

ANNUAL REPORT 2019



Arctictis Binturong Conservation – ABConservation

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A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

A person wearing a hat and a backpack is standing on a rocky peak, looking out over a vast landscape. The person is positioned on the right side of the frame, with their back to the camera. The landscape is rugged and mountainous, with a clear blue sky and some clouds in the background. The overall scene conveys a sense of adventure and exploration.

First, I would like to thank all those around us, who help us on a daily basis, who allowed ABConservation to exist and accomplish the goals it was created for. Thanks to our friends, family, our invaluable volunteers, our guides, members, donors, local and international partners, and our sponsors, for their support.

The year 2019 has not been an easy one. We have been struggling for 2 years now to obtain the final authorization we need to begin the radio tracking study, so this year felt quite similar to the past one. We had to bounce back to avoid a stagnating situation in Palawan, we visited several new sites on the island and carried out new field investigations on the binturong and local fauna. An awareness-raising program about the environment was also created, in partnership with local universities and schools, thanks to the arrival of our educational programs officer Murielle. A partnership was signed with the only wildlife rescue center in Palawan, with the aim to help them renovate the facilities and support them in their mission to rehabilitate wild animals back to their natural habitat.

Lastly, we noticed throughout our interventions in the Philippines and in France a growing interest for the protection of binturongs - and other species – especially among the youth. Here's to a new generation, committed to build a more environment-friendly world!

ABOUT ABCONSERVATION

context: According to the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature), the conservation status of the binturong is **VULNERABLE**. Indeed, in the past 18 years, its population was estimated to have **declined by over 30%**. The main causes of this decline are the development of **illegal trade** (for human consumption or pet trade), as well as **massive deforestation** (the binturong is a strictly arboreal species strongly impacted by the gradual destruction of its natural habitat).

South Asia is a fast developing area, fueled by a strong economic growth, sometimes at the expense of the local environment. There are more and more **palm oil, hevea and teak crops**, leading to a rapid **deforestation** that impacts the species living in these forests. Logging modifies the structure of the forest and creates networks of roads, which promotes **poaching**. Moreover, few studies have been undertaken on free-ranging binturongs so far, and there are many gaps in knowledge about this species: **status of populations, behavior, territory, reproduction, diet**. Yet, an **understanding** of their ecological and biological needs is an **essential prerequisite to the creation of an adapted *in situ* conservation program**.

ABConservation's missions:

- Lead *IN SITU* and *EX SITU* studies on the biology and ecology of binturongs
- Create a conservation and awareness-raising program
- Collect and share information, build a complete database on the binturong
- Promote the image of the binturong worldwide

Our story: The association was created in 2014 by Pauline Kayser, who works in the field of animal care and is fond of binturongs. In 2016, she met Agathe Debruille, veterinarian and ethologist: both shared a common passion and decided to fly to the Philippines, in order to create a study and conservation program on the binturong on Palawan island. In February 2017, they obtained the government approval for the creation of the Bearcat Study Program, in collaboration with many local partners.

L'EQUIPE



Pauline KAYSER

President



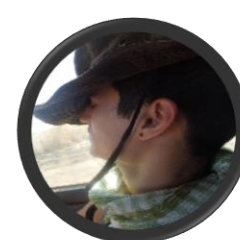
Agathe Debruille

Scientific officer



Murielle VERGNIOL

Educational program officer



Frédéric PREMIER

Treasurer



Mélissa PERRIGON

Secretary

A NEW FIGURE ABOUT ABCONSERVATION



424 Followers



4032 Followers



115 Followers



59 members



10 local partners, including 5 new ones in 2019



30 international partners, including 7 new ones in 2019



2 Full-time volunteers in the Philippines



A dozen volunteers for educational interventions in France



1 intern in the Philippines

2019 OBJECTIVES



Radio tracking – Palawan island – Year 2019



World Binturong Day – Worldwide, Paris, Palawan –11th May 2019



Publication of scientific papers – Scientific journals – Year 2019



Educational interventions and conferences - Europe, Philippines – Year 2019

ACTIONS IN 2019 – BEARCAT STUDY PROGRAM



SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

January 2019: Official refusal of the permit from the NCIP (to work on ancestral land of indigenous communities), because of issues with our scientific officer's visa

