

Såli - Micronesian Starling (*Aplonis opaca guami*)

Måtso na Mes | Umåtalaf na Pulan (March) 2024

Description- *sinangan*

Distribution- *amånu nai gaigne*



Juvenile Såli PC: Anthony Tornito/USFWS Adult Såli PC: Anthony Tornito/USFWS

- The Micronesian Starling or Såli in Chamorro is locally endangered in Guam and one of the two native forest birds that have survived the invasive brown tree snake (*Boiga irregularis*).¹
- Adults are around 9 inches tall and identified by their glossy black sheen and yellow eyes.² Juveniles have grayish yellow bellies and black eyes that turn yellow as they mature into adulthood.
- The Såli are omnivorous, cavity nesters that can lay up 4 eggs, and are an important seed disperser in the Marianas.³

- Såli can be found throughout Micronesia ranging from Guam, CNMI, Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia.
- Såli populations are found throughout Guam's northern villages and small populations can sparsely be found in Tamuning, Hagåtña, and Islan Dåno.⁵
- Forest foragers and usually seen in pairs, family groups or juvenile flocks including urban populations on artificial structures.^{1,2}



Juvenile & Adult Såli PC: Anthony Tornito/USFWS

Håfa i Kakkak na Masoksok (Chamorro)

Why the Yellow Bittern is Skinny (English)

Guihi na hålom tåno' guaha dos na pahåru na'an-ñiha si Sali yan si Kakkak na sumåsaga ha'. Un ånu madisidi ni dos na para u ayunat gi un Betnes Sånito.

There were two birds living in the jungle, their names were Micronesian Starling and Yellow Bittern. One year the two decided to fast on Good Friday.



Kakkak (Yellow Bittern) Artwork: Douglas Pratt

Matutuhon i dos i ayunat-ñiha, lao annai ti mali'li'e' i kakkak, chumocho un guali'ek sa' esta gof ñålang gue'. I Sali ha sungon ha' todut et diha ti chumocho. Put este na rason na ilek-ñiha i manåmko' na achokka' kuantu kinanno'-ña i kakkak masosoksok ha' ya ñåñalang ha' todut i tiempo sa' ti ha kumple i prinimiti-ña.⁴

The two began their fast, but when the Bittern was not seen, it ate a gecko because it was very hungry. The Starling just endured all day and did not eat. It is for this reason that the elders say that regardless of the amount the Bittern eats, it is still skinny and hungry all the time because it did not keep its promise.⁴



Såli (Micronesian Starling) Artwork: Douglas Pratt

På'go i Sali gof bråbu ya gof gepan sa' ha kumple i prinimiti-ña

Today the Starling is very healthy and very active because it kept its promise.