

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

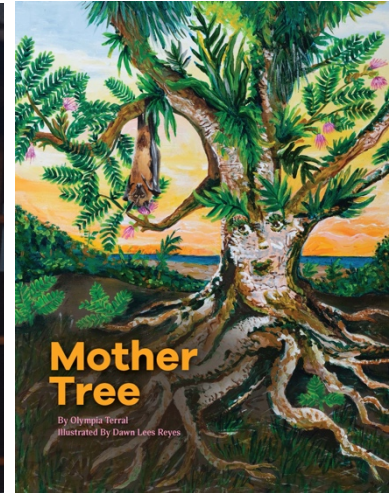
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**UOG Press to host virtual reading of ‘Mother Tree’ with author and community experts**

The University of Guam Press will be hosting a virtual author reading and discussion of its newest children’s book, “Mother Tree,” written by Olympia Terral and illustrated by Dawn Lees Reyes. The live reading by Terral will be followed by a discussion with the author and illustrator, community experts, and children who will ask questions to learn about the tree and its habitat. The event will be held at 2 p.m. this Friday on the UOG Press Facebook page.



“Mother Tree” was inspired by the last remaining mature *håyon lågu* (*Serianthes nelsonii*) in northern Guam. The book captures the friendship between the tree and the island’s native species, including the *fanihi* and *ayuyu*, while teaching young readers the value of protecting the natural world and its jungle creatures. The scientific features of the *håyon lågu* and the cultural elements depicted in the story were reviewed by scientists and CHamoru cultural advisors to ensure appropriate representation.

“Our island’s one and only mature *håyon lågu* faces grave danger as it is located in Northwest Field, where the surrounding jungle is being prepared for the construction of a U.S. Marines live-fire training range complex,” Terral said.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Guam National Wildlife Refuge, Ritidian Unit, worked with the University of Guam to plant *håyon lågu* seedlings in different parts of the refuge to study where they thrive best in hopes of keeping the species alive.

This event will feature experts and voices from the Guam National Wildlife Refuge, UOG's College of Natural and Applied Sciences, Humanities Guåhan, and the descendants of Peter Nelson, who introduced the tree to botanists in 1919.

The book can be purchased for \$15 at the University of Guam Triton Store, both Bestseller locations, Southern Mountain Gear, Faith Bookstore, and on Amazon.

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