February 2019: Renewal of our research permit

February 2019: End of study at Langogan, end of data analysis and writing of scientific articles

March 2019: Extension of the research permit validity for El Nido

April 2019-August 2019: Installation of camera traps in El Nido

May 2019: Second testing of the radio collar on a binturong of the PWRCC

June 2019: Signing of a partnership with France-Volontaires to obtain a volunteer visa for our scientific officer

July 2019: Participation in the Conference on the Biosphere and Sustainable development (Purteo Princessa City, Palawan, Philippines)

August 2019: Signing of our partnership with the PWRCC for the renovation of this center and for them to have French volunteers



SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

August 2019: Participation in the 28th Annual symposium on Biodiversity in the Philippines (Baybay city, Leyte, Philippines)

September 2019: Participation in the EAZA Annual Conference and in the Philippines working group (Valencia, Spain)

September 2019: Signing of a partnership with Palawan State University, to be able to have Filipino student interns taking part in our scientific studies

September 2019: Publication of the first scientific article as co-authors with Dr Géraldine Veron, about genetics of the binturong

October 2019: Beginning of the discussions with the committee for the management of Cleopatra's Needle Natural Reserve management. Arrival of the 1st volunteer for the program at the PWRCC

November 2019: Participation in the festival on biodiversity "Subaraw" in Puerto Princesa (Palawan, Philippines)



SUMMARY OF 2019

This year was particularly marked by two events in the beginning of the year. The first was by far the worst news we got all year! The NCIP denied us the authorization to enter ancestral lands of indigenous peoples for our study. Unfortunately, as we can't control how a binturong fitted with a radio collar would move around, this project is yet again postponed, until we can obtain the authorization allowing us to carry it out. However, our motivation remains strong and we kept working to improve our application and submit it again to the NCIP. We have especially struggled to obtain a volunteer visa for Agathe, our co-president and scientific officer, but should get it in December. We are also negotiating with the committee for the management of Cleopatra's Needle Natural Reserve management, so that the Bearcat Study Program could be part of the reserve management plan. This would enable us to launch the radio tracking study on a wild binturong without needing an authorization from the NCIP.

The second event, which is a lot more positive, is that we met a land owner in El Nido who granted us access to his forest, allowing us to set up 8 camera traps for 4 months in a mixed forest that is barely exploited by humans. Unfortunately, no binturongs have been observed during our field work or on photographs, but other rare species were caught on camera, including leopard cats, *Prionailurus bengalensis*, Palawan hornbills, *Anthracoceros marchei*, and Great slaty woodpeckers, *Mulleripicus pulverulentus*.



BILAN 2019

Finally, we got great news at the end of the year. A collaboration with Katala Foundation may be signed to share each other's data. This agreement would enable us to collect information on the binturong and its presence in various parts of the island where we haven't been working yet, thus reducing potential additional costs for the Bearcat Study Program.

During the rest of the year, the onsite presence of Agathe was of great help to reinforce our partnerships, create new ones and to take part in national and international conferences. These were the opportunity to share the knowledge we gained, but also to establish the presence of ABCConservation in Palawan and show its role as a local stakeholder in environment protection. We must also state our co-writing of a scientific paper with Dr Géraldine Véron on genetics of binturongs, and the writing of two other articles on the camera trapping study in Langogan, both being submitted for publication. Indeed, our study in Langogan allowed us to describe a new study method for binturongs, by placing cameras in tree tops. This method, which is seldom used in Asia, allowed us to obtain a binturong detection rate 3 times higher than the best previously published result. So this is a great step forward, that gives us some hope to finally be able to estimate binturong population densities in Palawan!



