

## AITo Update December 2018: It Keeps Getting Better

In the AITo newsletter published last month, a remarkable bit of news was announced: in Tompotika in September, a record 72 maleo birds were counted at one time on AITo's protected nesting ground.

But that's now old news: on November 14, that record was smashed when AITo staff counted **108 maleos** at one time. More than one hundred endangered maleo birds all at once: this represents a **quadrupling** of the number of individual birds seen at this site since the AITo partnership began in 2006, and at least triple the number that have been recorded anywhere in the maleo's entire range in the last two decades. In all other places or times this century, just seeing 10 birds would be considered a large number.

And it wasn't just a brief anomaly: during this year's peak maleo nesting season, which began in September and will continue into early 2019, we've been regularly seeing maleo numbers in the 80's and 90's.



November 2018: A sight like this has not been seen for decades.

*Photo: Sandhy Bawotong*

Over the course of the season, that's hundreds--likely over a thousand--of endangered maleo pairs making the arduous trek to AITo's protected nesting ground to lay their one precious egg. That's a **thousand** big beautiful pinkish-brown maleo eggs incubating safely in the sand for 2-3 months until a healthy, independent chick hatches out. That's a population of the endangered maleo that is **increasing and recovering**--not declining and disappearing as it is doing most everywhere else.

And this is all thanks to **you**, and your past support of AITo. As a member of the AITo alliance, you are among a small group of diverse humans that came together in 2006 to see if we could, in fact, reverse the decline and disappearance of the maleo that was happening across its range. You joined with other people from many nations, backgrounds, ages, and perspectives, all coming together for the sake of one common goal: **let not the maleo go extinct**. That was what it took, and together with the maleos, we did it. We reversed the decline. The maleo will **not** go extinct--at least, not here.

And, all together, we're still doing it. The maleo population is growing in Tompotika, and now we're helping that happen elsewhere as well. The AITo alliance is also growing, its diverse human members are thriving, and now many other precious and imperiled gems of nature--sea turtles, bats, anoas, forests and reefs--are gaining health and protection under better human care.

Some years ago, recently-departed former president of the United States, George H.W. Bush, called on all of us to be a "kinder, gentler" people. Have we heeded that call? The need to do so--for the sake of *all*--seems more urgent now than ever.

But think of this: those thousand pinkish-brown maleo eggs nestled safely in the sand of your protected nesting ground are, as the late president put it, "a thousand points of light." A thousand small beings of hope, a thousand small packages of promise. In some small but profound way, perhaps these thousand



Nestled in the sand, a point of light. *(Imagine it twinkling!)*  
Photo: M. Summers

pinkish-brown points of light are helping to kindle a kinder and gentler humanity, to illuminate a path toward a greener and healthier world.

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Your past support of ALTo has empowered a kinder, gentler humanity and a healthier world for all. Thank you!

The ALTo partnership needs your help going forward. ***Please help kindle thousands more points of light like the recovery of the maleo.*** Please make an online gift to ALTo, [here](#).

Or, send your check today to:  
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