Auala i le Mauga o Alava
Mt. Alava Trail

O le ala sopo lenei e sa fausia ile taimi o iai le atouila e fe'avea'i ai tagata mai Vatia ma Fagasa i Utulei. O le ala e fai si faigatā. O le tumutumu o loo iai se fale Samoa e mafai ona malolō ai. E faaauau pea lau savaliga i le ala i le va o Vatia ma Alava, e tele faasitepu poo apefa'i i le ala ma o nisi apefa'i e tu sasa'o. O nei lau'ele'ele, sa tausia e Samoa i le afe ma afe o tausaga o te'a se'ia pa'ia ona po. E avatu le agaga faafetai tele i afifio'aga o Fagasa, Pago Pago, Afono, ma Vatia i le faatagaina o tagata feoa'i e sopo. Faamolemole ave ia lava suavai taumafa ma savali male fa'aaloalo.

Hike through beautiful rainforest with spectacular views on this moderately strenuous trail. At the summit, you will find a fale (traditional Samoan house), the remains of a cable car, and TV antennas. If you continue past the summit you will arrive at the village of Vatia. Ladders along the trail ensure secure footing between the top of Mt. Alava and the village of Vatia. Stay on the trail and respect the village land that has been cared for by Samoans for thousands of years. Respectful thanks to the villages of Fagasa, Afono, Pago Pago, and Vatia for allowing us to experience this land.

Mamao mai le Mauga o Alava - 3.5 maila
Distance to Mt. Alava summit - 3.5 miles

Mamao aga'i i Vatia - 5.2 maila
Distance to Vatia Village - 5.2 miles

Ala Sopo i Vatia
Vatia Trail

O le ala sopo lenei sa muamua fausia e tagatanu'u e faimalaga mai Vatia i le tumutumu o Alava ona ifo ai lea i le fagaloa i Pago Pago mo fefa'ataua'iga. Ile 1960 sa fausia ai pou-uila e fa'ao'o ai le eletise mo le a'oga ale malo i Vatia. A'e le'i fausia le ala-ta'avale ile 1979 i Vatia, e fa'alagolago tagatanu'u i lenei ala sopo. O lenei ala sopo e ta'amilo i tafatafa o tulagafale sa nofoia e tagata anamua, ma ti'a e fai ai seugalupe. E fai fo'i si faigata, ma e lua ile tolu itula le savaliga. E tele sitepu , ma o nisi ala e tu sa'o. E talosaga atu e sa le sopo i aso sa aua tapua'iga ale nu'u. Fa'amolemole sopo ma le fa'aite'ite ma tumau ile le ala sopo o lo'o fa'ailoga e le paka-fa'asao.

This trail follows a traditional route. The people of Vatia used it to travel to and from Pago Pago Harbor for trade. In the 1960s powerlines were installed along this route to bring electricity to Vatia. In 1979 the road to Vatia was built to increase ease of access. This reduced traditional use of the trail.

The hike is very strenuous. Ladders along the trail ensure secure footing. You will pass through several unmarked settlements near star mounds and adze quarries. That National Park of American Samoa discourages use of this trail on Sundays—a sacred day of worship. Please respect the villagers and their privacy. Stay on the trail. Respect the village land that has been cared for by Samoans for thousands of years.

Mamao mai le Mauga o Alava - 1.7 maila
Distance to Mt. Alava summit - 1.7 miles

Mamao mai le Mafa Fagasa - 5.2 maila
Distance to Fagasa Pass - 5.2 miles

Fuga
Parrotfish

O le gutu o le fuga
Mouth of a parrotfish

O le fuga, e tele lona aoga ile faia o oneone o le sami. E fiafia le fuga e lamu limu, ma'ama'a, ma amu ona toe fa'asau lea i fafo pe'a fai lona fe'au-mamao. E safu mai i o latou nifo ma gutu 'u'umi limu ma 'amu e 'a'ai ai. A mae'a ona toe lafoa'i lea o le oneone mamā (o le 'amu ua faamaluina).