PROJECTS FOR 2020

Our 2020 research projects focus on 3 main themes:

- The distribution and population density of binturongs in Palawan (using camera trapping)
- Feeding and social behavior of binturongs (using radio tracking)
- Interactions between the binturong and Palawan forests (using radio tracking)

To help us with these research projects, we are considering to hire for 2020 two Filipino workers, one field assistant and one research assistant, added to our two current guides. The research assistant will gradually take over the missions of Agathe, who should come back to France in July 2020.

More students should also be involved in our 2020 scientific studies, including Filipino students thanks to our partnership with the PSU.

ACTIONS IN 2019 – RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT – A FEW FIGURES



8 Conferences in Europe and the Philippines



3 Webinare talks



17 Educational interventions, including **10** in France and **7** in the Philippines



2 Training sessions about raising awareness of the environment organized at the Holy Trinity University and the Palawan State University



1 Participation as the jury member



30 Institutions worldwide taking part in the World Binturong Day 2019



A FEW HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

February: Celebration of the 2 years of the Bearcat Study Program in Langogan

March: Educational intervention about the binturong in Langogan primary school

May: Organization of the World Binturong Day 2019 in Puerto Princesa and Langogan

August: Creation of the program “From awareness to actions for nature conservation”

September: Signing of the MOA with the Holy Trinity University (HTU)

October: Beginning of activities around the topics of waste management, water, electricity, animals and plants for kindergarten pupils of the HTU (taking place weekly on Wednesdays) / Training of HTU science teachers on education about the environment / Meeting with YEAH!, a group of young Filipino environmental activists, to discuss projects we could share

November: Intervention for HTU teachers / Creation of a joint project with YEAH! So that the Western Philippines University (WPU) bans single-use plastic

December: Training of Palawan State University (PSU) teachers who will help us with the training on environment education for primary school and high school teachers in Puerto Princesa



PROJECTS FOR 2020

- Beginning of the project with the WPU for a decreasing use of single-use plastic
- Intervention about the environment and zero waste workshop on HTU foundation day
- Training sessions on environment education for Puerto Princesa City teachers
- Continuation of activities launched in 2019 on waste management, water, electricity, animals and plants for kindergarten pupils of the HTU
- Beach/forest/city cleanup actions and zero-waste initiation with YEAH!
- World Binturong Day 2020 in Langogan and Puerto Princesa

ACTIONS IN 2019 – RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT - FRANCE



A FEW HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

March: Small Carnivore Workshop conference – Gaia Zoo, Netherlands

SECAS Conference - France

May: Weekend on conservation – Lyon, France

World binturong Day + conferences – Paris, France

Conference – MFR Carquefou, France

Binturong day – La Boissière du Doré, France

« Fête de la Nature » (Nature day) – Paris, France

Threatened species day – Parc animalier d’Auvergne, France

June: Binturong day – Parc animalier des Pyrénées, France

Webinare about the binturong and the Bearcat Study Program -
Formation Soigneur Animalier

Festival des rives et des rêves – parc du peuple de l’herbe, France



L'ANNEE EN QUELQUES DATES

July: Webinaire on raising awareness about protection of binturongs, for the greater public
– FormationSoigneurAnimalier

Celebration of ABConservation's 5th birthday – Paris, France

Binturong day – Zooparc de Trégomeur, France

August: Weekend on conservation – Zoo de Pesheray, France

September : Webinaire, presentation of the work of a zookeeper –
FormationSoigneurAnimalier

October : Breizh'Asia , race in favor of associations working for threatened wildlife protection
– Zooparc de Trégomeur, France



PROJECTS FOR 2020

- Organization of training sessions on raising awareness about binturong protection, with the aim to prepare new speakers for educational interventions in schools, events about Nature and zoological institutions
- Interventions in zookeeper training institutions
- Organization of the World Binturong Day 2020
- Interventions in partner zoological institutions
- Interventions through webinars
- Participation in festivals, various events on Nature and environment preservation

ACTIONS IN 2019 – Palawan Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Centre



BIRTH OF THE PROJECT



Partnership signed in August 2019



October 2019: arrival of the first volunteers

December 2019: arrival of 2 new volunteers

The Palawan Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Center aims to:

1. Take part in the conservation of 2 local crocodile species, with a breeding program and rebuilding a wild population in designated reserves.
2. Promote conservation of biodiversity, with the rescue, rehabilitation and release of threatened fauna into their natural habitat.
3. Raise awareness on wildlife conservation inside the rescue center and outside.



PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT

The PWRCC, only rescue center of Palawan island (Philippines) aims to release some animals into their natural habitat. Unfortunately, a few of them are not adapted to living in the wild anymore: either because of a disability, or because they are too imprint on humans as they lived in captivity, kept as “pets” by private owners. For this reason, the PWRCC has to keep these animals on site, and this includes binturongs.

For the needs of the Bearcat Study Program, ABConservation created a first partnership with the PWRCC in 2018 to test a prototype radio collar on one of the captive binturongs to check it could be used on a wild individual. Behavioral observations on this animal were therefore carried out and revealed a high level of stereotypical behavior. After discussion with the staff and the director, it appeared that despite their will to improve animal welfare in their center, the lack of funding could not allow them to keep the animals in the best conditions.

ABConservation thus decided to create a second partnership with the PWRCC and local government to improve animal welfare and facilitate the center’s work with its rehabilitation program for certain species.



OBJECTIVES OF THE RENOVATION PROJECT

- Collecting funds to purchase materials needed to renovate and create more adapted enclosures
- Have international volunteers join the center to bring knowledge in various fields and help the staff in daily tasks and construction work.
- Offer training to the staff on medical training, enrichment, among other topics.
- Enhance medical care for injured animals and captive animal welfare.



WHAT WILL THE FUNDS BE USED FOR?

- 1) A new binturong enclosure. The center currently houses seven adults: one housed alone as it doesn't tolerate living with a group, and only three sharing another enclosure. The 3 others are kept in cages that are poorly adapted to their physiological and ecological needs, within the quarantine area. Moreover, all the enclosures are outdated and lack enrichment, and some animals show stereotypical behavior.





WHAT WILL THE FUNDS BE USED FOR?

2) Creation of new aviaries for the mynahs, eagles and hornbills that are currently kept in the quarantine area.



3) Creation of a large aviary for rehabilitation to flight for birds

4) Renovation of the old aviary that hasn't been used for several months



5) Renovation of the former reptile house that hasn't been used for years.





WHAT WILL THE FUNDS BE USED FOR?

- 6) Creation of new enclosures for civets and macaques currently housed in the quarantine area.
- 7) Building an entirely new quarantine area to offer larger spaces to confiscated animals
- 8) Purchase of veterinary supplies, including restraint equipment

- 9) Planting fruit trees, to harvest part of the feed for the animals
- 10) Installing glass panels in the current reptile house: indeed, visitors keep trying to touch snakes through the fences.



- 11) Installation of new educational panels for visitors.



Second expected project

This program should be followed by a second project, its legal terms being currently discussed. We wish to involve our partner the City-ENRO in the construction of release stations in various places of Puerto Princesa, and also in the creation of a best practice manual for these releases, including for post-release monitoring. Both elements will bring a significant improvement of the positive impact of the PWRCC, with an increased number of releases and the evaluation of their success, as such assessments have not been implemented so far.

