

# MINDORO

## *Biodiversity*

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF MINDORO BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION FOUNDATION INC.



April to June 2022

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# Program Highlights



## RESEARCH

- Participation in the Annual Tamaraw Count in MIBNP and Consolidation Workshop
- Conducted orientation on monitoring and patrolling for IAMBAG
- Continued the assessment of Philippine Teak and tagged approximately 800 trees in Barangay Natandol, Pawican, Catayungan, Buri, Labangan
- Coordination with both NCIP Oriental and Occidental Mindoro for the upcoming FPIC activities in Mt. Gimparay and MIBNP
- Visited known roost sites of flying foxes in Puerto Galera and conducted informal interview with community members
- Coordinated with UPD regarding the plant DNA detected from Tamaraw fecal samples
- Monitoring Report for Tamaraw Dietary Analysis Study submitted to FFP
- Guided the preparation of the initial draft of the Halcon Patrolling Report
- Participation in “Focusing on Philippine Biodiversity: The Philippine BioGenome Project” Webinar
- Framework Plan and schedule preparation for OJT of UPLB Students
- Preparation for the ARNP seabirds survey in coordination with the protected area management office



Participants of the Consolidation Workshop of the Annual Tamaraw Population Count 2022



Ocular inspection of the bat roosting site in Muelle Bay, Puerto Galera



Post perception survey in Ilin and Ambulong Islands

## CARE

- Conducted Post Perception Survey with communities in Ilin and Ambulong Islands and MIBNP
- Launched a Photo Contest in celebration of Biodiversity and Environment Months
- Conducted the webinar, “School Plus Home Gardening cum Biodiversity Enhancement Enterprise” in partnership with SEARCA and DepEd MIMAROPA
- Served as Resource Speaker and Media Partner for PUP SBS’s webinar event
- Appeared as Guest in SpiritFM Calapan’s Program Episode for Biodiversity Day and Year of Protected Areas
- Coordinated with De La Salle student for “HANRAHID: Infographic Materials on the Conservation of Endemic Tamaraws in Mindoro Island, Philippines” Thesis
- New MBCFI website in progress



Resource speaker for PUP SBS’s webinar event

# Program Highlights



## MISSION

### Mt. Halcon

- KAWARAS sold 10 dozens of nito plates and 1 nito basket
- Nursery maintenance
- Foodshed in Bayanan completed
- Conducted orientation on maintenance of foodshed, planting of vegetables, and raising chickens
- Re-planted approximately 1000 indigenous seedlings in eroded forest areas and riverside during patrol
- Coordinated and facilitated monthly meetings of POs
- Conducted foot patrolling at Mt. Halcon with 19 Bantay Gubat members of NagMaMaHal



Established foodshed by KAWARAS members at Bayanan

### Mt. Malasimbo

- Clearing of nursery area and fenceline conducted
- 250 different, high-value fruit trees planted in MBCC site
- Trained caretakers on proper management of chickens and foodshed maintenance
- Established bamboo nursery containing 200 bamboo culm
- Disposal of raised poultry (chickens) and marketing 10 kilograms of eggplant monitored
- Conservation agreement with KAPAKA signed and conducted monthly meetings as youth organization partner
- Tree Planting Activity with Guardians Brotherhood, Inc. in MBCC nursery area
- Establishment of Edible Landscaping, at 95% completion
- Access to the campsite area cleared, step-ladder established
- Community sensing in Barangay Lapantay conducted
- Monthly meetings with MaSIPag conducted



Meeting with KAPAKA-Dulangan Chapter members



Inspection at the Utility Building

## MBCC

- Phase 1.1 requirements and execution plan prepared
- Reviewed and prepared requirements for execution of Phase 1.1
- Conducted final inspection, testing and commissioning of installed solar power system for synchronization to power grid
- Pre-bid activities for museum content initiated
- Agreement on the use of access road signed
- Transferred office files and equipment from Calapan Office to MBCC Office
- New security agency stationed onsite
- Access to temporary power supply from ORMECO secured

## Others

- Public Presentations about MBCFI and MBCC were conducted for the Municipality of Puerto Galera and Barangay Dulangan community members
- Participated in PAMB, Provincial Development Council, MAARRDEC meetings, and PEC Quarterly and special meetings
- Conducted organization's Mid-year Planning and Strategic Meeting in Puerto Galera
- Awarded Certificate of Appreciation by DOST as Science and Technology Foundation Partner

# The MBCFI Way

## Citizen Science Training and Philippine Teak Assessment in Ilin and Ambulong Islands



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources- Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (DENR-CENRO) San Jose, the Ilin and Ambulong Bantay Gubat (IAMBAG), and the Mindoro Biodiversity Conservation Foundation Inc. (MBCFI) are working together to protect the last remaining forest patches on the Ilin and Ambulong Islands where the Philippine Teak can be found.

