

Puia Hanahana

A small settlement of holy men lives on Puia Hanahana in the village of Taga Tapa. There, they worship the large, central volcano as the fire god Authua Aii. A cavern at the base of Authua Aii is said to lead to a subterranean city known as Ka Honuhonu. Taga Tapa was built on an island in the middle of a small lake to protect the holy men from the island's large predators. They used to visit Tangata and Port Digby, but have not been seen in months.

Most of the northern section of Puia Hanahana is uninhabitable due to the poisonous gas and lava spewn from Authua Aii and the three smaller volcanoes encircling it, believed to be the fire god's three sons. It is an area of sour, green, swampy, poisonous water and sludge known as Whenua Mate – the Deadland. Runoff from this bubbling morass spills into the sea, giving the island a green halo of toxic water where no fish or animals live and called Wai Mate Kaua – the Poison Dead Water. Whenua Toha -- the Fire Land – is a sterile plane dotted by geysers that blow out boiling, stinking water and steam. Ngohar o te Mate Mate -- the Forest of Mr. Death – is a landscape of dead, petrified trees said to be inhabited by demons and evil spirits.

The center of the southern portion of Puia Hanahana is occupied by a mountain range known as Kong Maunga Mamo, the Dreaming Mountains. Legend says the mountains hold great spiritual powers, and the holy men from TagaTapa would undertake long, dangerous journeys to the mountains to go on vision quests in search of passages to the mystic Dreamtime among the peaks of Kong Maunga Mamo.

Puia Hanahana's chief residents are lizard men and intelligent carnivorous apes. The lizard men keep mainly to the swamps and wetlands while the gorillas dominate the jungles. The lizard men villages are Kupoco'hu, Karila'hu, Ssaki'hu, Shapa'hu, and the city of Cuxapasi'hu, where the giant idol of their god Sacukte Yepela rises from the middle of a swamp. The ape men villages are Hoo'uh-Ar, Gu'rah-Oo, Har'oo-a, Gar-ung, and the city of Arr-hoo'a.

The other residents of Puia Hanahana are less civilized and far more dangerous. The jungles and swamps of the island are home to dinosaurs and other large, prehistoric megafauna and megaflore, giant herbivores and monstrous carnivores, alike. Ngohar Makomako Nu, the Jungle of Monster Lizards, has the highest concentration of dinosaurs, although they roam throughout the island. Above the jungles and swamps, in the mountains, giant cave bears, saber-toothed tigers, and other large animals dwell.

Other perils faced on Puia Hanahana include widespread patches of quicksand, venomous serpents and insects, poisonous plants, and giant, tree-sized man-eating plants. The largest of the carnivorous plant, Ya-te-veo, is worshipped as a deity and offered living, sentient sacrifices.

With all the hazards on Puia Hanahana, what became of the holy men from Taga Tapa? Devoured by dinosaurs or man-eating plants? Killed in a skirmish with the lizard men or ape men? Or did they succumb to one of the island's other dangers? Or did they discover the subterranean city of Ka Honuhonu...?