TRAINING AND CONFERENCES



2 classroom-training sessions about raising awareness in the public
and on the conservation of biodiversity

1 Online training session on zero plastic use



6 conference about the preservation of biodiversity



COMMUNICATION



146 Publications



57 Posts



65 Tweets



4 Newsletters

1 Annual Report for 2018



14 articles in the press

2 radio shows



2 main events World Binturong Day and the 5th birthday of ABConservation



1 scientific paper published as co-authors

1 scientific paper published as authors

2 other submitted scientific papers

2019 FINANCIAL REPORT

| REVENUE | | EXPENSES | |
|--|------------------|--|------------------|
| Subscriptions | 1 638,89 | Fees related to the Bearcat Study Program and From Awareness to Actions for Nature Conservation | 20 784,36 |
| Individual donations for the BSP | 3 987,42 | - ABC house/office rental + associated housing bills | 3 754,21 |
| Individual donations for the PWRCC | 370,00 | - Volunteer compensation + visa fee + international volunteer insurance (2 contractual volunteers) | 3 975,94 |
| | | - General running fees (notarial cost for agreements, scooter rental, administrative supplies) | 2 094,47 |
| | | - Running fees for the scientific study program (guide, salary, transport fees, meals) | 669,29 |
| | | - Purchase of scientific equipment (camera traps + radio collar) | 6 581,76 |
| | | - Running fees for the awareness programs | 1 869,20 |
| | | - Flight costs (within Asia and round trip between France and the Philippines) | 1 340,70 |
| | | - Purchase of materials for the PWRCC | 182,30 |
| | | - Manufacture of handmade products for FRance | 316,49 |
| Sponsors donations (from zoological institutions and NGOs) for the BSP | 18 685,31 | Running costs in France | 5 395,44 |
| Merchandise sales | 1 996,89 | Bank fees (account management + exchange fees + commission for withdrawal abroad) | 480,71 |
| | | Educational interventions: | |
| | | - Costs for educational intervention equipment in France | 1 401,92 |
| | | - Manufacture of merchandise | 307,18 |
| | | - Gas and toll | 1256,83 |
| | | - Accomodation | 770,32 |
| | | - Food | 130,55 |
| Reimbursement of bank fees | 966,47 | - General costs (purchase of supplies, insurance, payment software, postal stamps, website, printing ink...) | 1 047,93 |
| Assets from 2018 | 10 150,21 | Fees related to training and conferences in Asia and Europe (Small Carnivore Workshop, EAZA, International Congress for Conservation Biology (ICCB)) | 2 110,56 |
| TOTAL | 37 795,19 | TOTAL | 28 290,36 |

FINANCIAL PARTNERS IN 2019

Parc Animalier
d'Auvergne

la Passerelle
Conservation

Le Parc Zoologique & Végétal des Côtes d'Armor
**ZOOPARC
TREGOMEUR**

**ZOO
LYON**

AFdPZ
ASSOCIATION FRANÇAISE
DES PARCS ZOOLOGIQUES

**DUDLEY
ZOOLOGICAL
GARDENS**

**WILD
WONDERS**
HAND-ON ANIMAL EDUCATION

S.E.C.A.S.

**Cotswold
Wildlife**
Park & Gardens

**SABUYA
COFFEE
TRADING**

A F S A

Hamerton Zoo Park

LONGLEAT

MEMPHIS
AAZK
CONSERVATION. EDUCATION

Giardino Zoologico
di Pistoia

THRIGBY HALL
WILDLIFE GARDENS

ZOO HEIDELBERG

WILD!
ZOOLOGICAL PARK

**BOISSIERE-MERVENT
CONSERVATION**
Agir pour la nature

**ZOO
BOISSIERE**
DU DORÉ (44)

FINANCIAL PARTNERS IN 2016 - 2018



A & S ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS



ACTION PLAN FOR 2020



- Launching the radio tracking
- 3 new scientific research themes around radio tracking and camera trapping



- 2 new Filipino employees
- Welcoming new interns working on the BSP



Developing the program “From awareness to actions for nature conservation”

- Screening environmental films
- Participation and organization of awareness campaigns in public places and schools
- Carrying out beach and forest cleanups
- Development of the practical training of teachers in the field of environmental education

ACTION PLAN FOR 2020



Organization of the World Binturong Day 2020



Attend and participate in workshops and conferences on the preservation of biodiversity



Develop our network and seek new partnerships



Raise awareness in France and create new educational tools

MANY THANKS TO OUR LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

