

News Bulletin

Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office
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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Proposes to Protect 23 Species In Guam, CNMI Under the Endangered Species Act

Agency seeks information from the public, scientific community before final decision.

Current evidence suggests that 23 species located in the U.S. Territory of Guam and the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) are in danger of becoming extinct in the foreseeable future. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announced today its proposal to protect the species as either endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act, and is seeking new information from the public and the scientific community that will assist the agency in making a final determination.

The 23 species proposed for listing comprises 14 plants, four tree snails, two butterflies, one insectivorous bat, one skink, and one damselfly. Two of the plant species — *Cycas micronesica* and *Tabernaemontana rotensis* — are proposed for “threatened” status, the other plants and animals are proposed as “endangered.”

“We encourage the people of Guam and the CNMI to actively participate in the public comment process to help us determine if protection is warranted for these rare species,” said Kristi Young, the Service’s acting field supervisor for the Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office.

Of the 23 species proposed for listing:

- Five plants are endemic to the island of Guam – *Eugenia bryanii*, *Hedyotis megalantha* (paudedo), *Phyllanthus saffordii*, *Psychotria malaspinae* (aplokating-palaoan), and *Tinospora homosepala*.

- Eight plants are known from Guam and the CNMI – *Bulbophyllum guamense* (cebello halumtano), *Dendrobium guamense*, *Heritiera longipetiolata* (ufa-halumtano), *Maesa walkeri*, *Nervilia jacksoniae*, *Solanum guamense* (berenghenas halomtano), *Tabernaemontana rotensis*, and *Tuberolabium guamense*.
- One plant, *Cycas micronesica* (fadang), occurs in Guam, the CNMI, Palau and Yap.
- Three animals are island endemics – the Guam tree snail (*Partula radiolata*; akaleha) is endemic to Guam, the Rota blue damselfly (*Ischnura luta*) is endemic to Rota, and Langford’s tree snail (*Partula langfordi*; akaleha) is endemic to Aguiguan.
- The remaining six animals are known from islands in both Guam and the CNMI – the Pacific sheath-tailed bat (*Emballonura semicaudata rotensis*; liyang), Slevin’s skink (*Emoia slevini*; guali’ek halomtano), the Mariana eight-spot butterfly (*Hypolimnna octocula marianensis*), the Mariana wandering butterfly (*Vagrans egistina*), the humped tree snail (*Partula gibba*; akaleha), and the fragile tree snail (*Samoana fragilis*; akaleha).

The 23 species being considered for federal listing face current and ongoing threats, including: habitat loss and degradation due to urbanization and development; competition with nonnative plants and animals; predation by nonnative animals; climate change; inadequate existing regulatory mechanisms to prevent the introduction and spread of nonnative plants and animals; ordnance and live-fire from military training; recreational vehicles; and small numbers of individuals and populations.

The final decision to add the 23 species to the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants will be based on the best scientific information available. At a later date, the Service plans to publish a separate rule proposing critical habitat for these 23 species.

The Service is opening a 60-day public comment period on October 1, 2014 to allow the public to review and comment on the proposal and provide additional information. All relevant information will be considered and addressed in the Service’s final listing determination. The public comment period will close on December 1, 2014.

Requests for public hearings on this proposal must be received within 45 days after the October 1, 2014 publication of this proposed rule.

More information and copies of the proposed rule are available at <http://www.fws.gov/pacificislands/>. For further information contact: Acting Field Supervisor, Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 300 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 3-122, Box 50088, Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96850; telephone (808) 792-9400 or fax (808) 792-9581.

Images of some of the proposed species can be downloaded at:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwspacific/sets/72157648170464632/>

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