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Palauan Fish Names¹

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ABSTRACT: Palauans have names for most fishes of importance to them. Three hundred thirty-six vernacular fish names and their 312 scientific equivalents are listed. Palauan names show little similarity to Yapese and Guamanian names. Different native names exist for different life stages and sexes of many fishes, and some variation in names occurs between northern and southern Palau. Earlier publications of Palauan fish names are discussed.

PALAU is a compact archipelago in the Western Caroline Islands approximately 800 km north of New Guinea and 800 km east of Mindanao (Fig. 1). It is made up of numerous islands, which vary in size from volcanic Babeldaub ($45 \times$ 15 km) to small limestone islets. Except for two atolls in the north and Angaur in the south, the islands are largely enclosed within a barrier reef.

The Micronesian people who inhabit these islands rely on the sea as their principal source of protein. They are fortunate in having extensive areas of coral reefs, turtle grass flats, and other marine and freshwater habitats which support a rich diversity of aquatic life. This diversity is due not only to the variety of habitats but also to the proximity of the Palau group to the Indo-Malayan region, which has the greatest number of species of marine organisms.

As would be expected of a people with a dependence on fishes for food, the Palauans have distinct names for the many fish species of importance to them. Fishes of little value as food either have no native name or only a general name for an entire family. We have not listed those species for which there are no Palauan names.

We obtained most of the names in the present study from informants who viewed fresh or preserved specimens. Illustrations from books

or photographs by the junior author were used when whole specimens of fish we knew to occur in Palau or surrounding areas were unavailable. Our best informants were generally the older fishermen. When arguments ensued among the informants about the name of a particular fish, they were solved by a majority, a militant minority, or through deference to the oldest man or member of the highest ranking clan present. Many of the Palauan names in this paper would not appear in a similar study conducted 10 to 15 years in the future. As Western civilization continues to make its intrusions on Palauan culture, it is less common for young men to fish and hence to learn the many names of their fishes. Consequently, names and practical knowledge of the natural history of many fishes-and other animals and plants-will be lost with the older generation in Palau.

We were unable to obtain specimens or illustrations of fishes for some Palauan names and have identified them only at the generic or family level. A few others for which we have specimens appear to be undescribed. For many more, our scientific names are provisional. Most families of tropical Indo-Pacific fishes are in great need of systematic revision. There is little doubt that some of the scientific names used here will have to be altered when such revisions are completed.

This study was conducted over a 3-year period from October 1967 to August 1970 while the senior author was a United States Peace Corps Volunteer in Palau. The junior author has made three visits to the islands. Fishes collected during these visits have been deposited at the Bernice P. Bishop Museum in Honolulu.

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Fig. 1. The Palau Islands. The northern sector consists of Babeldaub and Kayangel; the southern sector, Koror, Peleliu, and Angaur. Redrawn from Yamaguchi et al. (1969).

HISTORIC AND GEOGRAPHIC COMPARISON OF PALAUAN FISH NAMES

Palau has been under the domination of Spain (1885–1889), Germany (1889–1914), Japan(1914–1945), and the United States (1945– present). Little Spanish or German influence is shown in the current fish names. The Japanese occupation resulted in some name changes which are discussed for the individual species below. No American names are commonly used.

The earliest known publication in which Palauan fish names appeared was Keate (1788). He used the word neekell for "fish" and arool for "skaite, or large flatfish." There has been little change in these two words: fishes, in general, are called ngikel, and stingrays are referred to as rull. We have found only three publications since Keate which include more than a few Palauan fish names. Walleser (1913) gave 99 Palauan fish names; he identified 25 of these by common name, but gave no scientific names. Krämer (1929) listed 375 native fish names with 120 line drawings, but gave only 64 scientific identifications. Abe (1939) identified 376 species of fishes by scientific name from Palau; for 60 of these he also recorded the vernacular names. The present paper contains 336 Palauan names and 312 scientific names.

Little work has been published on fish names from other Micronesian areas. Randall (1955) listed the Gilbertese names for 151 fishes obtained at Onotoa. Kami, Ikehara, and Deleon (1968) reported 465 species of fishes from Guam, including vernacular names for 191 species. There are only two possible similarities between the Guamanian and Palauan fish names. Exocoetids (flyingfishes) are called gaaga in Guam and kok in Palau. The silverside Pranesus insularum insularum (family Atherinidae) is called ginyo in Guamanian, which is close to the Palauan name kingyo for the guppy Poecilia reticulatus (family Poeciliidae). Both are small silvery fishes, and it appears that the name in each case has been borrowed from the Japanese.

