

Manumea

O le Manumea o le ituaiga o lupe ua nao le motu o Upolu ma Savaii o le atu Samoa e maua ai. E tulaga ese lava lea manu i le lalolagi.

O foliga ma le tino mai lava o le lupe, ae ese ai lava lona gutu. O le auvae-a-luga e pio i lalo ae maai le pito ona fesauai lea ma le auvae a lalo. O le gutu la lea ua mafua ai ona maua le igoa faapalagi o le “lupe gutu fisi”.

O le ituaiga gutu nei e aoga tele mo fatu laau malo, ona e le gafatia e le tele o manulele ona tatae. O fualaau nei e maua i le vaomatua, e pei o le maota, aoa ma le atone. E faamau e le lave maai le fatu ae taumafai le auvae-a-lalo e tatae le atigi ina ia maua le aano i totonu.

O le faatupulaia o le vaomatua o se tasi lea galuega a le Manumea, ma le faasalalauina o fatu o laau mo le toe faaalaina o laau fou. O nisi laau e aina e le Manumea o laau ua nao Samoa e ola ai.

E tai faatasi i le tausaga ona tuufua le Manumea, e faapei foi isi lupe. O le mea lea ua mautinoa, o le tuai ona faatuputupulaia le numera o Manumea ona o le tele ua mamate i afa poo le tafaanaina foi.

O nisi nei mafuaaga ogaoga ua lamataia ai le ola o Manumea:

- O le tafaanaina e tagata o lupe; ma manunua ai ma Manumea, aua foi e lele maualalo toe tuai. E aina foi e tagata ia latou fua.
- O le taina o laau e ofaga ai le Manumea mo faatoaga.
- O afa fulifao mai le tausaga 1990 ma le 1991 sa matua faaititia ai le aofai o Manumea ma isi ituaiga o lupe.

Talu ai o ni popolega mo le ola saogalemu o le Manumea, o le mea lea ua puipuia ai faaletulafono, ma na faalauiloina aloia ai o le manu a Samoa. E le faatagaina le toe fanaina, avea pe tamatea foi le Manumea, o le sala tupe e \$500 poo le nofo sala i le falepuipui i le tolu tausaga. E mafai foi ona o tatou fesoasoani i le Manumea e ala lea i le faasaoina o le vaomatua.

Ua tusa nei ma le selau tausaga le matua o le Manumea, o le mea lea ua tauau ai ina matafi lanu ma oi le manu; ae o loo mafai lava ona iloa lanu lauava i le ulu, ua, faatasi ai ma le fatafata .



Photographed by Ulf Beichle

Factors Threatening the Manumea:

• Humans

People have been shooting pigeons; the Manumea is particularly vulnerable, because it flies in a very low height. People also took eggs from Manumea nests as food.

• Deforestation

The forest home of the Manumea is continually being cleared for plantations.