O nisi fuga e o'o i le tone le mamafa o le oneone e maua mai ai i le tausaga. O le tele o le oneone o lo'o tatou fiafia ai i matafaga i aso nei na maua mai i fuga. O fuga e momoe i le po, ma lalafi i pupuma'a i le a'au. E tele ituaiga fuga e fa'aoga o latou fāua e fau ai 'afu'afu pei ni ofaga e malutia ai o latou tino i le po. Masalo o le 'afu'afu lea e puipui ai ne'i sogitia mai e o latou fili o loo sa'ili ni mea e a'ai ai i le po.

Parrotfish are named for their specialized teeth, which are fused together to form a beak-like structure. They eat by scraping algae from rock and coral with this beak. As they eat, they take in large amounts of coral.

A special structure in their throats, called the pharyngeal mill, grinds down the algae and coral. The parrotfish digest the algae and then excrete almost pure sand (ground-up coral). Some adult parrotfish can produce a ton of sand each year! Most of the beach sand we enjoy today came from the parrotfish.

Parrotfish sleep at night, hidden among cracks and holes in the reef. Many kinds of parrotfish make a special mucus cocoon around their bodies each night. We guess that the cocoon hides their smell from predators looking for an easy meal.

Le Vaomatua

O le vaomatua moni lenei, e o'o ile 125 i le 300 inisi le loloto e o timuga 'e to'ulu i le tausaga. ma e atoa le 500 o ituaiga o fugala'au, vao, ma isi la'au 'ese'ese e maua ai. O le tele 'o la'au 'o ile vaomatua, na fe'avea'i mai e matagi, totonu o manava o manufelelei, pe tafea mai i le sami. O nisi o la'au na aumai e tagata folau. E tolusefule pasene o la'au, ua na'o Samoa lava o loo maua ai. Aua ua tele tu'aiga la'au, e tauva la'au mo avanoa ole vaomatua ma le susulu ole la. E fai fo'i ma nofoaga o nisi manu tāua. I totonu o le li'o lea e iai pe'a, lupe, pili, ma vaaia ai uū i nisi taimi. E faalagolago manu i le vaomatua mo o latou ofaga ma mea'ai.

Tropical Rainforest

This is a true rainforest. Rainfall ranging from 125 to 300 inches a year supports nearly 500 species of flowers, trees, and ferns. Thirty percent of the plants are found only on the Samoan islands. Most plants arrived on the wind, in the stomach of birds, or floating on ocean debris. Samoan explorers also brought some species. These plants constantly compete for space and sunlight. Even in the bright tropical sun, the forest can be dark, as taller vegetation shades the plants below. The rainforest also houses some very special animals. Pe'a (flying fox), pigeons, doves, lizards, and coconut crabs depend on the native forest for shelter and food.

U'ūu
O le uu o se meaola totino a Samoa e seasea va'aia. E fa'aaoga ona maiuu malolosi e ta'ei ai niu.

Coconut crab
This rare native animal uses its powerful claws to open coconuts.

Manutagi
O Manutagi e fa'alagolago i fua o laau ola i le vaomatua.

Purple-capped fruit dove
This rare fruit-eater depends on the native rainforest habitat. Traditionally, they were baited and hunted for chiefly games.

Pepe a'e
O le tu'iiga pepe lea e na'o Tutuila e va'aia ai.

Samoan swallowtail
This endemic butterfly is only found on Tutuila Island.

Sisi
O le sisi fanua lea a tele lona aoga ile vaomatua o le mafua'aga lea o lo'o i lalo ai le va'ava'aiga o le malo Amerika Samoa.

Zebrina snail
This native snail is a protected endangered species that contributes greatly to the rainforest ecosystem.

Pe'a vao
O le Pe'a na te fa'afeusua'ia ma fa'asalalau fatu o laau.

