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| **Document** | **My Blog, My Philippines** |

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| **Chapter Title** | **Philippine Fauna - Part I / Animal Articles** |
| **Articles** | **Marine Turtles of the Philippines** |
|  | **Pawikan** |
|  | **Profile of the Philippine Tamaraw** |
|  | **The Majestic Philippine Eagle** |
|  | **The Tarsier** |
|  | **A Short List of Endangered Philippine Animals** |
| **Author** | **Alex Moises** |
| **Inspiration** | **Little Angel Gabby** |

**\*Marine Turtles of the Philippines**

**There are five marine turtles or sea turtles that can be found in the waters of the Philippines. These are the green turtle (Chelonia mydas), the hawksbill turtle (Eretmochelys imbricata), the olive ridley turtle (Lepidochelys olivacea), the loggerhead turtle (Caretta caretta) and the leatherback turtle (Dermochelys coriacea). All of these turtles are called "pawikan" in most Filipino dialects, although they are called by various names. The green turtle is called "bildog" by the people of Isabela province,  "talisayon" by Bicolanos,  "anuno" by the people of Palawan  and "tortuga" by Zamboangenos. The hawksbill turtle is named "karahan" by Bicolanos and "payukan" by the people of Sulu.  The olive ridley turtle has been labeled "kantiwan" by the Tagalogs of Bataan and Zambales,  "mukoy" by Bicolanos and "latun" by the people of Palawan. The loggerhead turtle is called "bulawon" by Bicolanos and "garanga" by the people of Palawan  while the leatherback turtle is called "binalimbing" by Bicolanos,  "balimbingon" by the people of Romblon and "laton" by the people of Palawan.**

**Among these five sea creatures, the leatherback turtle is the largest marine turtle. It can grow to a length of up to 190 centimeters and may weigh up to 600 kilograms. Another unique characteristic of the leatherback turtle is its thick leathery skin on the upper (dorsal) side of its body. The other four marine turtles have a carapace, which is popularly known as the "tortoise shell." The leathery skin has long ridges and it is black in color with white spots all over it. The leatherback turtle can be seen in the seas surrounding the Visayas (Central Philippines) and Bicol area that serve as feeding grounds. In contrast, the olive ridley turtle is one of the smallest marine turtles. Its length ranges from 60 to 75 centimeters and its average weight is 40 kilograms. Adult olive ridley turtles have a  protective shell that is (actually) yellow in color --- although it appears olive green when viewed from the air --- while immature and juvenile turtles have a shell that is grey in color. Olive ridley turtles can be found throughout the Philippines and they can be found nesting along the coasts of Bataan, Zambales and Batangas.  They are the only species of turtle that exhibit mass synchronize nesting call "arribada." They feed on fish and fish egg, crustaceans, mollusks, jelly fish and algae.**

**A species of turtle that is rarely seen or sighted is the loggerhead turtle. One explanation for this phenomenon is the fact that these marine turtles have no nesting sites in the Philippines. They have been sighted along the coasts of five provinces: Quezon, Albay, Camarines Sur, Palawan and Basilan. They feed on mollusks and crustaceans. The loggerhead turtle is named as such because of its large, wide head and broad, short neck. It can grow to a length of up to 120 centimeters and may weigh up to 200 kilograms.  Its carapace is reddish brown in color and it consists of five pairs of lateral scutes, which are the patterns seen on the carapace. In contrast to the loggerhead turtle, the green turtle is the most widely distributed species in the Philippines. The Turtle islands in Tawi-Tawi serve as its major nesting ground. One unique characteristic behavior of the green turtle is its eating habit. Its diet consists only of plants. It feeds on algae, seaweeds and sea grasses. Consequently, the fat formed inside its body is green and that is the reason why it is called the green turtle.**