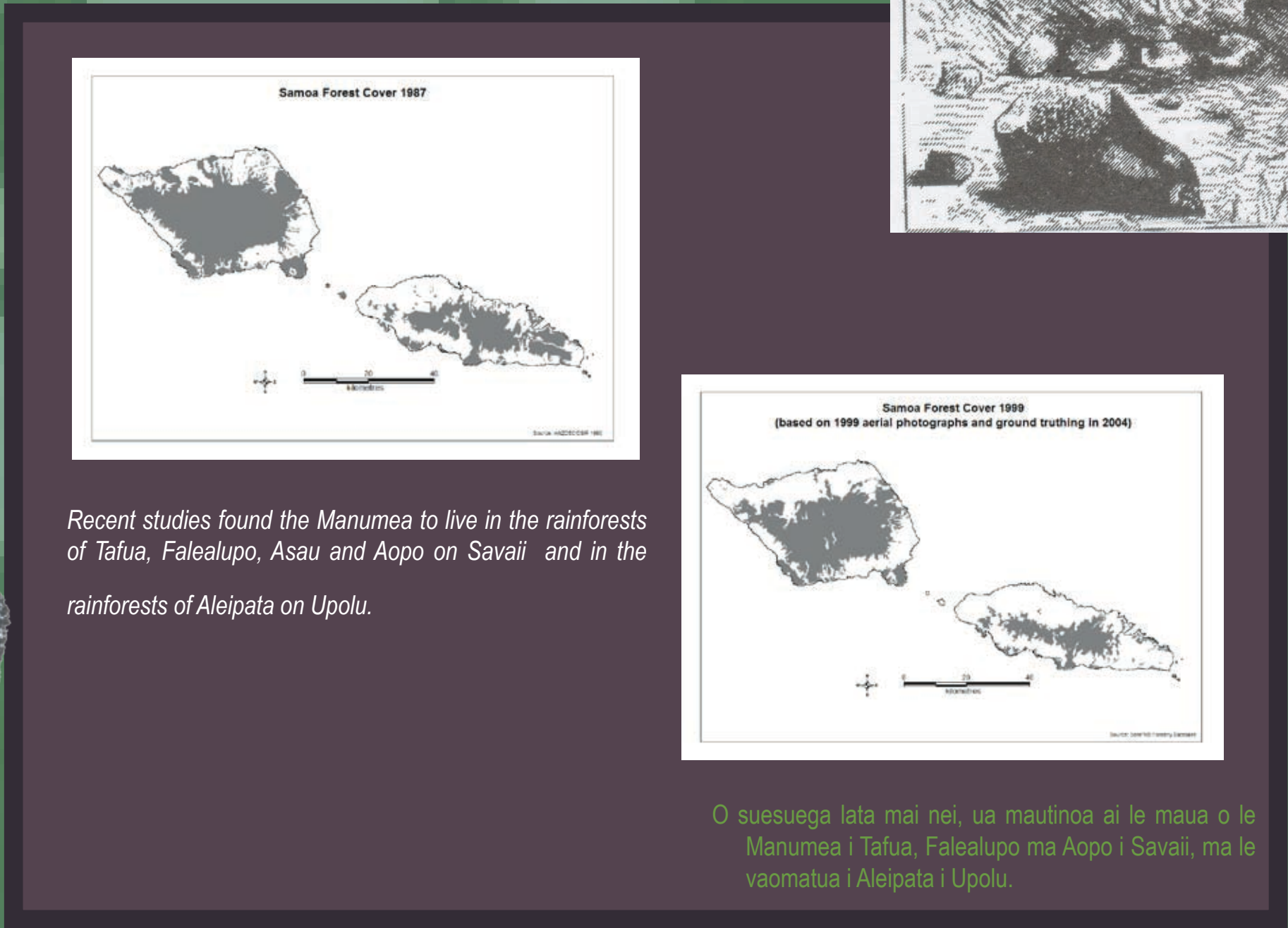
• Natural disasters

The population of Manumea and other pigeons are threatend by natural disaters like cyclones, which destroy the habitat of the Manumea.

The Manumea is endemic to Samoa, the bird has become a culturally significant to the region.



Illustraion from Appleton 1871



The Manumea is a type of pigeon found nowhere else in the world but on the islands of Upolu and Savaii in Western Samoa. It is one of the most endangered birds.

While the Manumea has the body and the legs of a typical pigeon, it has a very special beak. The upper part has a sharp hooked point which overlaps the lower jaw. This “tooth” gives the bird its English name “tooth-billed pigeon”. Its scientific name is *Didunculus strigirostris*.

The special form of its beak is adapted to feed on hard fruits which most other birds cannot open. These fruits come from certain rainforest trees, such as the maota (*Dysoxylum* sp), aoa or Banyan tree (*Ficus* sp) and atone or Nutmeg (*Myristica* sp.). The Manumea uses the tip of its upper jar to hook into the fruit, while the lower jaw performs a sawing movement, cutting the fruit in half. In this way, it can reach the seeds inside it.

The Manumea has a vital role in regenerating the rainforest, as it disperses the seeds of the fruits it eats to allow new trees to grow. Several food trees of the Manumea are indigenous to Samoa.

Like most pigeons, the Manumea is slow to breed, with each adult female bird laying only one egg a year. As a result, the Manumea population can only recover very slowly when many birds die in a disaster or are shot.

Because of the concern for the survival of the Manumea, it was given full legal protection, and was declared the National Bird of Samoa. It is illegal to hunt, take or kill the Manumea, with a maximum fine of \$ 500 or up to three years imprisonment. We can also help the Manumea by protecting our national rainforests.

Cultural Significance

-The most expensive fine mats traditionally had the feathers of the Manumea sown into them (Fanaafi pers.comm.)

-Appelton (1871) indicates that the bird had a special status being ‘...greatly esteemed as an article of food for the highest chief;’ ‘... a traveling party belonging to the dominant tribe, or clan on arriving at a village of a subject tribe where they intended to spend the day, would order the chief man of he viallage to procure them a certain number of didunculus before night. If they failed to provide the birds, a severe cudgeling would be the consequence...’

During the 2007 XIII th South Pacific Games Mana was the official mascot for the games. This marketing opportunity was just one of few that are being undertaken in Samoa to increase the awareness towards the threatened species.

Artist Impression of Manumea: Holly Pepp, 2008