Samoan flying fox
This native mammal pollinates flowers and spreads seeds. Its cultural significance is embedded into Samoan chiefly titles.

Fagaloa i Pago Pago
Pago Pago Harbor

O le faga i Pago Pago e tele ona fa'aaoga mo fefa'ataua'iga ma taua ai va'a folau i senituri ua te'a nei. Na fefa'atauaiga ai to'ima'a mo tagata folau, 'e oo atu i le Atu Kuki.

For centuries people have used this large natural harbor for commerce. Samoan sea-going boats traded basalt adzes as far away as the Cook Islands. On a clear day, you can see Upolu, Samoa, 53 miles to the west.

1880

Sa malilie le malo o Amerika ma tagata Amerika Samoa, e amata fa'aaoga le faga I Pago Pago 'e teu ai malala mo va'a afi a le Navy.

The US Navy recognized the strategic value of this natural deepwater port. They stockpiled coal on the shoreline for the next 40 years.

1941

Na toe fa'alautelē ai le nofoaga o le Navy mo le taua lona lua a le lalolagi.

The US Navy builds a larger base for WWII.

1954

Sa fausia ai le ulua'i falei'a tuna i le fagaloa e ta'ua o le Van Camp.

Van Camp builds the first tuna cannery in the harbor.

1980

Sa fa'aleagaina le va'alele o le US Air Force P-3 Orion a'o fai se fa'aliga ile aso o le fu'a.

The US Air Force P-3 Orion crashed into the tramway wire spanning Pago Pago Harbor as it passed low over the Fagatogo malae.

1990-91

Na fa'aleagaina nu'u, le vaomatua, a'au, ma gogoto va'a e iva i le fagaloa I le afa o Ofa.

Cyclone Ofa flattened buildings and rainforests, damaged reefs, and sank nine ships in the harbor.

2009

Sa fa'aleagaina le fa'agaloa i galu e 22 mita le maualuluga, na afua mai i mafui'e tetele ile va o Samoa ma Amerika Samoa.

An earthquake generated tsunami waves up to 22 meters high that engulfed the shores of Pago Pago.

Sula sula
O fua'o vae-mumu e nonofo i kolone i luga o tumutumu o la'au.

The red-footed booby nests in large colonies like many sea-birds, but unlike most seabirds they nest in trees.

Sula leucogaster
O fua'o vae-'ena'ena e ofaga i mapu'e ma ma'ama'a. E fa'atasi ile tausaga ona feusua'i, ae a tu'ufua, 'e na'o le 2 ilo 3 fua.

The brown booby nests on the bare rock cliffs. Breeding once annually, boobies lay two to three eggs, often with only one chick surviving. The parents feed the chick fish and squid until it can fly and catch its own food.

Phaethon lepturus
O le tava'esina, o se manulele e lalelei ile va'ai. E fiafia e fafau latou nofoaga i totonu o laugapapa.

The white-tailed tropicbird is a beautiful sight to see. These birds are usually found nesting in ferns.

Motu o Pola

Le so'otaga o le si'osi'omaga fa'alenatura ma le aganu'u

O le motu o Pola o se nofoaga puipuia e ofaga i ai manufelelei o le sami. E 400 futu (120 mita) le maualuga o itu mauga, e mafai o ona ofaga ma tu'ufua ai gogo, atafa, ma fuaō. O la'au o lo'o ola i Pola ua maua ai nofoaga e tu'ufua o fua'o-vae-mumū ma tava'esina.

O le tuasivi o Polauta o se mapu'e e afua mai i mauga-mu, ae le o se gutu o se mauga-mū. I aso anamua, e masani ona fe'a'ei taulele'a i le tumutumu o Pola 'e faatino ai lo latou totoa.

