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PRESS RELEASE For Immediate Release

“Gold” successfully breeds after four years

Dumaran, Palawan. A cockatoo hatchling, which was rescued in 2016 from starvation brought by the lack of food due to extreme dry months, bred after successfully released back to its original site in Dumaran Island Critical Habitat. “Gold” is named after the color of his leg band which bears the number DENR 055-16 is a female Philippine Cockatoo, which weighed only 60g when rescued back in May 2016.

“This is one success story we are proud of. To rescue hatchlings is a decision tough to make and the great challenge is releasing them back to the wild and monitoring whether they are accepted by the wild flock. So far we have been lucky in Dumaran with our re-introduction since the integration of the released birds are well accepted by the wild individuals. We have done supplementation of the natural population in Dumaran since 2014 to help the aging population of existing cockatoos on the island. Rescued Katalas either from starvation or persecution or poaching, after rehabilitation at the Katala Institute in Narra and if found fit for release, are done in Dumaran. Birds undergo the soft release program where they are acclimatized to natural environment, fed with natural foods and learn basic training to avoidance to predators and careful monitoring. Gold came back to Dumaran in August 2016 and was released to the wild in January 2017. The supplementation is also a way of improving the genetic diversity of the species”, said Peter Widmann, Species Conservation Programs Director of the Katala Foundation Inc.

Gold was among the five hatchlings from Dumaran which were rescued in 2016 due to starvation. They were brought to the Katala Institute in Narra, Palawan for proper care and rehabilitation with permits from PCSDS. In August 2016, they were brought back to Dumaran. This supplementation initiative is part of the joint Philippine Cockatoo conservation efforts with the PCSDS and DENR.

“To see them free flying after having seen them starving back in 2016 and now successfully breeding, the feeling is just incredible and overwhelming. Our collective decision to rescue was then worth all the hassles. It is just so great relief”, says Michael Plazos, who serves as Field Officer for Dumaran under the PCCP. Maximo Pineda who takes charge of checking the nest of Gold feels very fulfilled knowing that Gold was able to integrate with the wild population and

finally bred with a healthy hatchling this year. It is so exciting for all of us wardens here on site. He adds that all our efforts to track them and monitor them in each occupied nest tree paid off.

The other important factor that brings success to this story is the awareness and vigilance of Dumareños in participating to monitor the released birds. Once they see birds so close to people they report immediately to their officials and then to our field team. Gold has also been initially sighted in close proximity to people, but finally now is able to make his own family in Dumarán in the wild.

At Dumarán, the local government through Mayor Caabay's leadership is very supportive of the PCCP and has approved this year another round of generous appropriation for wildlife wardens to continue their conservation work. We are also grateful to the long-term commitment of our funders especially in this COVID crisis – LPF (Spain), ZGAP (Germany), Chester Zoo (UK), Fondation Segré (Switzerland), Beauval Nature (France), Wildlife Reserves Singapore, individual donors and other organizations.

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

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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. This is the first Critical Habitat issued by the PCSD.
- 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. and supplementation of Katala natural population is implemented in Dumarán as part of its joint conservation efforts with the PCSDS and DENR.
- Pictures attached: CREDIT TO KATALA FOUNDATION INC.



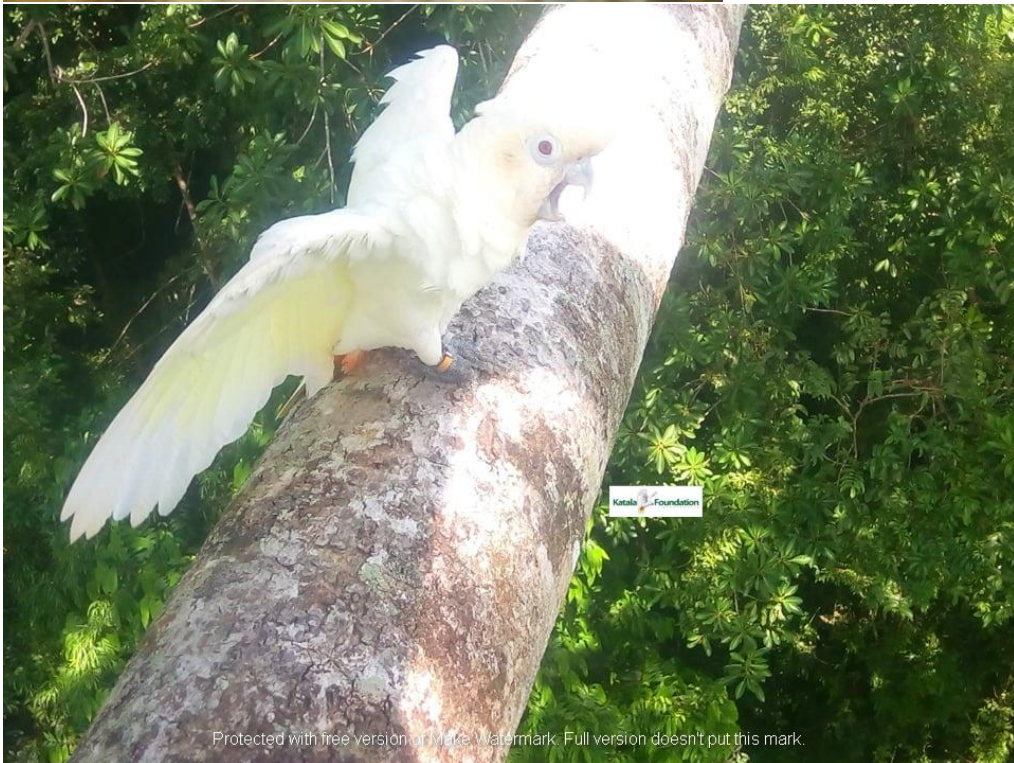
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