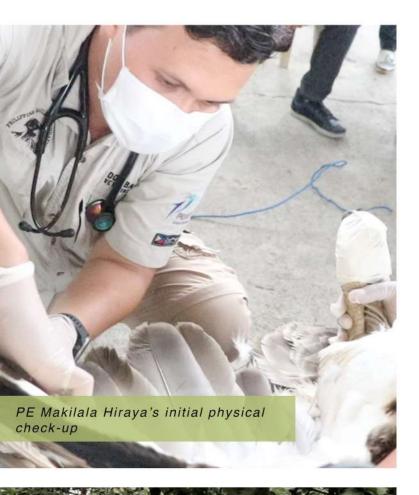
On May 7, the DENR staff took custody of the weakened eagle and transported it to Davao City for emergency medical attention at the PEC. At the quarantine checkpoint along the Davao City and Sta-Cruz boundary, DENR Davao and PEF received the bird. PEF Vet Lascano quickly hydrated the eagle with fluids and electrolytes to energize it for the next journey.

At the PEC, all hands were on deck to stabilize the bird. The usual x-ray, and blood workup

were skipped because the bird was so fragile; a pierce of a needle through its brittle veins might bleed it to death. The bird weighed only 1.8 kgs - severely underweight by eagle standards. It was very weak and sunken, and its almond-shaped eyes reflect severe dehydration. Its body condition score (BCS) was rated at 1 (very poor), which also says that he was very thin and malnourished. The bird was just skin and bones.

PEC staff gave emergency food via tube-feeding with ground rabbit liver mixed with food supplements and antibiotics. The eagle took it all in and did not vomit — a promising development. The bird was then isolated at our quarantine facility to rest and recuperate. Yet the bird did not make it. Eagle Palimbang died near midnight of May 9.







PHILIPPINE EAGLE MAKILALA HIRAYA

We received a link to a FB post showing a captive Philippine eagle via messenger. And there in the post was a captive eagle in Barangay Kisante of Makilala, North Cotabato. The large raptor had allegedly been pinned to the ground by a mob of aggressive crows and was rescued by three concerned citizens who then surrendered the bird to Kisante Officials. Together with DENR R-12, we retrieved the female eagle.

After getting cleared of diseases, and over a month of rehabilitation, the bird was released back to its forest home in Mt Apo. The bird was named Makilala-Hiraya, with the second name given by release benefactor the Energy Development Corporation. "Hiraya" is an old Tagalog saying which translates to "may your heart's wishes come true".

As the world celebrated the International Day for Nature Conservation on July 28, she was set free with a GPS/GSM tracker on her back. Her release was streamed live on the PEF's Facebook page. It was the first ever live broadcast of an eagle release via the internet. As of October 3, 2020, Makilala Hiraya was within the ancestral domain of the Indigenous Obu Manobo in Magpet town, 13 km north of her release site.

Following the release, an educational campaign was conducted from July 30- August 8, attended by locals. The goal of the campaign is to spread awareness about the presence of Makilala-Hiraya in the area and why it is important to protect her. The campaign was done in coordination with the Brgy. Batasan Officials and purok leaders and adhered to COVID19 protocols on social gatherings, limiting the number of participants to around 45 people per location.





PHILIPPINE EAGLE MAL'LAMBUGOK

In partnership with DENR R-11, we rescued eagle Mal'lambugok from the mountains of Caraga, Davao Oriental last July 29. An Indigenous Mandaya farmer at the remote village of Tagbanahao trapped the bird after it allegedly killed and ate a piglet.

After over a month of rehabilitation, the eagle passed its agility and medical tests and was cleared for release. Twenty-eight Indigenous Mandaya forest guards were trained by the DENR and PEF as Wildlife Enforcement Officers (WEO). These new WEO's shall monitor Mal'lambugok and ensure her wellbeing. The DENR and the Davao Oriental and Caraga local government units also funded education campaigns, and the field gears, food rations, and honorariums for the local WEOs.