**The last of the five marine turtles of the Philippines is one of the most beautiful marine turtles. This is the hawksbill turtle, which is the second most widely distributed turtle species in the country. Its facial appearance resembles that of a bird. It has a sharp facial look and a beak similar to a beak of a hawk. This is the reason why it is called the hawksbill turtle. It may weight up to 80 kilograms. It has a very beautiful carapace which is predominantly brown with dark and light spots. Its carapace consists of 4 pairs of scutes and it can grow to length of 90 centimeters.**

**Marine Turtles’ Carapace Info**

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| **Leatherback Turtle (Dermochelys coriacea)**    **Carapace Characteristics**  **Shape: Elongated leathery skin with long ridges  Lateral Scutes: None   Length: Up to 190 cm.  Color: Black with white spots**  **Olive Ridley Turtle (Lepidochelys olivacea)**    **Carapace Characteristics**  **Shape: Disc-shaped  Lateral Scutes: 6 to 8 lateral pairs   Length: Up to 70 cm.   Color: Olive green in adults at aerial view; yellow at close up        Grey in immature and juveniles**  **Loggerhead Turtle (Caretta caretta)**    **Carapace Characteristics**  **Shape: Somewhat elongated   Lateral Scutes: 5 lateral pairs   Length: Up to 120 cm.   Color: Varied with reddish brown as dominant color** |

**Continuation: Marine Turtles’ Carapace Info**

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| **Green Turtle (Chelonia mydas)**    **Carapace Characteristics**  **Shape: Nearly oval   Lateral Scutes: 4 lateral pairs   Length: Up to 125 cm.   Color: Predominantly brown**  **Hawksbill Turtle (Eretmochelys imbricata)**    **Carapace Characteristics**  **Shape: Heart-shaped or elongated   Lateral Scutes: 4 lateral pairs   Length: Up to 90 cm.   Color: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |

**Note:** According to "The 4th National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Republic of the Philippines, 2009," the major threats to marine or sea turtles found in Philippine waters are the following: destruction or loss of habitat or nesting sites, "large-scale illegal harvest of eggs and collection for ornamental trade...coastal development and fisheries practices, including foreign fishers poaching...."

**\*Source:** Pawikan Conservation Project, Marine Turtles of the Philippines Primer, Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau - Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippines, August, 2007;  2004 Statistics on Philippine Protected Areas and Wildlife Resources  and National Red List of Philippine Fauna, and the 4th National Report of  2009, Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB), Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippines, 2010 Version of the Website;  and World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) Website 2010

**Legend:** DENR-Philippines - Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Philippines

**Pawikan**

**One of the five marine turtles or pawikan found in the Philippines is the hawksbill turtle which is known scientifically as Eretmochelys imbricata and locally as the sisikan or pawikan. It is found throughout the Philippine archipelago but it is commonly found in the lakes and waters near the Bicol region and the seas surrounding the islands of Mindoro, Samar and Palawan. Its natural habitat is the coral reefs which serve as nesting areas. Coral reefs are rich sources of food from which the hawksbill turtle gets its food. Its main diet consists of sponges, anemones and invertebrates.**

**The pawikan or hawksbill turtle has a number of unique physical characteristics. It has a mouth which resembles the sharp beak of a bird, and this is the reason why it is called the hawksbill turtle. It has an elongated head and a somewhat sharp facial look. The combination of these characteristics gives the hawksbill turtle a bird-like appearance. It has a beautiful and sturdy shell structure called the carapace, which is popularly known as the tortoise shell. The dorsal portion of the carapace is made of  horny materials which form into patterns of distinct brown plates called scutes. The underside portion of the carapace is made of the same materials but it has a yellowish color. It is this attractive carapace that has been exploited by humans for commercial purposes.**

**This beautiful sea creature is one of the critically endangered species in the world. It is listed in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Appendix I. This means the hawksbill turtle is a protected species under national and international laws, and commercial trading of hawksbill turtle is prohibited.**