Pola Island

A place where nature and culture converge

The protected area on Pola Island is the most active seabird nesting area here. The 400-foot cliffs make ideal nesting areas for noddies, frigatebirds, and brown boobies. The trees provide good roosts for red-footed boobies and white-tailed tropicbirds. The Polauta Ridge is an up-thrust dike (layer of molten rock), not a volcanic caldera rim. It is made from very erosion-resistant rock. Pola Island is also an important cultural site. It connects to a time when young men would climb to the top of the Pola to demonstrate their bravery.

Ua tupu se Motu

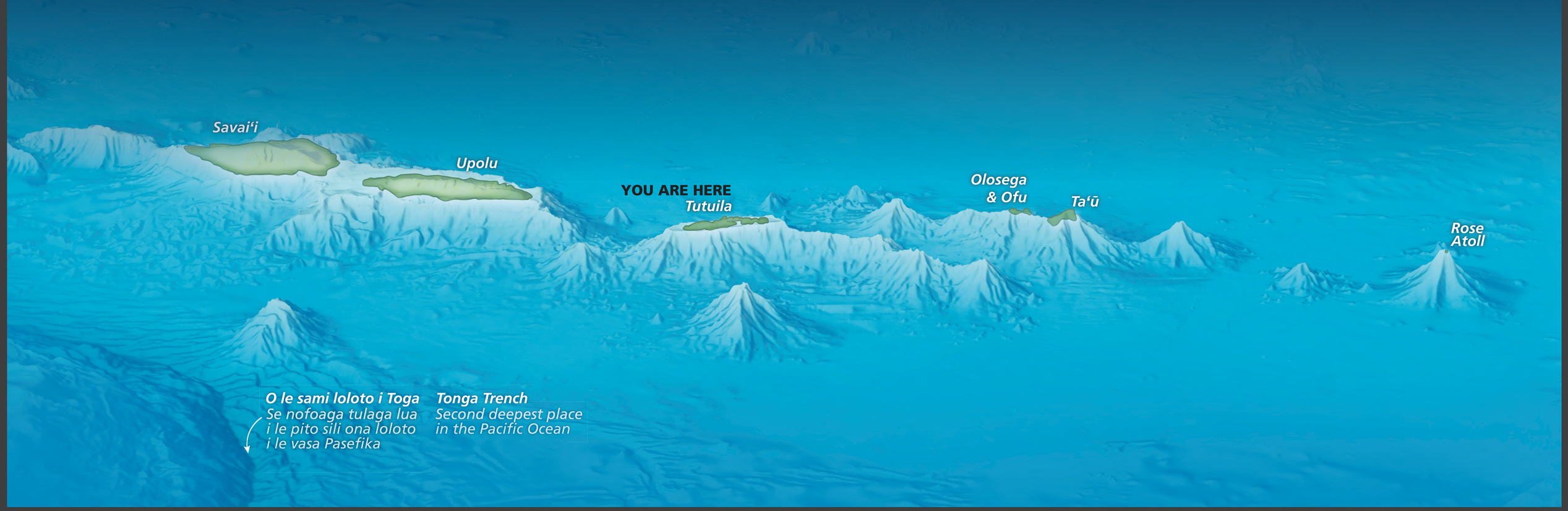
O le motu lenei o Tutuila e afua mai i maugamū, ma ‘e 1.3 miliona tausaga lona matua.

O le motu o Upolu ma Savai’i, e atoa ma le tasi miliona le matua pe’a fa’atusa i Tutuila. O le se’ese’e lemū le papa mafola i luga o se vaega ‘a’asa mai le ta’ele o le lalolagi, ma afua a’e ai se maugamū. A olaola tetele le maugamu i se taimi pu’upu’u, e fa’aputu se’i o’o ina pa i luga ma maua ai se motu. O le fese’eta’i o le oga’ele’ele o le Pasefika I luga ane o se vaega ‘a’asa ole lalolagi, ua maua ai atumotu o Samoa. A se’e ’ese le motu mai luga o vaega ‘a’asa o le lalolagi, ua fa’agata ai le tupu o se motu ma ua le toe olaola ai se maugamū. A toe olaola le vevela o vaega ‘a’asa o le lalolagi, ona toe tupu ai lea o se isi motu.