Mal'lambugok was released on September 26, in celebration of the World Environmental Health Day. She was cheered on by guests and locals while her Indigenous caretakers prayed to the spirits of the forests to keep her healthy and safe from harm.

PHILIPPINE EAGLE BALIKATAN

On August 28, a concerned citizen sent a photo of a Philippine eagle that was kept in Bacuag, Surigao del Norte. The bird was under the care of Ryan Orquina, an outdoor enthusiast. Orquina bought the bird from an Indigenous Mamanwa trapper for Php 8,000.00, which he believes is a small price to pay considering that it meant saving one individual of our national bird.

We retrieved eagle "Balikatan" with DENR R-13. On examination, it weighed 3.8 kgs, immature (at least 3 years old) and is male. Interestingly, the bird was docile and was restrained easily. It was also very calm during handling. X-ray showed neither injuries nor abnormalities and disease test results came back negative. The bird seemed healthy, except it was half blind.

Ophthalmic test showed that the bird's left eye cannot see. Sadly, the other eye is also showing early signs of a possible cataract. Our rehabilitation team at the PEC is working remotely with two US veterinary consultants to save the bird's right eye. With its current condition, Balikatan could no longer be released back to the wild.





PHILIPPINE EAGLE CARAGA

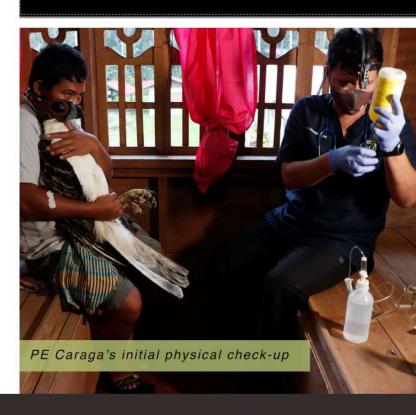
On September 25, we got a phone call that another eagle was trapped at the same place where eagle Mal'lambugok was rescued. Allegedly, this new bird also killed a piglet and its captor retaliated by trapping the bird.

With the help of our newly trained Indigenous WEOs, the new eagle was safely transported to the main village. Arriving the next day, we examined the new eagle and saw that the bird is in bad shape. It weighed only 3.6 kgs, was dehydrated, and seemed to have not eaten for days. Also, it did not resist handling and was unafraid of people. The bird seemed to have been caged for some time.

In Davao City, x-ray revealed more of the eagle's miseries. It had two air gun pellets embedded inside its body: one at the left chest, and another at its right thigh. We also suspect that the bird has been caged for quite a while. Aside from the pellets in its body, the bird also had a fractured right leg, which explained its awkward posture. This makes it unfit for release back in the forest as an eagle with leg injury could not hunt and survive in the wild. As of this writing, the DENR is gathering evidence for a possible filing of a criminal case against the bird's captor.

While these cases suggest that there is an increased motivation to report these incidents from the public, it also underscores an ongoing negative interaction between eagles and humans. Yet many of these perpetrators get away with it.





Without the strong arm of the law, we suspect this phenomena will persist. And this continued persecution of young eagles will, over time, result in a vacuum where there will be no fit individuals left to replace old breeding populations. If this happens, a population crash is inevitable.

Will we let this happen to our national bird?

PROTECTING FORESTS

DAKEOL FOREST: A TREASURE TROVE OF BIODIVERSITY





The forest of Dakeol in Maitum, Sarangani Province is an area around 3.518 hectares of Lowland Evergreen (Dipterocarp) Forest located at the western end of the Mt Busa complex. The property showcases a diverse terrestrial habitat. The Dakeol forest provides a sanctuary to a host of globally threatened and endemic wildlife with narrower distribution range and most likely use Dakeol forest as breeding, foraging, and nesting sites. At least 111 vertebrate species were documented within the vicinity of Dakeol which comprised of 11 amphibian species, 13 lizard species, 10 snake species, 7 mammalian species and 70 bird species. Of these number, 71 species are endemic (64%) in the Philippines with 21 species treated as threatened: Critically Endangered (3), Endangered (5), Vulnerable (3), Other Threatened Species (10). Some of the noteworthy species of conservation and scientific importance includes the Philippine Eagle. Pinsker's hawk-eagle, Amethyst brown dove, Giant scops owl, Rufous hornbill, Writhed hornbill Mindanao hornbill, Philippine brown deer, Philippine warty pig, Philippine tarsier and Mindanao caecilian.