**Profile of the Pawikan or Hawksbill Turtle Info**

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| **Conservation Status   Critically endangered; Listed in CITES Appendix I**  **Names    Scientific Name: Eretmochelys imbricata    English Name / Common Name: Hawksbill turtle    Local Names: Pawikan, karahan, sisikan, payukan**  **Scientific Classification    Class: Reptilia (Reptiles)    Order: Testudinata    Family: Cheloniidae**  **Type of Animal    A cold-blooded animal belonging to the reptiles or class reptilia**  **which includes snakes and crocodiles**  **Physical Characteristics    Length: Approximately 3 feet    Weight: 40 to 80 kilograms    Carapace Length: Ranges from 2 1/2 feet to 3 feet**  **Range    Found throughout the Philippine archipelago;  Commonly found in the Bicol region, the    Visayas (Antique, Cebu, Leyte, Mindoro, Samar) and Palawan**  **Habitat**    **Coral reefs of the Philippines;**  **Coral reefs of the world**  **Threat**    **Human exploitation for commercial purposes; marine pollution**  **(debris dumped into the sea by humans); Beach development; shoreline**  **erosion; sharks as predators** |

**The Majestic Philippine Eagle**

**The Philippine eagle is one of the most well-known birds of the Philippines. It is the \*world's largest eagle with an average height of 1 meter and an average weight of 6 kilograms. It has a wingspan of 2 meters which is the largest for its kind. With such a built, it preys on large mammals such as monkeys and civets as well as on large birds like the hornbills and crows. In fact, it is known as the monkey-eating eagle and it is one of the rare types of eagles that feeds on monkeys. It is also one of the most threatened species and it is listed as a critically endangered bird.**

**Pithecophaga jefferyi, which is the scientific name of the Philippine eagle, is an animal endemic to the Philippines. The original habitat of the eagle was the rainforest of the Old Philippines. It was thought that they were once widespread throughout the islands of the Old Philippines. Today, they can be found only in Mindanao, Samar, Leyte and a few parts of Luzon where there are forest areas. Estimates of the \*\*eagle's population range from a minimum of 100 individuals to a maximum of 500 individuals.**

**The loss of habitat is the primary reason for the decline in the number of Philippine eagle. The continuous destruction of the forest remains as the single most important factor that threatens the existence of the eagle. This situation is aggravated by the eagle's breeding and mating behavior. Philippine eagles are monogamous and they live together for the rest of their lives. They breed every two years. The female lays only one egg and the couple has to take care of the chick for 20 months.**

**Once fully grown, the chick will look like a powerful bird of prey, which it is. Its massive beak and eyes are bluish gray in color and its head is adorned with light brown crown feathers which complement the dark brown feathers of the upper-side of its body. The lower-side of the body is covered with buffy white feathers. Its thigh and legs are covered with reddish brown feathers, its legs have a yellow color and its talons are black. It is the world's largest eagle, it is majestic and it is one of the national symbols of the Philippines.**

**The need to protect and preserve the Philippine eagle cannot be overemphasized. The loss of the species will be a tragedy for the scientific community, a tragedy for the Philippines and a tragedy for humanity.**

**Profile of the Philippine Eagle Info**

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| **Conservation Status: Critically endangered Scientific Name: Pithecophaga jefferyi Type of Bird: Raptor or bird of prey belonging to the Accipitridae family** |

**Continuation: Profile of the Philippine Eagle Info**

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| **Physical Characteristics:  1. Height:  Approximately one (1) meter      2. Wingspan:  Approximately two (2) meters Range: Endemic to the Philippines; Found in forest areas of Mindanao, Samar, Leyte and Luzon; Almost extinct in Luzon  Habitat: Primary dipterocarp forest Population: Between 100 to \*\*1000+ individuals (2010) Threat: Destruction of the forest** |

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**\*Some experts say it is one of the largest eagles in the world.**

**The Tamaraw of the Philippines**

**The tamaraw (tamarao) is a land animal endemic to the island of Mindoro. It is an ungulate mammal, which means it is a hoofed and warm-blooded animal. It has a physical appearance similar to a carabao, an Asiatic water buffalo. However, the tamaraw has a few distinguishing physical traits. It is smaller and stockier than the carabao and its body is covered with more hair. It has a V-shaped horn while a carabao has a C-shaped horn.**

