



Birds of American Memorial Park *Can we keep them safe?*

Saipan in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands has vibrant bird life. A recent inventory of the forest birds of American Memorial Park turned up a beautiful array of species within the park's forest and mangroves. It may be difficult to tell from the cheery colors of the Micronesian honeyeater (*Myzomela rubratra*) or the Mariana fruit dove (*Ptilinopus roseicapilla*), but imminent danger is lurking just around the corner. Just one hundred and twenty miles to the South, War in the Pacific National Historical Park on Guam paints a much gloomier picture. In one of the most traumatic depictions of the devastating effects of invasive species, Guam's bird life has been nearly exterminated by the introduced brown tree snake (*Boiga irregularis*). In as little as 50 years, Guam went from having spectacular birds of its own to the point where bird song is no longer part of the ambiance in the forests, and bird-eating snakes lurk in every corner.

Fortunately, although brown tree snakes have been reported, this fate has not yet befallen Saipan. Vigilance at the ports of entry coupled with a determined snake control task force has been the only way to abate this pestilence and keep Saipan's unique bird populations alive and thriving. To learn more visit: http://hawaiiconservation.org/_library/documents/2008hcc/presentations/camp-opt.pdf and http://www.hear.org/species/boiga_irregularis/pdfs/stopthebts20080422.pdf



bridled white-eye
(*Zosterops conspicillatus*)



little terns (*Sterna albifrons*)



white-throated ground-dove
(*Gallicolumba xanthonura*)



orange-cheeked waxbill
(*Estrilda melpoda*)



golden white-eye
(*Cleptornis marchei*)



Micronesian honeyeater
(*Myzomela rubratra*)



Mariana fruit dove
(*Ptilinopus roseicapilla*)



Pacific reef heron
(*Egretta sacra*)



rufous fantail (*Rhipidura rufifrons saipanensis*) nest

— C. Nash