An Island is Born

Activity from multiple volcanoes formed the Samoan Islands 1.3 million years ago.

The islands of Samoa to the west are about one million years older than the islands of American Samoa. The movement of the Pacific Plate over a hotspot created this chain of islands. As the plate moves slowly over a hotspot a new volcano forms. If there is a lot of volcanic activity in a short time, layers of lava build up. When they break the ocean surface, they become a new island. Once the island moves away from the hotspot, the island stops growing. It is no longer an active volcano. Another island begins to form when the hotspot becomes active again. Due to the continuous motion of the plate, we are moving toward China at a rate of three inches per year.



Fasa
Screwpine

O tina o lo'o lalagaina
O 'ietoga o measina Samoa,
'e fa'aoga mo fa'alavelave.

Local Women Weaving
Fine-mats are highly valued as a traditional gift at weddings, funerals, and ceremonies.

Laufala ua mamago, ua saunia 'e lalaga.
Processed screwpine, ready to weave.

Fa'ato'aga laufala • Screwpine grove

Falamoe lalaga mai laufala • Screwpine mats

O le laufala o se la'au totō, 'e afua mai le aiga o la'au ua ta'ua o paina na aumai i Samoa i aso anamua. E tolu tu'aiga laufala o lo'o maua i Samoa, ma 'e tele latou aoga. E fafau ai fala-moe, meataulima ma ato, ula manogi, 'ie-toga, ma sa fa'aoga fo'i e fai ai la o va'a-folau anamua.

Laufala is an indigenous tree that reproduces through shoots from the roots and from seeds. Its fruit looks like a small pineapple. There are three types of laufala found in Samoa. The young laufala leaves, called lautolotolo, each have a particular use. People harvest them to create traditional Samoan handicrafts. This includes fine-mats, hats, toys, baskets, garments, sails for sail boats, and fragrant garland.

Fua o le laufala • Laufala fruit

Ano fala • Mat texture

Pe'a Fua
Flying Fox

Apaa'I o le Vaomatua

O Pe'a e taua e feavea'ia fatu o la'au ma fa'asalalau ina ia fa'ateteleina ai la'au o le vaomatua. O pe'a (tolu ituaiga) o manu Samoa moni e i le aiga o manu vaefā. E lua ituaiga pe'a 'e maua i Samoa; o pe'a vao ('e uliuli atoa), ma le pe'a fanua (e pa'epa'e lona ua). E u'umi o latou apa'au o'o atu i le 2 - 3 futu, ma e maua a latou mea'ai i le lelei o lo latou sosogi ma le va'ai. O fua o le āoa, o se mea'ai taua mo pe'a ona e fua fa'alausosoo i le tausaga atoa. E ta'ua fo'i i talatu'u fa'asamoa le aoga o le pe'a ile aganu'u ma le vaomatua.

Wings of the Forest

Fruit bats are the island's primary pollinators. They disperse seeds, making them essential in maintaining our native forest. The Samoan flying fox (pe'a vao) and the white-collared flying fox (pe'a fanua) are the only native mammals in American Samoa. The flying fox have wingspans of two to three feet. They find food by both sight and smell. The banyan tree is an important source of food because it produces fruit throughout the year. Samoan legends regard flying foxes as guardians of the forests and rescuers of people in distress.

