

# OPLAN MALUNGGAY PARA KAY ABUKAY

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Kudos to the Narranians who celebrated the hearts day in an extraordinary way! On Valentines day, tens of Narranians have shown again their heart and care for nature through planting Malunggay trees along Panacan River Bank in Narra.. As early as the day broke, more than 250 cuttings of Malunggay were planted along the river bank by almost 150 environmental enthusiasts representing local officials, government and non-government organizations in Narra. The planting was accompanied by Panacan river clean-up.

This meaningful event tagged as “Oplan Sagip Kalikasan” was conceptualized by the members of the Protected Area Management Board for Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary, aiming not only to provide foods for the cockatoos and other birds but to prove that there is still hope for the people who are in unison in protecting and conserving the remaining resources. The youth was challenged by the mayor himself of Narra, Atty. Clarito Demaala, Jr. in his speech that day “that the elder people are trying to save the endangered animals for your benefits so you must act and accept the challenge by being responsible stewards of the environment”. This was seconded by Dr. Sabine Schoppe of Katala Foundation saying that “the activity would benefit all: the birds, the river, the people and once more, the harmonious relationship of human and animals was achieved by sharing a place to live”.

The Municipality of Narra, Palawan is known as the Philippine Cockatoo Capital of the World. After 10 years of project implementation of the Philippine Cockatoo Conservation Program in the area by the Katala Foundation, the population of this critically endangered species has increased nine fold reaching approximately 180 individuals recently. The Katala or Abukay as it is locally known feeds on the seeds of Malunggay as one of its staple diet. Planting the tree does not only provide food for the cockatoos but also for humans who consume the parts of the plant as well. The birds frequent the mainland coasts adjacent to Rasa Island to forage. The activity was joined by students from Palawan State University – NCCRD under the NSTP classes, the Department heads of the Municipal Government of Narra headed by the Honorable Mayor Atty. Clarito D. Demaala, Jr., the employees of CENRO Narra headed by the Deputy Protected Area Superintendent for Rasa Island Wildlife Sanctuary, the Commando Brotherhood – Narra Chapter, the Philippine Guardians, Inc. – Narra Chapter, the Local Government of Barangay Panacan II, and Wildlife wardens & staff of Katala Foundation, Inc.

Cooperative effort like this ensures the future and successful conservation of this endemic species and other wildlife sharing its habitat on Rasa Island.

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Editor's Note:

- Rasa Island in Narra, Palawan is the pilot project site of the Philippine Cockatoo Conservation Program (PCCP) implemented by the Katala Foundation since 1998.
- Janice Tupas is the Administrative Officer of the PCCP project implemented by the Katala Foundation. She is in charge of conservation education campaigns in project sites.