Threats in and around the property include illegal collection of wildlife (poaching of forest plants, hunting and shooting) and the practice of kaingin. Management authorities have implemented a monitoring and research program to anticipate its effects on the biota and try to mitigate consequent impacts. Currently, the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Maitum alongside with DENR R12 and the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) are working hand in hand to declare this fragile ecosystem a Critical Habitat for Wildlife as a step towards establishing a long-term legal framework for protection.

INDIGENOUS FOREST GUARDS AND THEIR NEW DIGITAL PATROL APPS

The pandemic has made it harder for people to move around and work, but our dedicated forest guards were not deterred from continuously monitoring and protecting our Philippine Eagles and the forests against wildlife poachers. To optimize their foot patrols, the PEF and Whitley Fund for Nature developed and piloted two digital apps with four of PEF's partner Indigenous communities.

Based on the open-source Cybertracker software (www.cybertracker.org), the customized mobile phone-based apps help our forest guards monitor, assess, and document biodiversity, natural resources, and threats within their ancestral domains. The apps are also tools for recording their community services during their monthly duties. Added features include use of local or Indigenous wildlife names for easy reference for the forest guards and quick report generation.

For our Bantay Bukid Forest Guards in Mt Apo, Davao City, the app is called Bantay Bukid Biodiversity And Natural Resources Observation and Response Group or "BANOG Monitoring System." "Banog" is also the Indigenous groups' local name for Philippine Eagle. Over 125 Bagobo Tagabawa, Bagobo Klata, and Obu Manuvu forest guards were trained on the BANOG app which they have used in their monthly patrols. To date, they are protecting three Philippine eagle pairs whose territories overlap with four watersheds in Davao City, namely (i) Sibulan, (ii) Talomo-Lipadas, (iii) Panigan-Tamugan, and (iv) Davao.

At Manolo Fortich in Bukidnon, our 25 Bantay Kalasan Forest Guards underwent training in July, and has since used the Kalumbata app during their monthly patrols. Kalumbata stands for Keystones and Land Use Monitoring for Biodiversity and Threats. "Kalumbata" is also the Indigenous Higaonon or Bukidnon term for Philippine Eagle. Based on recent reports generated by the Kalumbata app, our Bantay Kalasan have documented their resident eagle pair displaying courtship behaviors. Hopefully, the eagle pair will nest again this season.

ALI DAVAO CARBON FOREST **GOES DIGITAL**

Work at the ALI Davao Carbon Forest continues amid quarantine. We re-greened six hectares of grasslands through the help of various individuals, students, companies, and generous benefactors via "virtual planting" webinars and Facebook Live broadcasts.

The online activities are a way to encourage the public to become "Carbon Warriors" and be involved in the "Nurture a Carbon Forest" initiative despite the pandemic. By donating Php 500.00, an individual can adopt one wildling (native tree seedling) and cover costs on land preparation, planting, and six months maintenance.

"Carbon Warriors" can also participate in a planting webinar with the PEF and get quarterly updates and a photo of their sponsored wildling.

Since June, we mounted three successful tree-nurturing online events with our conservation partners- Stella Maris Academy of Davao Batch 1995, Ayala Land Inc., BS Environmental Science Students of Ateneo de Davao University, and EcoTeneo.

To date, we have engaged at least 3,850 online viewers, and generated funds for the planting and nurturing of 886 wildlings.