Saua

Atonu o Saua le ‘ele’ele na taunu’u muamua i ai tagata folau o le Polenisia na ‘ainā ai Samoa i le 3,000 tausaga ua tuana’i. I tala tu’ugutu, o le ulua’i ‘ava na faia e Tagaloa, le Tui Manu’a muamua, ma le toa o Pava. E mafai ona finauina fa’apea o Saua na amata mai ai le aganu’u a Samoa. O Saua o le fanua muamua e suluia e le la pe ‘a oso i aso uma, e iai le alagaupu, “ E afua mai Saua, se’ia pa’ia Agalega.” Ua maua e le ‘au su’esu’e fa’a’akiolosi le 135 o fa’amaoniga e aofia ai pāma’a, fa’avae o fale, o ma’aolo, o pa na atia’e, o ti’a, ma vai’eli.

Saua is believed to be the site where the first Polynesian explorers settled in Samoa about 3,000 years ago. According to oral tradition, the first ‘ava ceremony was performed by the god, Tagaloa, and the hero, Pava. It can be argued that Saua is the place where Samoan culture began. Saua is the first place in all of Samoa to be touched by the rising sun each day, hence the proverb, “It starts from Saua but reaches Agalega.” Archeologists have found 135 features that connect to early settlements of Saua. These include enclosures, house platforms, sacred sites, grinding stones, rock alignments, walls, earth mounds, and wells.

O lse vai’eli o anamua
Ancient water well

Mati’e, ‘e mate’ia ‘o se tu’ugamau
Relocated graves

O maaolo ua lamolemole i le olo ai o to’imaa
Bedrock worn by grinding stone adzes

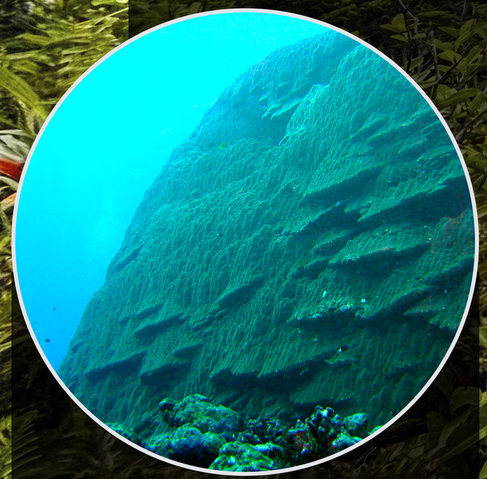
Tulagafale ‘e mate’ia ‘e ova male lima selau tausaga
A home, perhaps more than 500 hundred years old

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Paka Fa'asao o Amerika Samoa

Ua lisiina e le ofisa o Paka Faasao a Amerika (USA) 'ele'ele mai motu e tolu o lo'o i ai ala'alafaga o Afono, Vatia, Pago Pago, Fitiuta, Fagasa, Faleasao, ma Ofu mo le 50 tausaga. E auai fo'i ogāsami e kuata maila mai le matafaga aga'i ile tai. Sa tu'uina mai e le Konekeresi i le 1998 le tulaga aloa'ia i le Ofisa o Paka Faasao mo lenei lisi ae sa amata galuea i le 1993 ina ua malilie matai o ia nu'u e tu'uina i le Kovana le pule na te sainia ai nei lisi.

O le sini o le Paka Faasao o Amerika Samoa o le fesoasoani ia fa'asaoina le vaomatua, pe'a, eleele fa'ailogaina fa'aakiolosi, a'au, aganu'u a Samoa, ma ia faia se nofoaga e fiafia ai tagata asiasi ma tagatanu'u.



A'au amu • coral reef

Siva Samoa • Traditional Dance

Pea'a Fua • Flying Foxes

National Park of American Samoa

The National Park of American Samoa protects rainforest, flying foxes, and coral reefs. It also preserves archeological sites and Samoan culture. The park provides a place for enjoyment for all people of the world.

The US National Park Service leases land on three islands from the villages of Afono, Vatia, Pago Pago, Fiti'uta, Fagasa, Faleasao, and Ofu. The American Samoa government also leases 0.25 miles of the ocean surrounding the islands to the National Park Service.

The US Congress authorized the National Park of American Samoa in 1988. Then, the matai (village chiefs) authorized the governor to sign the lease, creating the park in 1993.