Marjorie V. Cushing-Falanruw of the University of Guam was kind enough to send us a copy of her unpublished report on the ethnoich-thyology of Yap, an island group approximately 500 km northeast of Palau. She listed 102 Yapese names and 48 scientific names. Seven

of these appear similar to the Palauan designations:

ENGLISH	YAPESE	PALAUAN
rays	rol	rull
conger eel		
(Congridae)	mar	mar
flyingfish		
(Exocoetidae)	gog	kok
angelfish		
(Pomacanthidae)	er	cher
unicorn fish		
(Acanthuridae)	um	chum
yellowfin tuna		
(Scombridae)	taguw	tekuu
tuna (Scombridae)	garngab	kerengob

The lack of similarity is predictable, since Palauan shares little linguistic affinity with Yapese. The Palauan language is closer to Indonesian than to any of the Micronesian languages (Capell, 1962). Similarity in the Palauan and Yapese names of pelagic fishes, such as the exocoetids and scombrids, is probably due to name-borrowing. For further discussion of this practice, see the introduction to the family Scombridae.

The native names of fishes are not the same throughout Palau. Pronunciation differences, and even different names for the same fish, occur in villages only a few miles apart. Names in this paper followed by (N) or (S) indicate primary usage in the northern and southern sectors of Palau, respectively. Where two native names appear for a fish, the first is the more commonly used or was obtained from more positive informants. Where different names apply to different developmental stages or sexes of a single species, all names are given and the size or sex noted accordingly.

SPELLING AND PRONUNCIATION

Palauan spelling has not been standardized. We have attempted to use the spelling system currently accepted in Palau. Spellings of fish names were often contested by Palauans almost as much as the names themselves.

The following is an approximate key to the pronunciation of the more commonly used sounds in this paper. The examples are from an anonymous, undated (ca. 1966), U.S. Peace Corps language training text on Palauan. vowels: a, like the *a* in father; e, like the *e* in bet; i, like the *e* in Pete; o, like the *o* in bore; u, like the *oo* in boot.

DIPHTHONGS: ai, like the *ie* in *tie*; ao, au, like the *ou* in about; ea, like the *ay o* of stay *on*; ei, like the *ay* in bay; eyo, like the *ay o* of stay *over*; ia, like the *ea o* of *tea on* Friday; iu, combine the *e* of me with the *ue* of Sue; oa, like the *oa* in moa; oi, like the *oy* of boy; ou, like the *oa* of boat; ui, like the *ouie* of Louie.

CONSONANTS: d, similar to th in then; ng, like the ng in song; r, usually trilled slightly, as in Spanish; ch, a glottal stop, similar to the beginning of the expression, ugh!

NAMES OF BODY PARTS

Fig. 2 gives the Palauan names for anatomical features of a fish.

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PALAUAN FISH NAMES

The families of fishes are given in phylogenetic sequence; genera and species are listed under each family alphabetically.

SQUALIFORMES (SHARKS)

The general Palauan name for sharks is chedeng. We have been unable to obtain specimens of the following reported names: chedenguchei rulluriul ("shark in front, ray in back"), similar to pictures of *Squatina* spp.; koklchedeng ("flying shark"); yaoslchedeng, a spotted shark.

1. CARCHARHINIDAE (REQUIEM SHARKS)

Two offshore species, *Carcharhinus falciformis* Bibron in Müller & Henle and *C. maou* (Lesson) (= *longimanus* [Poey]), are known to some Palauans, but there are no accepted vernacular names for these sharks. **Melkakl** is a Koror name for an unknown species in this family. **Matukeyoll** comes from a word that means "to dash at and turn quickly" and refers to a common behavior of the blacktip reef shark.

Carcharhinus albimarginatus	besachel (N)
(Rüppell)	
Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos	mederart,
(Bleeker)	teongt
Carcharhinus melanopterus	matukeyoll
(Quoy & Gaimard)	•
Galeocerdo cuvier (Peron &	mochelas
Lesueur)	
Negaprion acutidens (Rüppell)	metal
Triaenodon obesus (Rüppell)	ulupsuchl

2. SPHYRNIDAE (HAMMERHEAD SHARKS)

Hammerhead sharks are called **ulach**, which is the same name as that for the base of a coconut palm frond and refers to the lateral expansion of the head of these sharks. Hammerheads are often called **ulachlchedeng**, to distinguish them from *Fistularia petimba*, which is also known as **ulach**.