**The tamaraw is known for its fierceness which is quite unlike the temperament of the domesticated carabao. It will attack when cornered and it will continue to fight even when it is wounded slightly. The tamaraw is a solitary animal, although there are rare instances when tamaraws live as a herd. The solitary life of the tamaraw is a natural adaptation to a forest environment and it serves to increase the tamaraw's chances for survival. Tamaraws associate with each other during the breeding season which lasts for 2 months (December and January). The gestation period for the female tamaraw takes about 9 or 10 months before it gives birth to a single calf during the wet season (June to November) when food is abundant.**

**The main diet of the tamaraw consists of a variety of grasses but it prefers to eat soft, young grasses of the cogon and talahib type. It also feed on young bamboo shoots and water plants when food supply is inadequate. The forest, open grasslands and marshy areas are the natural habitats of the tamaraw. Wide grasslands serve as feeding grounds while marshy areas serve as resting places where the tamaraw can wallow in the mud. The tamaraw's habitat in Mindoro has been reduced considerably, and the reduction in habitat area is positively correlated with the decline in the number of tamaraws.**

**At the beginning of the 20th century, the number of tamaraws was estimated at 10,000 individuals. Today, less than 200 individuals exist, which makes the tamaraw one of the most critically endangered species in the world. The destruction of the forest due to illegal logging and mining, human encroachment on the tamaraw's habitat through agriculture and infrastructure and illegal hunting are the main factors that have contributed to the terrible decline in the population of the tamaraw.**

**Profile of the Tamaraw or Tamarao Info**

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| **Conservation Status    Critically endangered; Listed in CITES Appendix I and    the Philippines' National Red List of Philippine Wild    Fauna; (Note: Status remains the same as of 2009    unless new and official reports emerge.)**  **Names    Scientific Name: Bubalus mindorensis    English Names / Common Names: Tamarao, Mindoro    Dwarf Water Buffalo    Local Names: Tamaraw, timaraw**  **Scientific Classification    Class: Mammalia     Order: Artiodactyla    Family: Bovidae**  **Type of Animal    A hoofed animal (ungulate) belonging to the class    mammalia (mammals), which is a group of warm-    blooded animals**  **Physical Characteristics    Weight: Approximately 300 kilograms    Horn : Short, stout and V-shaped    Skin Color: Dark brown to grayish black**  **Range    Found only in Mindoro; specifically, found in    Mt. Iglit, Mt. Baco and Mt. Calavite**  **Habitat    Forest, open grasslands, marshy areas**  **Population    187 individuals as of 2001**  **Threat    Destruction of the forest, human encroachment and    illegal hunting** |

**The Tarsier**

**The Philippine tarsier, which is known scientifically as Tarsius syrichta, is a small, nocturnal, tree-dwelling animal. It is one of the smallest primates in the world. The length of its body ranges from 4 inches to 6 inches long. It has a round head, which can be rotated 180 degrees, large, movable ears and extremely large and seemingly protruding eyes. Its body is covered with thick brown fur.**

**It is a nocturnal animal. It hides and sleeps in hollows near the ground during the day, and it is active at night, searching for food. It is a carnivorous animal, and it feeds on insects and reptiles. Its specialized arms and legs, which have adhesive pads at the end of its limbs, make it easy for the tarsier to leap from one tree to another when hunting for food. It is an arboreal animal and it spends its time living on trees. In fact, it gives birth while clinging to a tree.**

**Philippine tarsiers are found in the islands of Bohol, Leyte, Samar and Mindanao. Their natural habitat is the tropical rainforest.**

