

## **Bird habitat destroyed to make way for new homes**

With An area that was once a haven for birds in the green corridors along the watersheds in Bogor, West Java, has been destroyed and replaced by residential homes, leaving only a small number of trees to provide habitat for the birds.

According to Bogor Wild Birds Reservation spokeswoman Tri Susanti, in the 1930s, Bogor Botanical Garden was home to 150 bird species from the lowlands and highlands of Java.

But by 2010, she said, according to research by the Bogor Institute of Agriculture (IPB), the number had shrunk to 46 species.

“We went bird-watching in Bogor Botanical Garden some time ago and we only found 33 species of birds there,” Santi said recently.

She said she had spotted many gray-cheeked green pigeons and coppersmith barbets, while other species were hard to find.

“There used to be many yellow-throated hanging parrots birds — or *Loriculus pusillus* — in the botanical garden. But we can rarely find one these days,” she said.

Santi added that Bogor Botanical Garden used to be home to many species of birds from Mount Salak and Mount Gede Pangrango regions.

She said the trees in the green corridors had acted as perfect stop-off points from where the birds could continue their journey to the botanical garden.

However, she added, the green corridors had gradually been destroyed to make room for the houses.

Meanwhile, Indonesia Wild Birds Reservation resource development officer Caecilia Yulita Novia said that the organization, in cooperation with the city’s Sanitation and Parks Agency, had formed the Birds Around Us (Baru) program to improve the green corridors in Bogor.

“We want Bogor to be a bird-friendly city. We want to attract birds into the city by planting a variety of trees. We aim to plant flamboyant and Bougainvillea trees to attract insect-eating birds, and flowers to attract pollen-eating birds,” she said.

With the Baru program, Caecilia said she hoped that both residents and developers would help by planting trees for birds.

“Through the program, we hope that residents and developers will come to understand the importance of revitalizing the green corridors because birds offer a natural indication of the quality of the environment,” she said.

Caecilia added that Bogor had the potential to be home to many birds.

Separately, Dian Herdiawan, head of the parks division with the Sanitation and Parks Agency, said his unit was preparing to build a 3-hectare urban forest around Jl. Ahmad Yani.

“The West Java administration will be offering financial support of up to Rp 1.5 billion to build the urban forest,” Dian said.

He said his unit would plant various fruit trees to attract birds, including salak trees. “We hope the urban forest will become new habitat or just a temporary stop-off for the birds,” Dian said, adding that Bogor currently had around 14,000 trees, including walnut, rasamala and acacia trees.