ARAKAN WOMEN GOES DIGITAL

Sixty women and girls of Barangays Salasang, Tumanding, and Ganatan participate in the digital inclusion project with PLDT, Inc. The project aims to help women in remote areas cope with the new normal through online learning and digital media use. Project beneficiaries are members of communities that are closest to and actively protect Philippine eagle nesting sites in Mt. Sinaka and Mt. Mahuson.

Topics for the online sessions include facilitation of modular education for kids, online selling of local crafts, and face mask sewing among others. PLDT, Inc will donate four desktop computers with accessories to each of the three partner communities. The PEF together with PLDT, local government officials, and community leaders launched the project online last September 18, 2020 via PEF's Facebook Live.

NEW COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION LEADS IN SINAKA EAGLE PAIR CONSERVATION

Three sitios (villages) located at the foothills of Mt. Sinaka help conserve a pair of nesting Philippines eagles in Mt Sinaka, Arakan. With support from the Direct Aid Program of the Australian Embassy in the Philippines and the local government of Arakan, members from these villages organized and formed the Kaguko, Paraiso, and Pag-asa Environment Association (KPP-ECA) — a community-based organization dedicated to improving the lives of their members while helping save the Philippine eagle and its rainforest habitat in Mt Sinaka.

Since KPP ECA was organized, a Communtiy Conservation Plan (CCP) has been published and implemented. A series of training webinars on personal finances, gender and development, leadership, and youth volunteerism were facilitated. Women members also established a tree nursery that housed 24,000 seedlings of native trees.



Last September 26, they planted 2,500 wildlings in a one-hectare restoration area at Mt Sinaka. Fifteen members were also trained as forest guards who now perform monthly eagle and forest patrols.

CONVERSATION ON CONSERVATION WITH ATOM ARAULLO

Following the unusual number of Philippine eagle rescues in just a span of a few months, a conversation had to be had on the challenges of rescuing, rehabilitating, and subsequently releasing an eagle. With the goal of informing the public through a discussion, the PEF launched the first episode of Conversations on Conservation, a special live feature on our Instagram. We were fortunate to have journalist, TV personality, and Philippine eagle advocate Atom Araullo to join the discussion with PEF Director for Research and Conservation Dr. Jayson Ibañez and PEF Veterinarian Dr. Ana Lascano. The conversation revolved on the work and resources it takes to rescue eagles and in giving them a chance to survive in their forest habitat.

The episode is available on our official Instagram account @phileaglefdn.



CROWDFUNDING RELEASES A PHILIPPINE EAGLE BACK TO ITS FOREST HOME

Part of the PEF's protocols in releasing a Philippine eagle back to the wild is attaching a GPS transmitter on its back to be able to track and monitor it in the forest to keep it safe. Apart from this, our partner forest guards must also patrol the forest for months to protect the eagle after its release.

The PEF mounted a weeklong series of online screenings of "Bird of Prey: To Save Our Eagle" to crowdfund for the costs of Mal'lambugok's release. We raised Php 64,736.69 from about 100 online viewers and Php 300,000.00 from online donation and corporate sponsorships from our conservation partners Uy Masuy Wine Factory Inc., and Ulticon Buiders, Inc. (UBI), for a total of 364,736.69.

UBI gave a statement saying "Wildlife conservation is more challenging during these difficult times and Mal'lambugok's release being the [third] one during the pandemic shows what can be achieved with the concerted efforts of both private and public sectors. We, in UBI, hope that more Filipinos especially other corporations will pay more attention to wildlife conservation and be interested in helping organizations such as the PEF as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR)."

Philippine eagle "Mal'lambugok", which is "eagle" in Mandaya, is the third eagle to be rescued, rehabilitated, and released since April 2020. Mal'lambugok, suspected to be female, was rescued in Caraga, Davao Oriental last July 31, 2020.