To further improve the management of Ilin and Ambulong Islands as Critical Habitat, training on citizen science and the assessment of the Philippine Teak was conducted last April.

Citizen science encourages local communities to take part in biodiversity research and conservation. There are around 2,000

individuals of Philippine Teak on the 10,000 square kilometer-area of Ilin and Ambulong Islands. Monitoring the species and conservation of the islands are not easy tasks for DENR and MBCFI without the assistance of other stakeholders, more specifically, the community members.

Citizen science will help researchers or concerned institutions in carrying out such activities. Additionally, it instills a sense of responsibility in community members, especially when they are entrusted with protecting their own home. A refresher course was conducted for the IAMBAG members, which included transect walks and recording of species, taking of GPS coordinates, and actual tagging. The activity also included conducting transect walks to record other species in the Philippines.

Aside from making an inventory and tagging of Philippine Teak individuals, it is now necessary to deepen the study of the species, more specifically on the phenology. Phenology studies the timing of seasonal events such as budburst, flowering, and dormancy. IAMBAG members were also trained to record specific events by observing the date of onset and the duration of particular phenophases. Phenology is vital since it is one of the indicators to monitor the impacts of climate change on ecosystems and their constituent species.

Together with IAMBAG members and CENRO San Jose, MBCFI was able to tag and assess approximately 800 individuals of Philippine Teak in Ilin and Ambulong Islands.



Photos by EHTan

# The MBCFI Way

## Webinar on Introduction to SHGBEE for MIMAROPA Schools





### INTRODUCTION TO SCHOOL-PLUS HOME GARDEN CUM BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT ENTERPRISE (SHGBEE)



31 May 2022  
9:00-11.30 AM

via Zoom and FB Live Simulcast

Presented with:





**Anna Gale Vallez**  
Program Specialist,  
RTLD SEARCA

Speakers



**Leticia Afuang**  
Wildlife Biologist,  
UPLB

According to the Convention on Biological Diversity, biodiversity remains the answer to several sustainable development challenges. As part of this year’s celebration of International Day for Biological Diversity and Biodiversity Month for Mindoro, MBCFI conducted the webinar, “Introduction to School Plus Home Garden cum Biodiversity Enhancement Enterprise (SHGBEE),” in partnership with the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) and the Department of Education - MIMAROPA region (DepEd MIMAROPA).

This webinar was conducted with the goal of giving teachers and school garden coordinators an introduction to the concept

of sustainable agriculture and biodiversity enhancement, which can be done through the initiation of SHGBEE in support of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP) implemented in their respective schools. The resource speakers for this webinar were Ms. Anna Gale Vallez, Program Specialist from the Research and Thought Leadership Department (RTLD) of SEARCA and Dr. Leticia Afuang, Wildlife Biologist from the University of the Philippines Los Baños.

Ms. Vallez talked about SEARCA’s project, “Participatory Action Research on School and Community-Based Food and Nutritional Programs for Literacy, Poverty, Reduction and Sustainable Development.” She explained how the school plus home garden program

is a combination of education, nutrition, and economics. On the other hand, Dr. Afuang discussed the relevance of the biodiversity of our country and how school and home garden pilot sites can serve as a take-off and central learning area for teachers to introduce and share awareness about environmental concepts to children by using a participatory and science-based approach.

The webinar garnered a total of 755 views from the Facebook Livestream, with numerous positive feedback from the viewers. Through this webinar, MBCFI and SEARCA hopes to initiate and establish the SHGBEE Project in pilot schools in each school division in Mindoro in the near future.



