

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

We did not detect any Pacific sheath-tailed bats in American Samoa during acoustic surveys in 2006 and 2008, nor did we observe any insectivorous bats visually. Surveys during 2006 included a combined survey effort of 12.5 hours on Tutuila, 3.53 hours on Ta'u, and 12.4 hours on Ofu/Olosega. During surveys in 2008, a total of 27 survey hours (13.5 hours * 2 observers) were conducted driving approximately 189 km.

Although we did not visually and/or acoustically detect Pacific sheath-tailed bats in American Samoa, our survey efforts were limited by time, travel, and equipment constraints. It is possible that these bats have moved into more remote areas of the islands (G.J. Wiles, pers. comm., Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife). Therefore, future surveys should focus on use of passive monitoring bat detectors (e.g., Anabat detection systems). This type of detector allows for continued, long-term monitoring of specific site locations in the absence of researchers, and operates for long time periods on battery power. In turn, this increases the chance of detecting rare bats, as the equipment remains stationary. We also recommend that remote areas of Ta'u, Tutuila, and Ofu/Olosega be thoroughly investigated, particularly focusing on areas with reported caves, in addition to further interviews with residents to evaluate potential cave sites.

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