Sphyrna spp.

ulach

3. ORECTOLOBIDAE (NURSE SHARKS AND CARPET SHARKS)

The name **metmut** is from the verb "to suck." One informant attributes the name to the unfounded belief that this shark attaches itself to large fish and sucks body fluids from them. **Biall** means "wide-eyed," as in a young child.

Ginglymostoma ferrugineum	metmut
(Lesson)	
Stegostoma varium (Seba)	biall



FIG. 2. Major parts of the fish. Palauan names are given in the third person singular possessive.

RAJIFORMES (RAYS)

The general name for rays is **rull.** We collected no specimens of rays for study. They are not common in Palau, yet they are very popular food fishes (with the exception of *Aetobatus*, which has totemic restrictions on its capture). Therefore, very few of these fishes ever reach the market, and those that do are quickly purchased. All of our names were obtained from pictures in books shown to our informants. These illustrations were often of rays which probably do not occur in the Palau Islands but merely resemble species that do. **Rulluchei** edenguriul ("ray in front, shark in back") and **rullelchedeng** have been given for photographs of R*hinobatos* spp. **Tebekbuk** is an additional name for which we have found no pictures.

4. MYLIOBATIDAE (EAGLE RAYS)

Aetobatus narinari chochaio (Euphrasen)

5. DASYATIDAE (STING RAYS)

In addition to **dudek** we have obtained the following ray names which seem to belong to dasyatids: **ilachetoil**, **kim** (also a general name for tridacnid clams), **kultalchelbeab**, **ngiilch**, Palauan Fish Names-HELFMAN AND RANDALL

tuboklmerand, and ruetuu (a large ray of at least 150 cm in width; we have seen a barb 25 cm long attributed to this species).

Dasyatis sp.

dudek

6. MOBULIDAE (MANTAS)

Manta sp., Mobula sp.

chouklemedaol (N), choklemedaol (S)

7. MEGALOPIDAE (TARPONS)

Palauans often distinguish fishes from mangrove, lagoon, deepwater, or oceanic areas with a suffix. The ox eye, *Megalops cyprinoides*, is **chaol diong (chaol** "from brackish water areas"); the young of *Chanos chanos* is **chaol kereker (chaol** "from the lagoon").

Megalops cyprinoides	chaol diong
(Broussonet)	

8. ALBULIDAE (BONEFISHES)

Alblua vulpes (Linnaeus) suld

ANGUILLIFORMES (EELS)

Dilch is a general name for brackish water eels. We have been able to link Palauan names with some of the more common and distinctive species of eels, such as certain morays, but we have been given a number of Palauan names for which we have no specimens nor sufficient information to tie the names even to family. These names are as follows: butelkaeb, debdebeschelangel, didalatang, kilch (a freshwater eel living in the larger limestone islands), klaeb, tukidolch, and utuitch (similar to Anguilla, but very thin). Tukidolch is applied to a congridlike eel about 10 cm in diameter which supposedly attains a length of 5.5 m. This eel lives in a burrow in mud bottoms at depths of about 4 to 6 meters near the mangrove regions of western Babeldaub. It is said to extend itself from its burrow only at night (and hence has been seen only on moonlit nights) with its head just beneath the surface of the

water. Its name means "tide gauge," in reference to its habit of maintaining its head just beneath the surface regardless of tidal oscillation.

9. ANGUILLIDAE (FRESHWATER EELS)

Anguilla spp.

kitlel

10. CONGRIDAE (CONGER EELS) Conger cinereus Rüppell mar

11. MURAENIDAE (MORAYS)

Most moray eels are called kesebekuu, although a few of the larger species are recognized by different names. In addition to the identifications given here, we have on several occasions been told of an aggressive muraenid called cholechulach which has a long mouth and large teeth and is said to reach a length of 4 meters. This is the name given to the photograph in Schultz et al. (1953), Plate 13A, of Enchelynassa canina (Quoy & Gaimard). It is doubtful, however, that this species exceeds 1.5 m in length. The largest moray of which we have positive record in the Pacific is a specimen of Gymnothorax javanicus (Bleeker) from Hawaii which measured 2.2 m (R. E. Brock, personal communication). We have collected javanicus in Palau, but none approaching this size. When shown this species, our informants provided only the general moray name, kesebekuu.

