War in the Pacific
Connecting Guam's Natural Resources with its Culture and History

The historic sites preserved at War in the Pacific National Historical Park are inseparably tied to the natural resources of Guam and cultural traditions of the Chamorro people. Understanding how the reefs, grasslands, and forests were sustainably harvested and how they recovered from being a battlefield can help us preserve these resources for future generations.

Rich marine life and unique forests are found in the park’s many natural habitats.

Diverse and abundant corals lay the foundation for Guam’s marine life.

North

0 0.5 1 Mile
0 0.5 1 Kilometer

North

0 1 2
0 1 2 3 Miles
3 Kilometers

North

Pacific
Ocean

Guam

Coral reef
Park unit boundaries

Asan Beach
Asan Inland
Fonte Plateau
Piti Guns
Mt. Chachao/Mt. Tenjo
Mt. Alifan
Agat

Other areas

reef flat
reef front and deepwater slope
road

Terrestrial habitats in the park

Inland
wetland
ravine forest
mahogany forest
savannah

Marine habitats in the park

reef
seagrass
macroalgae

Due to annual fires, native forests have been replaced by savannah grasslands.

Saltwater-tolerant, coastal strand (beach front) plants bridge the land and sea.

Algae create energy at the base of the reef ecosystem.

Formed from ancient corals, this limestone forest is unique in Pacific national parks.

Tropical seagrass beds provide specialized habitat for many marine animals.

Native eels, shrimp, and gobies wind their way through Guam’s streams.

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WARNING: Be aware that strong, unpredictable currents can occur on reef flats.

WARNING: Do not disturb any ammunition you may find offshore - call 911 and report its location to a park ranger.
Gently sloping beaches and shallow reef flats allowed rapid landing of U.S. troops.

Foraging and fishing on the reef flats still provide a wealth of food including small fish, seaweed, crabs, and shellfish.

Now threatened with extinction, seeds of the fadang palm (Cycas circinalis) were pounded into flour.

Aga'te'lang (Eugenia palumbis), a shrub found in limestone forests, has medicinal uses and wood used for tool handles.

Ifit (Intsia bijuga), Guam's territorial tree, has been overharvested due to its beautiful termite-resistant wood.

Bikkia (Bikkia tetrandra), "torch weed," was broken off and set on fire to use as hand-held torches.

Hillsides and cliffs were used by the Japanese to build defensive structures.

For thousands of years, the Chamorro people have traditionally harvested Guam’s abundant natural resources for food, medicine, and to build shelters and canoes.

During World War II, Asan and Agat reef flats were ideal for amphibious landings of U.S. troops and supplies, while steep hills and cliffs above structured ensuing battles. Massive environmental changes occurred as reefs and hills became battlefields.

Many battles took place along coastal areas, leaving visible scars on reef flats.

Vehicle and troop movements, fires, and trenches destroyed forests and savannas.

Explosions and bombs left huge craters both on shore and in the water.

The island's natural resources rebounded from the effects of war. They are vibrant once again, but continue to face man-made and environmental challenges.

How will modern development, wildfires, climate change, and the spread of non-native species alter our natural and cultural landscapes? It’s up to everyone to protect and preserve Guam’s heritage for future generations to enjoy!

Please inquire at the park’s visitor center or call 671-333-4050.