**Profile of the Philippine Tarsier Info**

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| **Conservation Status    Low risk and conservation dependent**  **Names    Scientific Name: Tarsius syrichta    English Names / Common Names: Philippine tarsier, tarsier    Local Names: Tarsius, maomag, tagsing**  **Scientific Classification    Class: Mammalia (Mammals)    Order: Primates    Family: Tarsiidae**  **Type of Animal    A primate belonging to the mammal group    (class mammalia), which includes monkeys,    gorillas and humans**  **Physical Characteristics    Height: 4 to 6 inches    Weight: Approximately 4.5 lbs    Body Covering: Thick brown fur    Tail: 8 to 10 inches    Eyes: Extremely large and disproportionately    large in relation to its head** |

**Continuation: Profile of the Philippine Tarsier Info**

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| **Range     Commonly found in the Visayas (Bohol, Leyte and Samar)**  **and Mindanao (Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, South Cotobato and**  **Zamboanga del Norte)**  **Habitat     Tropical rainforests; areas with dense vegetation    Threat     Destruction of the forest** |

**\*A Short List of Endangered Philippine Animals**

**Philippine animals (fauna) listed under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Appendix I are considered the most endangered species in the world. National and international trade is prohibited. Commercial trading of the animals is illegal. These animals can be used only for scientific purposes after all the individuals or parties involved in such undertakings have complied with national and international laws. Philippine animals listed under CITES Appendix II are considered animals which may become threatened with extinction in the future. National and international trade is strictly regulated.**

**Philippine Fauna - CITES Appendix I**

**1. Giant Scops Owl  
            
          Local Name : Kuwago  
          Scientific Name : Mimizuku gurneyi  
          Class : Aves (Birds)  
          Order : Strigiformes  
          Family : Strigidae  
          Range : Found in Mindanao; specifically, found in Zamboanga**

**2. Palawan Peacock Pheasant or Napoleon's Peacock-Pheasant  
            
          Local Name : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
          Scientific Name : Polyplectron emphanum  
          Class : Aves (Birds)  
          Order : Galliformes  
          Family : Phasianidae  
          Range : Found only in Palawan**

**3. Philippine Cockatoo  
            
          Local Name : Kalangay, abucay,  katala  
          Scientific Name : Cacatua haematuropygia  
          Class : Aves (Birds)  
          Order : Psittaciformes  
          Family : Cacatuidae  
          Range : Known to have occurred in Luzon, the Visayas (Bohol, Cebu,  
                       Guimaras, Leyte, Marinduque, Masbate, Negros, Panay,**

**Samar) and Mindanao, but believed to have become extinct**

**4. Philippine Eagle or Great Philippine Eagle or Monkey-Eating Eagle  
            
          Local Name : Haring ibon, tipule, manaol, maboogook, agila  
          Scientific Name : Pithecophaga jefferyi  
          Class : Aves (Birds)  
          Order : Falconiformes  
          Family : Accipitridae  
          Range : Found in the Sierra Madre mountains in Luzon;  
                       found in Leyte, Samar and Mindanao**

**5. Calamian Deer or Calamian Hog Deer  
            
          Local Name : Usa  
          Scientific Name : Axis calamianensis  
          Class : Mammalia (Mammals)  
          Order : Artiodactyla  
          Family : Cervidae  
          Range : Found only in Palawan**

**6. Dugong or Sea Cow  
            
          Local Name : Dugong, duyong, baboy dagat  
          Scientific Name : Dugong dugon  
          Class : Mammalia (Mammals)  
          Order : Sirenia  
          Family : Dugongidae  
          Range : Found in the waters of the Pacific Ocean; found  
                       and recorded to have been sighted in Batanes,  
                       Camarines Norte, Catanduanes, Manila, Mindoro; found also  
                       in Cebu, Panay Island, Tacloban, Sulu and Zamboanga**

**7. Tamaraw or Tamarao  
            
          Local Name : Tamaraw, timaraw  
          Scientific Name : Bubalus mindorensis  
          Class : Mammalia (Mammals)  
          Order : Artiodactyla  
          Family : Bovidae  
          Range : Found only in Mindoro**