# The MBCFI Way

## MBCFI and MBCC Public Presentations in Puerto Galera



Last May 26, MBCFI conducted back-to-back public presentations for the Municipality of Puerto Galera and the community members of Barangay Dulangan. The presentations were held at the Puerto Galera Municipal Gymnasium in the morning and at Isidro Suzara Memorial School (ISMS) in the afternoon.

MBCFI's Executive Director, Grace Diamante, presented the history of MBCFI and the organization's various conservation efforts throughout the years.

The Program Managers and focal person presented the activities involved in the core programs. Kyle Cielo, RESEARCH Program Manager, presented the different activities done under the RESEARCH Program, including citizen science initiatives. Together with Ms. Elyza Hazel Tan, RESEARCH Project Officer, they also set up a mist net and laid out the different equipment used in the field and showed these to the audience.

MISSION Program Manager, Juan Valdez, Jr. then presented how MBCFI provides assistance to different communities in priority sites, including capacity building activities, livelihood enhancement and nursery establishment. Mr. Valdez also explained how the MISSION Program strengthens partnerships with local Peoples Organizations through conservation agreements. He also demonstrated a seedling propagation technique that can ensure high survivability of the sowed plants.

CJ Bantiling, CARE Program Officer, also presented the various information, education and communication campaigns done by MBCFI to raise awareness about biodiversity and its conservation. Ms. Bantiling explained the relevance of biodiversity to the daily lives of community members and how protecting it can lead to a better outcome. The Mindoro TREASURES Sourcebook was highlighted, especially during the presentation for the teachers of ISMS.

The Project Manager of Mindoro Biodiversity Conservation Center (MBCC), Jaydee Naungayan, presented the scope and purpose of the ongoing construction, as well as future phases of the center. He also shared how the establishment of MBCC will benefit the municipal and barangay levels in terms of increased tourism and provision of additional sources of income to the community.

Dr. Leticia Afuang, Vice President of MBCFI's Board of Trustees, also gave heartfelt and encouraging messages to the public presentation attendees. She also shared a self-written song for MBCFI, to which the audience sang along with.

A total of 37 people attended the public presentation at the Puerto Galera Municipal Gymnasium while 62 community members went to the one held in Isidro Suzara Memorial School.



Photos by LManalo

# The MBCFI Way

## MBCC Construction Updates



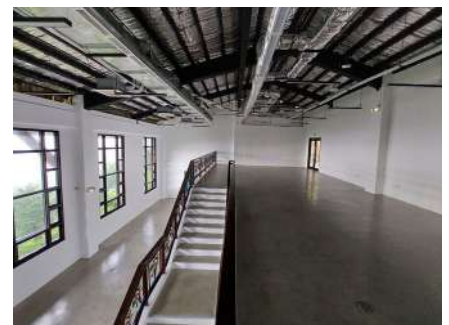
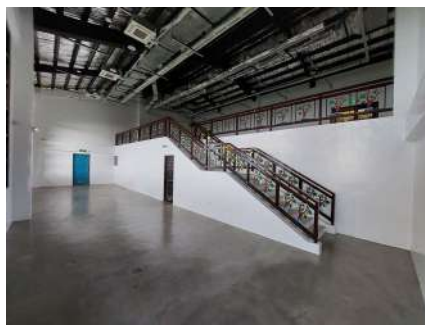
By mid-June of 2022, the actual construction progress for Phase 1 of MBCC is 99.45%. Establishment of step-ladder from the Museum to the Camping Area has started. Pre-bid activities for museum content are also underway.

Synchronization of the installed solar power system to the power grid has been initiated. Requirements for the commencement of Phase 1.1 of MBCC, which includes the establishment of the access road, have been reviewed and are being prepared.

Access procedures have been put in place. Security personnel are also stationed onsite and routine inspections are being implemented in addition to daily and weekly HSSE inspections.



**YOU CAN SUPPORT MBCC BY DONATING.**  
**PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION:**  
<https://mbcfi.org.ph>



Onsite photos by Arch. RMagcale

# Species in Focus

## Hawksbill Turtle



Photo by Atlantis Philippines

**Common Name:**  
Hawksbill Turtle

**Scientific Name:**  
*Eretmochelys imbricata*

**Conservation Status:**  
Critically Endangered  
(IUCN, 2019; PRLC, 2020)

The Hawksbill Turtle is one of the five species of marine turtles that can be found in the Philippines. Hawksbills are primarily found in coral reefs in the tropical oceans of the world. The word “hawksbill” refers to its short, pointed beak.