Gymnothorax spp.	kesebekuu
Gymnothorax meleagris (Shaw	sekelekoll
& Nodder)	
Gymnothorax undulatus	luleu
(Lacépède)	
Uropterygius spp.	kesebekuu

12. OPHICHTHIDAE (SNAKE EELS)

Because of their fossorial habits, the snake eels as a group are not well known to native peoples. Although many species occur in Palau, only the general name **mar** is used, and this is usually applied to black-barred species such as *Leiuranus semicinctus* and *Myrichthys colubrinus*. In southern Palau the latter species is called **bsipslngechal.**

Leiuranus semicinctus (Lay &	mar
Bennett)	
Myrichthys colubrinus	mar (N),
(Boddaert)	bsipslnge-
	chal (S)

13. CLUPEIDAE (HERRINGS)

An unidentified clupeid bears the Palauan name mams. The additional names chedings and ulekiued are recorded for fishes believed to be clupeids. Ulekiued is also the general name for species of *Caesio* and *Pterocaesio*.

Herklotsichthyes sp.	mekebud
Spratelloides delicatulus	kwaol
(Bennett)	

14. ENGRAULIDAE (ANCHOVIES)

One other Palauan name for an anchovy we have not seen is merau.

Stolephorus heterolobus	telai
(Rüppell)	

15. SYNODONTIDAE (LIZARDFISHES)

Saurida gracilis (Quoy &	desomel
Gaimard)	
Synodus spp.	desomel

16. CHANIDAE (MILKFISH FAMILY)

Mesekelat is also the name for the female of *Scarus sexvittatus*.

<i>Chanos chanos</i> Forsskål	chaol kereker (small),	23
	mesekelat (large)	In add is a barrae
		bacanas

17. PLOTOSIDAE (MARINE CATFISHES)

Piotosus anguillaris (Bloch) kebes

18. CARAPIDAE (PEARLFISHES)

Carapids are called **eremelamolch**, which means "animal of the sea cucumber," in reference to the endobiotic habits of these fishes, most of which are found in holothurians. Molch is a commonly eaten holothurian which derives its name from its resemblance to a human penis. A less commonly used name for pearlfishes is derirk.

19. ANTENNARIIDAE (FROGFISHES)

The Palauan frogfish name is **cholik**, which is the same as that for the fruit bat *Pteropus* sp.

Antennarius spp. cholik

20. ATHERINIDAE (SILVERSIDES)

The general name for atherinid fishes is teber. Our only Palauan specimens of the family are *Pranesus pinguis*. Abe (1939) listed this and four other atherinids from Palau.

Pranesus pinguis (Lacépède) teber

21. MUGILIDAE (MULLETS)

Sebus has been reported as applying to a fish in this family, but we have been unable to obtain specimens for identification.

Chelon vaigiensis (Quoy &	chesau (N),
Gaimard)	uluu (S)
Crenimugil crenilabis	blilch (small),
(Forsskål)	kelat (large)
Mugil ceramensis Bleeker	iokedch

22. polynemidae (threadfins)

Polydactylus spp. klakmil

23. SPHYRAENIDAE (BARRACUDAS)

In addition to the names given below, there is a barracuda from Angaur called **babii** ("pig") because of the high fat content of its meat.

Sphyraena barracuda	mersaod
(Walbaum)	(< 30 cm),
	mordubch
	(30–60 cm),
	ai (> 60 cm)
Sphyraena forsteri Cuvier &	meai
Valenciennes	
Sphyraena genie Klungzinger	meai

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24. EXOCOETIDAE (FLYINGFISHES)

The general name for flyingfishes is kok.

25. HEMIRAMPHIDAE (HALFBEAKS)

The name **bolobel** is applied to marine species of halfbeaks, particularly the larger individuals. The genus *Zenarchopterus*, which inhabits rivers, is called **kieu**. A species with a short lower jaw in Peleliu is called **ngesur**; we have not seen a specimen.

Hemiramphus spp.	bolobel
Hyporhamphus spp.	bolobel
Zenarchopterus spp.	kieu

26. BELONIDAE (NEEDLEFISHES)

Needlefishes are known only by the general name sekos.

27. POECILIIDAE (LIVE-BEARERS)

The Japanese brought *Poecilia reticulatus*, the guppy of aquarium fame, to Palau for mosquito control. Palauans use a name derived from Japanese for this fish.