‘Ulu
Breadfruit

O mea’ai taumafa pito sili o le teropika

O le ‘ulu sa folau mai ma tagata Polenisia i Samoa. E tusa ma le ‘afa o l e tausaga e fua ai ulu ae fua tetele i masina o Tesema, Ianuari, Iulai, ma Aokuso. O le ulu o ‘e maua mai ni fugala’au se tele o pipi’i i le fune. E tele le aoga o le ulu.

- le ‘apulupulu o le ‘au o le lau’ulu e tului ai mata e afaina pe a pa’ia.
- lona ‘apulupulu fo’i e lamulamu pei o se pululole.
- ‘E fa’aaoga lau’ulu e ofu ai mea’ai pe a tao i le umu.
- le pa’u o lona a’a e lalaga ai upega ma manoa fagota.
- ulupē e fai ai masoā mo siapo po’o lauu’a.
- la’au mai oga’ulu e fai ai fale. E malolosi ma e umi ona aoga. E fa’aaoga i amopou ma pou tū o fale tetele. E ta’u le fale e fai i la’au mai le ulu o le fale’ulu.
- E aoga fo’i lālā’ulu e fai ai matau o paopao.

A Tropical Superfood

Ancient Polynesian seafarers introduced the ‘Ulu (breadfruit tree) to the Samoan islands. This evergreen produces fruit in both summer and winter. The breadfruit itself is an “aggregate fruit.” It is made of many flowers imbedded inside a flowering head.

Breadfruit grows very abundantly and has many traditional uses.

- The juice from the crushed leaf stem helps injured eyes.
- ‘Ulu sap can be chewed as a chewing gum.
- The leaves are wrapped around food to be baked in an umu (earth oven).
- The bark from root sprouts can be used to make upega’ulu (nets) and fishing lines.
- Very ripe breadfruit can be used to make a glue for siapo (tapa) mulberry bark cloth.
- The wood of the tree is used as posts for making a fale (house).
- The wood of the tree can be used to make the paopao (outrigger canoe).

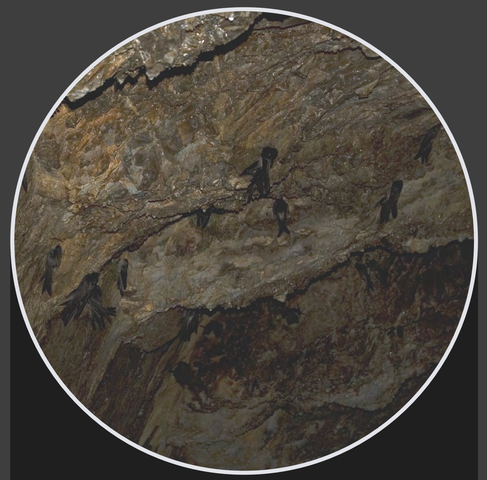
Pe'ape'a Swiftlets

O se va'aiga masani i le atumotu le lele saosaoa a le pe'ape'a. E felelei lava ma pu'e manu nini'i. E au i le afe iniseti e 'ai e le pe'ape'a e tasi i le aso. O le pe'ape'a, e ola ma ofaga i totonu o ana ma iloa fa'alogo i le pogisa. E gaoisa o ō latou ofaga i ana, ma 'e puipuia ai mai fili e fa'atama'ia i latou. E fa'apipi'i fa'atasi vaovao ma limulimu i o latou fāua ma maua ai se ofaga. E lagona atu tagi 'o pe'ape'a i le ana pogisa pei ni la'au o tātā fa'atatagi.

A common sight throughout the islands is the quick, darting flight of the white-rumped swiftlet *(Aerodramus spodiopygius)*. These small, fast birds catch insects in flight, eating hundreds each day. Known in Samoan as pe'ape'a, swiftlets have developed the ability to echolocate. They nest in caves, which helps protect them from predators. These little birds use their saliva to glue lichens and mosses together to make a nest. You can identify swiftlets by the clicking of their echolocation.

