

Javan small-toothed Palm-civet (*Arctogalidia t.trivirgata*)



PRIGEN CONSERVATION BREEDING ARK

Winter Update
December 2022

By Jochen Menner

Preface

The past three months, for the first time in years, have been shaped by guests visiting us in Prigen. It has been a pleasure to welcome:

John Corder (WPA),

Conny Mattes, Renato Rafael with family and team (Wildkatzenzentrum Felidae),
Greg Nichelsen,

Bpk Nur Patria Kurniawan (BBKSDA Jawa Timur),

Joel and Cole Sartore (PhotoArk),

Pierre de Chabannes (Pierre Wildlife),

Astrid Parys and Klaus Rudloff (Zoo Frankfurt, Tierpark Berlin)

Fabian Schmidt and Markus Klamt (Zoo Basel, Tierpark Berlin)

Barney Long and Andrew Tilker (Re:wild),

Daisy and Roland Wirth and Mick Kurtz (ZGAP),

Agus Jati (WCF Jogja–Maine University)

Boas Emmanuel and Khaleb Yordan (Jakarta Birder).

These visits from fellow conservation and zoo professionals have enabled us to engage in knowledge exchange and very fruitful discussions.

Undoubtably, the highlight of the past three months was the reintroduction of 40 Javan Pied Starlings (*Gracupica jalla*) onto the grounds of Taman Safari II Jatim on 5th of November. Marking a true milestone in the conservation of this critically endangered species.



Javan Pied Starlings being released

Forth quartal 2022

The forth quartal of 2022 saw PCBA continue to grow. With more and more fish species being included into our conservation breeding efforts it became inevitable to add another animal keeper position, dedicated to care for our fish.

Fish husbandry can be very challenging and requires a lot of sensitivity, therefore, we carefully chose the right person to take on this task.

In Steven bin Maghfur we found the right candidate, he had been in charge of building our different fish facilities and is therefore very well informed about the functionality of our set ups. At the same time he privately owns fish and hence, has some experience in taking care of aquatic animals.



Reintroduction of Javan Pied Starling

The Javan Pied Starling is a critically endangered Passerine species, endemic to Java, Bali and Southern Sumatra.

It is certainly extinct in Bali and Sumatra and even in Java, the lack of records for many years indicates that there is no more viable population left in the wild.

From the very beginning on the Javan Pied Starling was in the focus of PCBA's conservation breeding efforts and of high priority for the Ministry of forestry and environment. Our common aim was and is to establish a stable, genetically pure population to prevent the loss of original traits by domestication and hybridization.

After five years of ex-situ breeding efforts at PCBA, the population had grown to nearly 70 individuals, enabling us to prepare for a local reintroduction.

In the beginning of October, 40 Starlings, all hatched and parent reared at PCBA, moved to a habituation aviary adjacent to the large Giraffe exhibit of Taman Safari. Here, the birds are provided with perfect habitat and adequate security.

On 5th of November, as part of the ceremony attended by more than 100 guests, the birds were released by Ibu Indra Exploitasia of KKHSG, Bpk Dr. Andriyanto of Jawa Timur Province and Bpk Tony Sumampau of Taman Safari Indonesia.



John Sumampau opening the release ceremony

Having initially left the aviary, all birds stayed in the very close proximity and returned to the aviary within a few hours. The birds were continuously provided with food and water in the aviary and they regularly returned to seek shelter.

About one week after the release, the Starlings started to venture further from the initial release site and subsequently returned to PCBA, a few hundred meters away from the habituation aviary.

From here, the birds started to explore the vast grass lands around PCBA and first pairs began to form. Just about three weeks after the release the first pair started to build a nest in one of the provided nest boxes. Soon after that, more pairs followed. Interestingly, the majority of birds do not use the nest boxes but rather build their nests free standing in trees, just the way it is described in older literature.



Starling singing



Starling collecting nesting material

By the end of 2022, we are observing 34 Javan Pied Starlings and several active nests on the grounds of Taman Safari II. One bird was found dead in the habituation aviary a few days after the release. Five birds have not been recorded for several weeks and might have disappeared.

