



COMMONWEALTH of the  
NORTHERN MARIANAS ISLANDS

- Farallon de Pajaros (Uracas)
- Maug
- Asuncion

● Agrihan

● Pagan

- Alamagan
- Guguan

● Sarigan

● Anatahan

● Farallon de Medinilla

● Saipan

- Tinian
- Aguiguan

● Rota

- \* Distribution in the CNMI
- \* Locally Extinct



PHOTOS BY SCOTT WOGT



ENDANGERED · ENDEMIC

## NIGHTINGALE REED-WARBLER

Ga'ga karisu/Ga'kaliso *Chamorro* Litchoghoi bwel *Carolinian*

### IDENTIFICATION

The Nightingale reed-warbler has a light yellow front and a greenish to brown back. The males are an average of 35g and females are slightly smaller. The male Nightingale reed-warbler often has ruffled head feathers and can be identified by his long melodious song. The song is a long, uninterrupted warbling that is unique among CNMI birds.

### HABITAT and FEEDING

The Nightingale reed-warbler is endemic to the Mariana Islands, where they are found only on only on Saipan and Alamagan. They live in *Phragmites* (wetland reeds), and tangantangan stands, but rarely in the native forest. Their Chamorro name means "animal of the reeds".

The reed warbler on Saipan adapted to tangantangan forests that increased after WWII. This allowed the population to expand from the wetlands to the upland forest for about fifty years. Today, the cutting of tangantangan has caused the population to lose ground.

They feed primarily on insects with their long (2cm), thin bill. They have also been observed feeding on spiders, and small reptiles such as skinks and geckos.

### REPRODUCTION

Nightingale reed-warbler males are very territorial. An individual male can defend up to two hectares of territory. When aroused by

intrusion, their back feathers become ruffled. While males usually stay within a set territory, females move around between males until they find a mate with whom to nest.

Nightingale reed-warblers nest primarily in wetland reeds and tangantangan. They lay an average of two eggs in a bowl-shaped nest woven from twigs, grass, ironwood needles and spider casings.

### THREATS and CONSERVATION

The Nightingale reed-warbler population has been decreasing on Saipan due to the loss of wetland habitat and tangantangan scrub. On Alamagan, the feral goat population has destroyed much of the reed warbler's natural habitat.

Predators of the Nightingale reed-warbler include rats, cats, Monitor lizards and other birds.

The Nightingale reed-warbler is a protected native forestbird of the CNMI. It is illegal to hunt, kill, or possess this bird or its eggs without a permit issued by the CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife and the federal government. A mitigation area to protect the reed-warbler was established in the Marpi area of Saipan in 2002. Efforts are being made to control induced predators, improve habitat and prevent further introduction of alien species.



ARTIST  
DOUGLAS  
PRATT

*Acrocephalus luscini*

### IT'S THE BOMB

After WWII, tangantangan flourished in the devastated areas, allowing the Nightingale reed-warbler population to increase!

**FACTOID!**







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