

Update and visit report from Kanopi Java Sparrow project

Text and images by Simon Bruslund/EAZA Silent Forest

On June 25th, 2024 I had the opportunity to visit some of the sites of the community conservation project to benefit the Endangered Java Sparrow (*Padda oryzivora*) in near Yogyakarta in South-central Java.

The project is carried out by Kanopi an Indonesian NGO which work mostly in the central parts of Java. For the Java Sparrow project located in the Karst Hills southeast of Yogyakarta and the infamous active volcano Merapi. The climate in this landscape dominated by exposed karst rock structures is seasonally quite dry especially in years of El Nino where surface water becomes scarce for several month a year.

The holes in the larger karst cliffs are full of cavities and are favored by the Javan Sparrow as nesting sites. Kanopi work successfully with local communities and individual farmers in the extended village of Kiribogo and have 5 important project sites in the Gunung Sewo area the meaning of which is “a Thousand Mountains”.

The project is coordinated by Irfan and locally carried out by Arman whose personal roots are from the local area. They are supported by volunteers from the local Karang Taruna organization which engages local youth to participate in social and charity activities and Irfan and Arman have gathered a small group of enthusiastic participants around their activities.

Originally planned to organize larger community gatherings it has proven to be more effective to visit the busy local small livelihood farmers on their own lands having conversations directly in their fields. The group is gearing up to have a village wide agreement and pledge about no hunting and trapping in place soon. Additionally, the landowners are encouraged to actively protect the Javan Sparrow in their sites and are provided with incentives about opportunities to gain funding through adoption schemes and support for using bird friendly farming practices.



Project coordinator Arman

A limiting factor for the Javan sparrow and likely also other wildlife in the area is the need to migrate between nesting, feeding and watering sites which likely increases their risk of exposure to trapping activities. It is hoped that local activities, which provide access to suitable feeding plants as well as clean drinking water year-round, will reduce the birds need to migrate out of the safer areas. There have been sightings of up to 80 Javan sparrows in the area and it is hoped the population will increase further with active mitigation of the trapping risk soon.



Main nesting and roosting site for Javan Sparrow in a farming region with scattered karst formations

Visiting the site, seeing the Javan sparrows and other threatened songbirds in the area was amazing but even more it was incredible to meet the local heroes who work every day to project their local biodiversity heritage.

Project title:

Develop Community Based Java Sparrow monitoring through bird adoption in Gunung Sewu Geopark Yogyakarta Indonesia <https://www.kanopi-indonesia.org/works/develop-community-based-java-sparrow-monitoring-through-bird-adoption-in-gunung-sewu-geopark-yogyakarta-indonesia/>

Images in WeTransfer link

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Karst cliffs used as nesting sites with multitude of cavities used by the birds





Team



Javan sparrows



Landscapes and local farms



The Thousand mountains (Gunung Sewo) in the background of the surrounding plains





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Wilhelma
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ZOO BASEL



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The project is coordinated and carried out by Yayasan Kanopi Indonesia