She spent over a month at the Philippine Eagle Center (PEC) where she was checked and tested for avian diseases like the Avian Flu and New Castle Disease. After careful observation, she was deemed fit to be released back to the wild. On September 26, 2020, World Environmental Health Day, Mal'lambugok was released back to her forest home in Caraga, Davao Oriental. Thanks to all our donors, she flew back to the wild with a GPS transmitter on her back and our partner forest guards to watch her and keep her safe.

The event was also made possibly by our partners: Uy Masuy Wine Factory Inc., Ulticon Builders Inc., the local governments of Davao Oriental and Caraga, Whitley Fund for Nature, and DENR XI.

We have also sucessfully raised Php 488,306.72 for the month of September which will go to fund our rescue, rehabilitation, release operations, and provide the day-to-day needs of the animals at the PEC.

SECURING OUR FUTURE | JULY-SEPTEMBER 2020



Tours

Cart



PEC ONLINE BOOKING SYSTEM **POWERED BY 1DAY.IO**

In time for the reopening of the Philippine Eagle Center (PEC), the PEF in partnership with 1Day.io launched the new online booking system last September 30. After over six months, the PEC finally had the go signal from the City Tourism Office to reopen on October 5

Part of the health protocols put in place at the PEC is the online booking system which allows the facility to have contactless transaction with visitors while on limited capacity. Booking online also offers convenience to guests by guaranteeing their guided tour slots. Through the initiative of 1Day.io, quests can now book their preferred tour schedule in advance and pay using their credit card, Paypal account, or via mobile bank transfer.

The PEF is fortunate to partner with property management system developer 1Day.io in making online bookings for the PEC possible.

Its Co-founder Ian Reyes reached out to PEF amid quarantine to help through the "Eagle Tech" initiative - part of which is the online booking system.

lan on the plight of the eagles in the time of a pandemic says "The challenges are immense and seemingly insurmountable. But we need to just take the first step. And that's what we at 1Day.io hope to do. We don't know if we can make a difference, but we know one small contribution we can take today [is] by participating in the programs of the Philippine Eagle Foundation."

We also launched four new tour packages that offer a more enhanced experience of the PEC featuring the Raptors in Flight, Monkey Keeper Talk, and screening of "To Save our Eagle". To book a slot, visit https://book.philippineeaglefoundation.org/

NATURE TALKS SERIES

With the PEC indefinitely closed due to COVID-19, we turned to various digital platforms to continue our Conservation Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) campaigns for the Philippine eagle. Despite the quarantine restrictions that limit our in-person activities, we persevere in our efforts in raising support for and spreading awareness about the protection of our national bird and the environment.

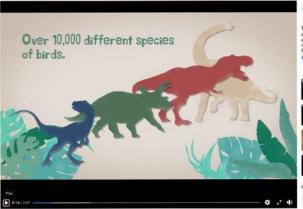
We need to underscore the importance of keeping our forests and biodiversity healthy to avoid future viral outbreaks as we continue the work in improving wildlife conservation literacy. To this end, we created "Nature Talks" — an online series of informative animated videos dedicated to highlighting the significance of protecting wildlife and its habitat in connection with human health.

"Nature Talks" is also a means to fundraise for our Conservation Education program. Individuals, organizations, and companies can sponsor the series and contribute to our CEPA initiatives both in the upland and urban settings and even online. Now more than ever, we need to invest in initiatives that help spread awareness and share knowledge that influence a positive attitude towards wildlife and environment conservation.

Nature Talks episodes are available on our official Facebook page and You Tube channel.













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PHILIPPINE EAGLE ADOPTERS







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HIYAS



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PHILIPPINE EAGLE ADOPTERS



DAGITAB





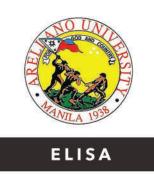








FIGHTER



ANONYMOUS

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MR. & MRS. KIM AND FELICIA ATIENZA

ZEUS

MR. UY CHING SIONG CANG

PAGBABAGO

PHILIPPINE EAGLE ADOPTERS

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