'E fiafia pe'ape'a e nofo i ana.

Though swiftlets will nest in trees, they prefer to nest in the relative safety of caves.



'E fiafia 'e momoe i le pogisa. E fi ani pe'ape'a 'o 'e va'aia ilea ta.

Swiftlets nest in almost complete darkness. Can you find all the birds?

'E tasi lava le fua n atē fōfoina.

Used year after year, the swiftlet nest typically has a single egg.

Tava'e
Tropicbird

O le tava'e, o se tasi o manulele lalelei o Samoa 'ona o ōna fulu sinasina ma lona si'usi'u e umī. E ofaga i la'au maualuluga o le vaomatua. A tu'ufua, e tasi le fua na te fofoaina.

O le tava'e, o se faifaiva maoa'e. E tofu sa'o mai se mea maualuga e pu'e i'a nini'i ma nufe'e. E lauiloa le tava'e e le au faifaiva, 'aua 'e iloa ai 'aui'a. E tāua fo'i le tava'e i le 'au faifaiva ona o fulu sinasina e fa'aaoga e fai ai maunu i'a. E nonoa fulu tava'e i mātau e fa'atosina ai malau (squirrelfish) ma isi i'a o le a'au.

The tava'e (white-tailed tropicbird) is one of Samoa's most beautiful birds because of its bright white feathers and long tail. Tropicbirds nest high in rainforest trees and lay a single egg. Like most seabirds, the white-tailed tropicbird flies gracefully through the air.

Tropicbirds are masters at fishing. They make plunging dives from great heights for small fish and squid. The tava'e is well known to Samoan fishermen, who watch the birds to help them locate schools of fish. Fishermen also value the tava'e for their white breast feathers. They use the feathers as fishing lures to attract malau (squirrelfish) and other reef fish.

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Laau Lafulafuā

O se Tasi o Taufaamatau Sili o le Vaomatua

O la'au lafulafuā mai fafo le isi lea mafuaga 'o fa'aleagaina ai o tatou vaomatua. O le tupu olaola o la'au lafulafuā, ua pepē ai la'au fa'aleaganu'u i tatou vaomatua. O le la'au lafulafuā aupitoa'i va'aia tele o le tamaligi palagi (Falcataria moluccana). O tamaligi e gaosia le kasa o le nitoroseni ma e tupu vave na'uā e o'o lava i palapala le lelei. Ua sili atu lona maualuga i isi laau uma ma ua malu'ia ai asi, tamanu, niu, ma isi laau masani. E sili atu i le 250 ituaiga laau ese fa'alafuā i Tutuila, ma o se lu'itau tele le tautaofiofi o le sosolo.

Ata pito i tua: Avapui
Background Image: Wild Ginger

Invasive Plants

One of the Greatest Rainforest Threats

Non-native plants do not have the enemies here that they have in their homelands. Many out-compete the native plants for space, sun, and nutrients. This endangers the native plants and everything that depends on them. As a result, birds and bats struggle to find food.

There are over 250 non-native plant species in the Samoan Islands, including mint weed, mile-a-minute vine, wild ginger, and Luecaena. One of the great challenges is to stop their spread. A highly visible example is the tamaligi palagi tree (Falcataria moluccana). A nitrogen-fixing tree, the tamaligi grows extremely fast, even on poor soil. It grows to be the tallest tree in the forest, shading out native trees.

'Aufaigaluega 'o lo'o fa'atama'iaina tamaligi i totonu o nu'u.
Crew stripping off the bark to kill tamaligi trees on village land.

Fue saina
Mile-a-Minute

Pride of India

Vao migi
Wild Mint

'A vave fa'a'umatia, 'e puipui mai ai la'au fa'aleaganu'u.
Removing strawberry guava trees helps preserve native plant life.