

Updates from Prigen Conservation Breeding Ark.

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All of you who have contributed to the development of Prigen Conservation Breeding Ark have made an investment into the creation of a brighter future. In return, we want to brighten these dark days with a few joyful updates from Prigen.



Our first rufous-fronted Laughingthrush chick

To begin with, we would like to inform you that we are all healthy and we continue to run PCBA as usual.

Since our host, Taman Safari was forced to close its gates to visitors which resulted in the temporary reduction of staff numbers, we faced some uncertainties. Luckily, those were managed with great understanding by TSI, so that we are able to keep operating in a reasonable manner.

Additionally, over the last couple of days we experienced great solidarity from Vogelpark Marlow, ZGAP, and Roland Wirth who have made spontaneous donations to cover the shortages we faced which allowed us to keep working as usual and in the best interest of our animals!

While around us the world comes more and more to a halt, we are still seeing great progress on our new projects and in breeding.

Unit 4



Our Unit 4 had been completed in January 2020. With 11 aviaries of 7m×2.5m×5m, we now have the opportunity to house our most sensitive pairs in a way that allows the birds to get away from the keepers when they need to enter the aviaries for the regular feeding and cleaning duties. In this arrangement, the birds feel safer than in smaller aviaries. This is important to reduce the stress in birds which is crucial to achieve breeding success. Currently, we use these aviaries for pairs of Tenggara Hill Mynas (*Gracula venerata*), Nias Hill Mynas (*Gracula robusta*), Javan crested Jay Shrikes (*Platylophus galericulatus galericulatus*), Rufous-fronted Laughingthrushes (*Garrulax rufifrons rufifrons*) and others.



Laughingthrush aviary in Unit 4

The 11 remaining aviaries measuring to 2.5m×2.5m×3m are housing a colony of Javan pied starlings (*Gracupica jalla*) and pairs of Javan and Greater Leafbirds (*Chloropsis cochinchinensis* and *C. sonnerati*). While the Starlings seem to do best in a large group, the Leafbirds are currently housed individually to decrease social pressure and set them into breeding condition

Javan Small-toothed Palm Civet

Apart from Unit 4, in January we were also able to complete a breeding complex for Javan Small-toothed Palm Civet (*Arctogalidia trivirgata trilineata*). This virtually unknown carnivore from Western Java is facing high pressure from the online pet trade and might be eradicated from most of its former range, a lack of records indicates so. With basically no information available about their ecology, taxonomy or population status and no existing ex-situ population, this taxon is one of the highest priorities in conservation breeding.

As six civets moved into the new enclosures, two pairs have successfully been formed and more pairing attempts are being carried out.



Breeding complex for Javan small-toothed Palm Civet

Unit 5 and 6

Upon the completion of Unit 4 we were able to immediately start with the construction of Unit 5 and 6. Here we will have a total of 62 additional aviaries with the dimension of 3m×1.5m×3m. For these units we will use a roof, covering the entire building to protect more sensitive lowland species from the frequent heavy and cold rain.

With all enclosures being connected via slide doors, we will be able to flexibly react to specific needs of each species or even individual. If everything goes as planned, both complexes will be finished in May and will then accommodate more breeding pairs.



Unit 5 and 6 (26.03.2020)

Breeding results

Over the last couple of months, we have successfully bred 11 threatened songbird taxa. Among those are Javan Green Magpie (*Cissa thalassina*), Javan Pied Starling and Rufous-fronted Laughingthrush, all three species are listed as “Critically Endangered” by IUCN. Furthermore, apart from those high-profile species, two far less well-known taxa have also been bred for the first time in captivity at PCBA.



3 Sumatran Laughingthrush chicks

Wangi-Wangi White-eye (*Zosterops sp.*) is a yet undescribed species which is endemic to Wangi-Wangi Island, off the southern coast of Sulawesi. Its only a little over 100km² small home island was declared as a governmentally supported tourism destination. With more infrastructure being built, the already degraded habitat is becoming even smaller, it is believed to be only about one km² left! Another serious threat is posed by Javanese migrant workers coming to the island. Often enough some birds are taken on the workers' way back home to Java and sold there.

After quite some difficulties in the beginning, with birds showing signs of malnutrition and high social stress, we can now say that we know how to keep and breed this highly delicate species. So far, we have successfully been raising chicks from two pairs. Furthermore, more pairs are making promising attempts.



Wangi-Wangi White-eye with the very first chick

While Wangi-Wangi White-eye might be on the brink of extinction, the scenario for Maratua Shama (*Kittacincla (malabarica) barbouri*) could already be worse. The last record for this taxon from the wild dates back to 2011. In subsequent surveys, it could not be detected, raising the fear that it might be extinct in the wild. Endemic to Maratua island off the east coast of Borneo, this Shama has most likely fallen victim to excessive poaching and logging. Until late 2018, there was no known Maratua Shama in captivity. Since then, we managed to locate and acquire 8 individuals from the online trade, one of those died, leaving us with seven birds to start a rescue mission. Later on, we found out that there was only one male out of the seven. With this in mind, all efforts were made to successfully pair this male and produce healthy offspring. Within a relatively short period, these efforts were paid off. The very first chick hatched in October 2019, which was followed by another five until January 2020. To give the first female a rest and involve as many founders as possible, we paired the male with another female. This new pair is not any less fertile than the first. By the end of March, we have had two chicks which now has started to feed independently, while the same female is already incubating the next clutch.



The most recent Maratua Shama chick

Future projects

Since, sadly, not even the current Corona crisis is putting an end to the Indonesian wildlife trade, we will not stop putting our best efforts to save as many species as possible.

Therefore, hopefully by June, we will start the construction of an aviary complex dedicated to Hill Mynas. The funds for that project are being raised by the German “Zootier des Jahres” campaign. Sixteen specifically designed enclosures will allow us to breed species like Nias Hill Myna, Tenggara Hill Myna and Enggano Hill Myna (*Gracula enganensis*). To establish genetically viable ex-situ populations, more pairs are needed than we can accommodate right now. Hence, the new aviaries will play a vital role in achieving the goal.



Enggano Hill Myna

Furthermore, we are soon going to expand our breeding efforts to threatened Indonesian parrots. For that purpose, we are planning to build 3 aviary complexes with 21 aviaries each. As a first step into that direction, a group of Red-and-blue Lory (*Eos histrio talautensis*), acquired by confiscation, moved to PCBA in March 2020.



Red-and-blue Lories at PCBA

Apart from the huge number of threatened bird species, an increasing number of mammals is also under imminent danger of extinction. To address that issue, we are currently planning a breeding complex for some of the most threatened smaller mammal species. The aim of the project is the establishment of ex-situ populations for the most endangered Cuscus species (*Spilocuscus rufoniger*, *S. wilsoni* and *S. papuensis*), Javan slow loris (*Nycticebus javanicus*) and Sumatran striped rabbit (*Nesolagus netscheri*).

All those achievements and projects are only possible thanks to the generous support from Taman Safari Indonesia and all our international donors!

We, the PCBA team want to wish all of you the very best for these tough times!

Kind regards,

PCBA Team