On their shells, they have a distinctive pattern of overlapping scutes that give the edges a serrated appearance. The carapace is also elliptical in shape with flippers having two claws. The carapace color ranges from orange, brown or yellow.

They mostly eat sponges, which they pull from reef crevices using their tiny, pointed beaks, although they also consume sea anemones and jellyfish.

This species is under threat due to habitat destruction and other natural/manmade factors such as trade for commercial use and ornaments. Plastic wastes in our oceans also pose a threat to their survival as they mistake the plastic items as prey item.

Strategies and policies in place aim to prevent plastic pollution and other factors that could harm these turtles and other marine wildlife. Likewise, regulations on illegal trading of wildlife and their derivatives should be strictly enforced. Protecting hatching grounds of marine turtles also helps to ensure higher chances of their survival.



Photo by Nature Conservancy



# Virtual Tour

## Lubang Island



Photo by MLAcRed



### Where in Mindoro

#### Occidental Mindoro



### Activities in Lubang Island

- Explore the beaches of Tagbac and Binacas in Lubang, and Bonbon in Looc
- Scuba diving (See Don Juan Villa Beach Resort and Dive Center contact number above)
- Snorkeling and free diving
- Visit the old Spanish Lighthouse in Cabra island
- Check out Onoda Trail and Caves
- See Hulagaan Waterfalls
- Trek to Gozar Air Station, Mt. Benogongon and Mt. Gonting
- Discover other attractions of the Islands of Cabra, Golo and Ambil

Lubang is a group of islands located southwest of Manila and northwest of mainland Mindoro. It is composed of seven islands and two municipalities under the jurisdiction of the province of Occidental Mindoro on the western end of Verde Island Passage, dubbed as the center of the center of the world's marine biodiversity.

Lubang is a coastal municipality in the province of Occidental Mindoro. The municipality has a land area of 113.10 square kilometers or 43.67 square miles which constitutes 1.93% of Occidental Mindoro's total area. Its population as determined by the 2020 Census was 17,437. This represented 3.32% of the total population of Occidental Mindoro province, or 0.54% of the overall population of the MIMAROPA Region.

Despite its proximity to Metropolis, Lubang Island is generally verdant, unspoiled and unexplored. It is too near yet too far, as they say. Information on the net are either lacking and outdated, but blessing in disguise for it has preserved its mysterious beauty.



Photo by Uncharted Philippines

Its prominent landmark is more than a century old Cabra Island Lighthouse, one of the few remaining lighthouses built during Spanish era. The lighthouse shows the importance of the place even in the early Philippine civilization.

In 2007, a study in the island has documented new island records of bird species: Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher (*Ceyx erithacus*), Glossy Swiftlet (*Collocalia esculenta*) and Mangrove Blue Flycatcher (*Cyornis rufigastra*)<sup>1</sup>.

In 2010 the Municipalities of Lubang and Looc passed ordinances to establish Marine Protected Areas of more than 14,000 hectares. The Looc-Lubang marine protected areas are composed of a total of 14,485 hectares scattered across ten sites around the island, making it the largest MPA system in the entire Verde Island Passage.<sup>2</sup>

Today, Lubang Island is a paradise breaking out of its shell. Its vast farmlands, virgin beaches, amazing marine life and striking scenery as well as the natural hospitality of the locals are warm welcome that await everyone.

<sup>1</sup> Peterson, A. T. (2007). Three new records from Lubang island, Philippines. Forktail, 23, 149.

<sup>2</sup> Reports from Arvel Malubag & Conservation International, posted January 12, 2015

Scan this QR Code or click [here](#) to view a 3D bathymetry model of Lubang Island and Verde Island Passage





## OUR VISION

*Sustained conservation of Mindoro's natural treasures for future generations.*

## OUR MISSION

*To lead scientific research and catalyze collaborative and participative conservation efforts in key biodiversity areas of Mindoro resulting in empowerment of Mindoreños through increased awareness and care.*

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# MBCFI

Mindoro Biodiversity Conservation Foundation Inc.

## Mindoro Biodiversity



UDENNA