**8. Hawksbill Turtle  
            
          Local Name : Pawikan, karahan, sisikan, payukan  
          Scientific Name : Eretmochelys imbricata  
          Class : Reptilia (Reptiles)  
          Order : Testudinata  
          Family : Cheloniidae  
          Range : Found in Luzon (Albay, Batanes, Cagayan, Isabela,  
                       La Union, Quezon, Sorsogon, Zambales),  
                       the Visayas (Antique, Cebu, Iloilo, Leyte, Negros Occidental,  
                       Negros Oriental, Occidental Mindoro, Samar) and  
                       Mindanao (Agusan del Norte, Davao Oriental, Misamis  
                       Occidental, Misamis Oriental and Surigao del Sur)**

**9. Leatherback Turtle or Leathery Turtle  
            
          Local Name : Pawikan, binalimbing, manahanga, kulod, ratong  
          Scientific Name : Dermochelys coriacea  
          Class : Reptilia (Reptiles)  
          Order : Testudinata  
          Family : Dermochelyidae  
          Range : Recorded to have occurred in the Visayas (Marinduque,  
                       Negros Oriental, Romblon and Southern Leyte) and Mindanao  
                       (Agusan del Norte and Zamboanga del Norte)**

**10. Olive-Ridley Turtle  
            
          Local Name : Pawikan, mukoy  
          Scientific Name : Lepidochelys olivacea  
          Class : Reptilia (Reptiles)  
          Order : Testudinata  
          Family : Cheloniidae  
          Range : Recorded to have occurred in Luzon (Albay,  
                       Batanes, Catanduanes, Isabela, Pangasinan and Zambales),  
                       the Visayas (Bohol, Cebu, Eastern Samar, Leyte,  
                       Negros Occidental, Negros Oriental and Oriental Mindoro),  
                       Mindanao (Davao Oriental, Misamis Occidental,  
                       Misamis Oriental, South Cotabato, Zamboanga del Norte  
                       and Zamboanga del Sur) and Palawan**

**Philippine Fauna - CITES Appendix II**

**1. Philippine Eagle Owl  
            
          Local Name : Kuwago, kwago  
          Scientific Name : Bubo philippensis  
          Class : Aves (Birds)  
          Order : Strigiformes  
          Family : Strigidae  
          Range : Found in Luzon, Leyte, Samar and Mindanao**

**2. Rufous Hornbill  
            
          Local Name : Kalaw  
          Scientific Name : Buceros hydrocorax  
          Class : Aves (Birds)  
          Order : Coraciiformes  
          Family : Bucerotidae  
          Range : Known to have occurred in Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao**

**3. Leopard Cat  
             
          Local Name : Maral, tamaral  
          Scientific Name : Prionailurus bengalensis  
          Class : Mammalia (Mammals)  
          Order : Carnivora  
          Family : Felidae  
          Range : Found in Cebu, Negros, Panay and Palawan**

**4. Long-Tailed Macaque or Crab-Eating Macaque  
            
          Local Name : Matsing, tsonggo, ayung, bakes, ukay, amo  
          Scientific Name : Macaca fascicularis  
          Class : Mammalia (Mammals)  
          Order : Primates  
          Family : Cercopithecidae  
          Range : Found throughout the Philippines**

**5. Philippine Tarsier  
            
          Local Name : Tarsius, maomag, tagsing  
          Scientific Name : Tarsius syrichta  
          Class : Mammalia (Mammals)  
          Order : Primates  
          Family : Tarsiidae  
          Range : Found in the Visayas and Mindanao; specifically, found in  
                       Basilan, Biliran, Bohol, Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur,  
                       Leyte, Misamis Occidental, Misamis Oriental,  
                       Samar, South Cotobato and Zamboanga del Norte**

**\*Source:** 2004 Statistics on Philippine Protected Areas and Wildlife Resources, Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau, Department of Natural Resources, Philippines, 2009 Version of the Website