With only six birds lost in the initial 56 days and all other Starlings starting to establish territories and building nests, we are looking at a great initial success and hopefully a bright future for the only free flying population of Javan Pied Starling.

This success has only been possible due to the commitment of the entire PCBA and Taman Safari team who contribute to keep the birds safe and observation data complete. In particular, PCBA biologist, Kuku, is tirelessly monitoring the birds on a daily basis and producing detailed records for each individual.



Kuku observing the Starlings

Small Carnivores facility

Thanks to the very generous and continued support by Augsburg Zoo and ZGAP we have been able to commence yet another very important facility construction.

Currently, we are building second breeding facility for threatened small carnivores species. The focus will be on our growing population of Javan Small-toothed Palm-civet and in the future the Indonesian Mountain Weasel (*Mustela lutreolina*).

The new enclosure complex consists of 16 aviaries which will not only be interconnected but also linked to the existing facility for the Civets. This will enable us to work more flexibly and efficiently when pairing or moving animals.

As of December 2022, PCBA is home to 15 Javan small-toothed Palm-civets, representing the only ex-situ population of this highly threatened Javan endemic. Therefore, we are excited to be able to add more holding capacities in order to continue our very successful breeding project, as an endeavor to establish a stable population in human care to provide a safety net against the looming extinction of this highly distinct taxon.



The new small carnivore complex under construction

Internship at Zoo Leipzig

In November our Parrot keeper Ade Bagus had the opportunity to do three weeks of internship at Leipzig Zoo in Germany.

It seems crucial to give our PCBA keepers the chance to learn animal husbandry practices beyond our relatively small facility. These experiences will give the team more insight into zoo and conservation work being done abroad. At the same time this internship was an expression of our appreciation of Bagus' outstanding work and dedication over the past five years.

We are very grateful to Zoo Leipzig and its team for giving us this opportunity and for being so welcoming to Bagus.



Shama breeding

In the past three months we have been able to successfully raise,
16 Maratua Shamas (*Copsychus barbouri*)
7 Larwo Shamas (*Copsychus omissus*) and
5 Kangean Shamas (*Copsychus nigricauda*).

We now have managed to include all available founder individuals of Maratua Shama into the breeding project and have raised the first F2 offspring from two pairs.



2 Larwo Shama chicks

This outstanding breeding success has only been possible thanks to more proactive animal management, allowing the breeding pairs exercise outside of their aviaries on the keeper corridor. But more importantly, we have hand raised all chicks from the age of eight days. This procedure decreased chick mortality to below 7% and at the same time increased the productivity of our breeding pairs.

Hand rearing is largely and very successfully done by Febry.



3 Kangean Shama and 1 Maratua Shama fledglings

Other remarkable breeding successes



Female Civet with 2 offspring

Javan small-toothed Palm-civet:

Two babies were born to a mother that had not yet successfully reared offspring, marking the inclusion of the fourth female founder into the breeding project. The father of these two babies is the first civet born at PCBA in 2020.

White Cockatoo (*Cacatua alba*)

For the first time a White Cockatoo hatched at PCBA and was raised without complications by its parents

Sunda Laughingthrush (*Garrulax palliatus*)

Two healthy chicks of Sunda Laughingthrush have been raised by a pair of first time parents.

Javan Pied Starling

With a lot of commotion within our Starling population, in preparation for the release, breeding was not as productive as previously. Nevertheless, three chicks were raised by their parents.

Straw-headed Bulbul (*Pycnonotus zeylanicus*):

For the first time we have been able to raise chicks of the critically endangered Straw-headed Bulbul. Two offspring were raised by their parents without complications.

Javan White-eye (*Zosterops flavus*)

Just before the onset of the rainy season, another two Javan White-eyes fledged. This year has been very challenging for this species, the prolonged rainy season significantly shortened the breeding season and therefore, hampered breeding success.

Wangi-Wangi White-eye (*Zosterops paruhbesar*)

In October, yet another Wangi-Wangi White-eye has grown up at PCBA. During the past three months several new pairs of this very challenging species have been formed and we are hoping to see increased breeding activity next year.



Straw-headed Bulbul fledgling



Javan White-eye nestling