



Amerika Samoa

– o se nofoaga e sili ona matagofie o lo’o tatou i ai –

American Samoa

– a place of spectacular beauty at our doorstep –

Emerging from the deep ocean floor, the remote South Pacific islands of American Samoa are home to steep volcanic mountains covered by tropical rainforests and surrounded by colorful coral reefs. The seven islands are the only U.S. Territory south of the Equator. In keeping with the meaning of the word Samoa, "sacred earth", the National Park of American Samoa helps protect "fa'asamoa"—the customs, beliefs, and traditions of the Samoan people.



Amu (coral)

Reefs are complex habitats built by corals and algae in shallow tropical waters. Over 250 species of corals occur locally. One of the world's largest corals (23 feet tall by 135 feet wide) is found here.



Lupe (Pacific pigeon)

Manulele (birds)

Pacific pigeons, many-colored fruit doves, and blue-crowned lorries dwell in the rainforest. White-tailed tropicbirds and red-footed boobies cruise the coast, and some shorebirds migrate to Alaska to nest.



Alogo (lined surgeonfish)

I'a (fish)

American Samoa's coral reef fish are a highly diverse community of nearly 1,000 species. Fish here have developed many different shapes and colors. Many species are caught for food.



Pe'a fanua (white-naped bat)

Pe'a (fruit bats)

At dusk and dawn, large fruit bats (flying foxes) with 3-foot wingspans glide through the tree-tops in search for fruit and nectar to eat. Bats are the only native mammals on these remote islands.



Laumei ena'ena (green sea turtle)

Fonu (sea turtles)

Rare hawksbill and green sea turtles visit and nest on local beaches. Tagged green turtles traveled to Fiji, indicating complex life cycles and regional connectivity among islands.



Vaomatua (rainforest)

The rugged rainforest is largely intact, although several invasive species are a significant menace to the native ecosystem. About 30% of local plants are found nowhere else.



Faisua (giant clams)

Among the royalty of reef invertebrates, the giant clam is very beautiful. Like corals, giant clams obtain most of their food directly from sunlight (via plant-like cells in their tissues).

O le aganu'u o Samoa o lona siosiomaga ma ona laufanua lanu lauava

Tia seu lupe

O le tia seu lupe o se tasi lea o foliga maupu'epu'e e sili ona taua I le atunu'u I laufanua o su'esu'ega tau tala eli, e masalomia na fausiaina pea ma le 500 tausaga ua tuanai. O nei tia seu lupe na fausiaina I pa m'a'a ma o latou fa'asinomaga. O se tasi aoga o le tia seu lupe e mailei ai lupe (lupe o le Pasefika) o se faagatama masani lea o Ali'i o le atunu'u.



Starmounds for catching lupe

Starmounds are one of the most prominent features of the island's recent archaeological landscape, probably built within the past 500 years. They are raised platforms made of stone walls with projecting points. One use of the starmound was to snare lupe (Pacific pigeons) as part of a ritual sport of chiefs.

Faigafaiva o le atule I le nu'u o Fagasa

I nofoaga eseese I totonu o Amerika Samoa, o le au i'a lea o le atule I isi taimi e aofaga potopoto I le aau I le vaitau o Oketopa. O se vaitaimi fagatele lea o le seleselega, o le a fa'aogaina ai metotia fa'aleaganu'u e aofia atoa ai male nu'u. Ma o talaaga fa'asolopito mai aso anamua, e foafoa mai I totonu o nu'u ma alalafaga, e fa'atauta I faigafaiva fa'aleaganu'u I aso anamua.



Atule harvest in Fagasa village

At several locations throughout American Samoa, schools of atule sometimes gather on shallow reef flats around October. A carefully timed harvest, using a range of traditional techniques, can involve the whole village. Rich legends have developed in many villages based on this ancient fishing tradition.

Feiloaiga ma le filemu

E I ai se tala e fa'atauta ia Leutogi Tupaitea lea sa fa'aipoipo atu I le alo o le tupu Toga. Ina ua le usitai lenei tamaitai sa fa'apea ona fa'asalaina o ia, ma tu'uina atu o ia I totonu o le laau lea o le fetau, ma o lalo ifo o lo'o ola ae ai se tafunai. Ina ua tagi lenei tamaitai, sa fa'apea ona laga le taulaga pe'a, ua felelei mai I fafo ma o latou otaota ua tineia ai le afi ma fa'asaoina ai le ola o lenei tamaitai. E o'o mai I le taimi nei o le laau lea o le fetau ua avea ma ma'a fa'amanatu o se nofoaga saogalemu mo fonotaga.



Meet in peace

There is a Samoan legend about Leutogi Tupaitea who married the Prince of Tonga. She misbehaved, and was punished by being placed in the forked trunk of a fetau tree, with a fire lit below. As she cried, the bats came out and their urine put the fire out—saving her life. The fetau tree still symbolizes a safe meeting place.

Fa'atoetoe le muli o le ola (Save what remains in the basket)

Se tasi aso na alu ai se fanotaga a se aiga Samoa, ae tu'ua se tasi o latou uso I le fale. Sa fa'apea ona fa'amanuina lo latou fanotaga I le tele ma le anoanoai o ia sa latou maua. Ona toe fa'amanatu ai lea e le tina ia te'i latou, ina ia sefe ia o lo'o totoe I totonu o le ato aua lo latou uso o lo'o I le fale, fa'apea foi ma'i latou o e o fia aai. O le matagofie o lo tatou siosiomaga ma o tatou lafanua lanu lauava, o lo tatou ato ia lea.



One day, a Samoan family went fishing, leaving one brother at home. They caught many fish and were feasting on the catch when the mother reminded them to save what remained in the basket for their brother at home, as well as others who might be hungry. The natural beauty of America Samoa is our basket of fish.

Afai tatou te galulue fa'atasi, e mafai ona tatou fa'asaoina le matagofie o lo tatou atunu'u aua tupulaga lalovaoa o le lumanai.

If we work together, we can save the spectacular beauty of American Samoa for future generations.



Content is synthesized from discussions with staff at the National Park of American Samoa. For more information, please visit the Park's Visitor Center or call 684-699-3982.

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www.nps.gov/npsa



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