

Project Update
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**Strengthened Community-Based Biodiversity
 Conservation in Selected Sites of Cebu,
 Philippines
 "Siloy Project 2007"**

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Cebu is considered the hottest of the global hotspots for biodiversity conservation (Mallari et. al, 1999). Apparently Cebu has total of 6 restricted-range species two of which are globally threatened and found nowhere else in the world (Cebu Flowerpecker and Black Shama).

In 2003 the Rufford Small Grant project supported a community based biodiversity conservation initiatives which lead to the protection and conservation of the forest Alcoy and Dalaguete Southern, Cebu. This project aims to develop the biodiversity conservation by engaging local government units of Boljoon, Alegria and people's organization.



Fig. 1 Everett's White-eye (*Zosterops everetti*) one of the subspecies endemic in Cebu and netted one individual in Boljoon. (Photo by: Godfrey Jakosalem)

The forest in Boljo-on is composed of three fragments with one of the larger forest fragment lying continuous with the largest remaining forest in Alcoy. The forests are within forestland/ timberland area and under the management of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) in Argao and the local government of Boljo-on. The largest forest fragment estimated at 120 ha was continuous with the forest of Nug-as and is found in brgys. Nangka and El Pardo. A gap separates this forest fragment found in Upper Beceril – Lower Beceril – Lunop and San Antonio range. This forest is confined to river gullies and was estimated at 160 ha. Smaller forest fragments of less than 40 ha are found in Baclayan and Arbor.

Research

We conducted a wildlife survey in the forest of Beceril, Boljoon, Cebu last May 2007. the results we observed a total of 65 species of birds observed and seventeen of these species were Philippine endemic birds of which the endemic and endangered Black Shama (*Copsychus cebuensis*) and the Streak-breasted Bulbul (*Ixos siquijorensis monticola*) were observed.



Fig. 2 Lesser Bamboo Bat (*Tylonycteris pachypus*) A new island species for Cebu. (Photo by: Godfrey Jakosalem)

A total of 14 species of mammals were recorded in Boljoon. Fruit bats represent the highest number both in terms of number of individuals observed and in the number of species, followed by insect bats. Among the species of fruit bat netted are Little Golden-mantle Flying Fox *Pteropus pumilus*, Philippine Tube-nose Fruit Bat *Nyctimene rabori* and Common short-nosed fruit bat *Cynopterus brachyotis*, Large Flying fox *Pteropus vampyrus*. Some species of insect bats are represented only by single individuals. This is partly due to the difficulty of capturing the species using mist-nets. In this case, we relied mostly on counting roosting colonies in caves one of species caught was the Lesser Bamboo Bat *Tylonycteris pachypus* was recorded for the first time in Cebu.

Roosting colonies of flying foxes were reported in the gullies of Lower and Upper Beceril barangays since 2003. The colony was visited last May 2007 but the roosting tree was already destroyed by the strong winds of the last typhoon. The colony was not encountered in the rest of the forests.

The locals have reported on the presence of Malay Civet Cat and Palm Civet Cat. The Civet cats were locally called maral or milo and were perceived as nuisance since the civet cat sometimes venture into the farms and raid the chickens.

The locals have reported the presence of Sailfin Lizards and Monitor Lizards. These species were locally hunted for their meat. The anglehead lizard *Gonocephalus sophiae* was also reported in the forests. It is very likely that the species is also found in the forests of Boljo-on as the larger population is found in the adjacent forest of Nug-as.

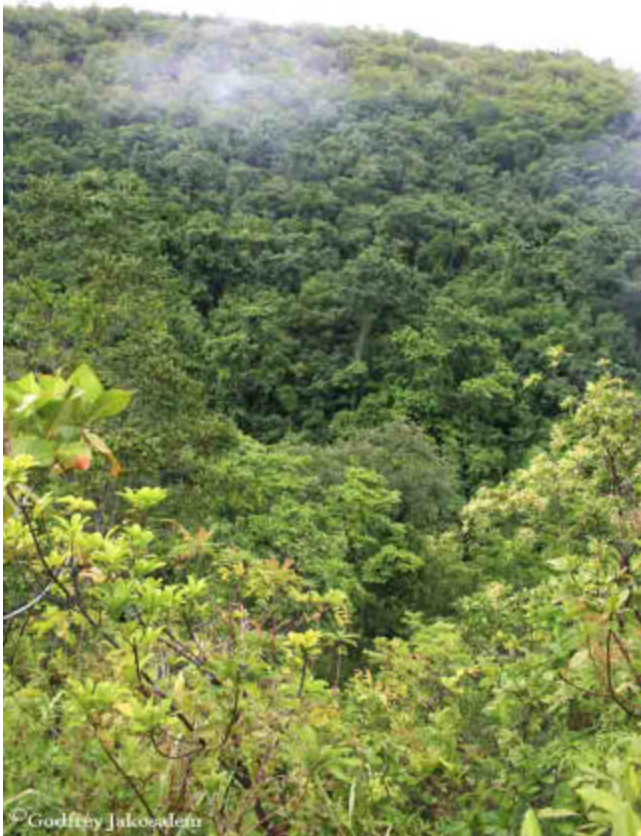


Fig. 3 a view of the forest cover of Beceril, Boljoon (Photo by: Godfrey Jakosalem)

The Cebu Cinnamon tree *Cinnamomum cebuense* was reported in the forests of Nangka – San Antonio. The “bitu-on” flower or Kappa-kappa *Medenilla magnifica*, an endangered species of plant was also reported in the area.

Other trees of importance are “bago” *Gnetum gnetum* where the young shoots were harvested by the locals

for food. The leaves of “mana” *Cinnamomum* sp. were also harvested and sold commercially as a spice. The fruits of “anis” tree were also harvested and sold in the local market as well as consumed locally. Two economically important species of trees were mentioned by the locals present in the area: White Lauan *Shorea contorta* and “anislag”.



Fig. 4 A Male Black Shama and endemic species of Cebu. (Photo by: Godfrey Jakosalem)

Threatened Species

Two threatened species of birds were recorded in Beceril forest. These are the Black Shama *Copsychus cebuensis* and the Streak-breasted Bulbul *Ixos siquijorensis monticola* were observed. Both species are highly dependent on forest for survival. The Black Shama was only observed in areas with dark understories and areas with clumps of larger species of trees.

The Large Flying Fox *Pteropus vampyrus*, Little Golden-mantled flying fox *Pteropus pumilus*, and the Philippine Tube-nose Fruit Bat *Nyctimene rabori* were the only threatened species of mammals recorded.

The presence of sailfin lizards *Hydrosaurus pustulatus* of the Genus *Hydrosaurus* are the largest living agamids in Cebu (Family Agamidae). Sailfin lizards are essentially endemic to the Wallacean Region, which includes all of the Philippines except Palawan. Two individuals were observed in the Beceril River.

