

Wildlife sightings rise in Calabarzon

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The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has reported that there has been an increase in wildlife sightings in the Calabarzon Region during the coronavirus quarantines and lockdowns.

Calabarzon comprises Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon provinces.

In a statement, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said the agency noted a rise in the number of people reporting wildlife sightings in the region since the entire Luzon was placed under enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus, the latest of which were the two juvenile species of Brahminy kite (*Haliastur indus*) spotted in Mabini, Batangas.

“With the increased sightings of wild animals occurring in the Calabarzon Region, it is important that we remind the public to leave them alone, unless they are sick, orphaned or injured as we have wildlife experts who can take care of them,” Cimatu said.

He attributed the latest development to restrained human activities resulting from the ECQ, helping nature and biodiversity rediscover their natural spaces.

Last May 10, a team from the head office of the DENR's Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) in Quezon City went all the way to Batangas to retrieve the young Brahminy kites after receiving a call from a certain Christian Atienza to whom the hatchlings were turned over by Philip Ramos who found them near his house in Barangay SantoTomas.

Ramos reportedly tried to release the juvenile raptors back into the wild but they kept returning to his house, prompting him to turn them over to Atienza, his neighbor.

Atienza later decided to call the BMB after some people started taking interest in the animals and threatening him in exchange for the raptors.

The raptors were brought to the Wildlife Rescue Center in Quezon City where they will stay until they are ready to be released back into the wild.

The possession, transportation and importation of wild animals are regulated under Republic Act 9147 or the "Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act of 2001."

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/05/18/news/regions/wildlife-sightings-rise-in-calabarzon/725571/>