



Contact: Indira Dayang Lacerna-Widmann  
Chief Operations Officer  
Katala Foundation  
Telephone No: 048-4347693  
Email: [ldlacerna@yahoo.com](mailto:ldlacerna@yahoo.com)

## **PRESS RELEASE For Immediate Release**

### **Cockatoos released in Dumaran Island to help solve low recruitment**

Five Philippine Cockatoos were released by the Katala Foundation Incorporated (KFI) in Dumaran Island Critical Habitat, Palawan on November 29, 2019 as part of their effort to alleviate the recurring problem of low recruitment in the wild population of Katala on the island.

Representatives of the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Dumaran and staff of the DENR Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) of Roxas, Palawan witnessed the release of five out of nine Katala brought to Sitio Omoi nursery from the Katala Institute of Ecology and Biodiversity Conservation (KIEBC). The release is done by batches to better monitor their dispersal. These birds were rescued hatchlings from Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary (RIWS) from the 2019 breeding season which was hit hard by the El Nino. After three months of rehabilitation in the institute, they were transported to Dumaran Island and were placed in a pre-release aviary in Omoi nursery set to acclimatise and introduce the birds to the habitat of Dumaran and its natural fruits.

“We ensure that the bird is in good condition before the release; we checked their weights, their leg bands, and their wing marks prior to release”, Michael Plazos, KFI-Dumaran Field officer, stated in the orientation of visitors prior to the release. He alongside Lemuel Pabico, KFI’s Research Specialist, held a short orientation the day of the release to explain the importance of supplementation of the natural population of Philippine Cockatoos in the island. “Witnessing the soft release of the Philippine Cockatoo is an amazing experience for us. We realized how much effort the people behind the Katala are doing just to protect and conserve this critically endangered Philippine Cockatoo in the wild. We learned a lot from the activity; about their diet, their flight behavior, distribution and status,” says Rinades L. Jusos, Forest Technician of DENR-CENRO Roxas who was among the team and also joined the patrols of the PCCP wardens within the declared Dumaran Island Critical Habitat.

This is the fourth supplementation done on Dumaran Island. of Katala in the island by KFI. Previous released birds are still observed in the Critical Habitat. “It is hoped that these reintroductions will serve as an initial step in solving the low recruitment of Katala on the island and hopefully can improve the genetic diversity of this population and improve breeding success in the future”, Peter Widmann, Species Conservation Director of KFI explains.

“I believe that the release today is successful, three birds stayed around the area but did not fly close to humans, nor did they go towards the ground, while two flew away together. They will be followed by our wildlife wardens and hopefully can be sighted along with the remnant wild populations in the area”, Plazos added when asked for his opinion of the release. The remaining four Katala are set for release this December.

For more information, please contact Indira Widmann, Katala Foundation, P.O. Box 390, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan or at [idlacerna@yahoo.com](mailto:idlacerna@yahoo.com) and visit our homepage at [www.philippinecockatoo.org](http://www.philippinecockatoo.org).

### ENDS ###

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Editor's Note:

- PSDS Res. 14-513 declared 1,628 hectares was approved on October 28, 2014. The same resolution was adopted by the Municipal Council of Dumarán through SB Resolution NO. 74 on December 13, 2016. The said Critical Habitat aims to connect through a corridor the two cockatoo reserves and remaining forest patches earlier declared by the municipality.
- Katala Foundation, Inc. (KFI) uses the endemic Philippine Cockatoo as its flagship species to achieve its vision of conserving biodiversity with the active community involvement.
- Dumarán is one of the project sites of the Philippine Cockatoo Conservation Program implemented by the Katala Foundation Inc.
- Pictures attached: CREDIT TO KATALA FOUNDATION INC.



The cockatoos perched in the pre-release aviary with branches of native trees as perch. @Photo by KFI



PHOTOS:



DENR and LGU team members listen intently to Michael Plazos' short orientation prior to the release of Katala. @Photo by DENR-CENRO Roxas.



The five released birds perched together in the wild. @Photo by KFI





A released bird with its wing markings surveyed its surroundings in Dumarán Island Critical Habitat, Palawan. @Photo by KFI



Two of the five released birds stayed at a feeding platform to enjoy some Pagatpat fruits. The other three flew into the forest of Dumarán. Note the leg bands of the released cockatoos. @Photo by KFI



Katala staff with team from CENRO-Roxas and LGU-Dumarán @Photo by KFI