Poecilia reticulatus (Peters) kingyo

28. HOLOCENTRIDAE (SQUIRRELFISHES)

Techelabilis means "meat of a dog." Palauans do not eat dogs and the fish name implies that the small *Adioryx diadema* is not worth eating. All species of *Myripristis*, including the distinctive *M. kuntee* (Russell), are known by the single name **bsukl**.

Adioryx spp. Adioryx diadema (Lacépède) Adioryx spinifer (Forsskål)	kedaol techelabilis (N), chomou- chedekl (S) desachel	"bottom of the sea" and "s Pterois spp. Scorpaena spp. Scorpaenodes spp. Scorpaenopsis spp.	pines." chesechid koklbetaot koklbetaot koklbetaot
<i>Adiory× tiere</i> (Cuvier & Valenciennes) F <i>lammeo</i> spp. Myripristis spp.	techelabilis kedaol bsukl	Synanceia verrucosa Bloch & Schneider Taenianotus triacanthus Lacépède	smuuch (N), louch (S) louch

29. AULOSTOMIDAE (TRUMPETFISHES)

Although *Aulostomus chinensis* (Linnaeus) is not uncommon in Palau, we were unable to obtain a native name for this fish from any of our informants.

30. FISTULARIDAE (CORNETFISHES)

Fistularia petimba is called ulach, or ulachlmerand (ulach "from coral regions") to distinguish it from ulachlchedeng, the hammerhead sharks.

Fistularia petimba Lacépède ulach

31. CENTRISCIDAE (SHRIMPFISHES)

The local name for the one shrimpfish known from Palau is **kobesos**, which describes the paddling motion of the pectoral fins when this fish swims.

Aeoliscus strigatus (Günther) kobesos

32. SYNGNATHIDAE (PIPEFISHES AND SEA HORSES)

Although there are a number of pipefishes in Palau, we could discover no vernacular names. Abe (1939), however, listed the Palauan name emdeb for these fishes. The sea horse, *Hippo*campus sp., is today called woseradaub, which means literally "sea horse." An obsolete name for the sea horse is kobesos, now applied solely to *Aeoliscus*.

Hippocampus sp.

woseradaub, kobesos

33. SCORPAENIDAE (SCORPIONFISHES)

The word **betaot**, the suffix for the name of most of the scorpionfishes in Palau, means both "bottom of the sea" and "spines."

34. PLATYCEPHALIDAE (FLATHEADS)

All platycephalids, the largest of which is *Platycephalus* sp., are called **debribr**.

35. DACTYLOPTERIDAE (FLYING GURNARDS)

Dactyloptena orientalis Cuvier koklbetaot & Valenciennes

36. APOGONIDAE (CARDINALFISHES)

All cardinalfishes are called **sebus**, or **sebusngmerand** (**sebus** "from coral") to distinguish them from *Etelis marshi*, *Lutjanus malabaricus*, and a mugilid which are also called **sebus**.

37. SERRANIDAE (GROUPERS)

This family is generally divided by Palauans into two main divisions: temekai, which includes most species in the genera *Epinephelus* and *Cephalopholis*; and tiau, which covers fish in the genus *Plectropomus*. Often, when a fisherman did not know the particular name for a serranid, he would refer to it as "a kind of temekai" or "a kind of tiau." Small fish of the temekai group are often called mirorch. Chubei is the same name as that for *Scatopha*gus.⁴ Katuultiau means "cat tiau" and refers to the black saddle markings of this fish, similar to the coloration of the many piebald cats in Palau.

Aethaloperca rogaa (Forsskål)	chubei
Anyperodon leucogrammicus	choloteachl
Cephalopholis argus Bloch &	mengardelu-
Schneider	cheb, men-
	gardeluu, mardelucheb
Cephalopholis leopardus (Lacépède)	elewikl
Cephalopholis miniatus (Forsskål)	rumekei
Cephalopholis sexmaculatus	bachungor
(Rüppell)	

⁴ Elewikl and meleches are also the names for an unknown lethrinid and *Sillaga* sp., respectively.

Cephalopholis urodelus (Bloch	01105
& Schneider)	
Cromileptes altivelis (Cuvier &	meleches
Valenciennes)	
Epinephelus corallicola (Cuvier	chemirchorch,
& Valenciennes)	mirchorch
Epinephelus fasciatus	temekai
(Forsskål)	
Epinephelus flavocaeruleus	temekai
(Lacépède) (= kohleri	
Schultz)	
Epinephelus fuscoguttatus	remochel
(Forsskål)	
Epinephelus fuscus Fourmanoir	keksau
Epinephelus hexagonatus (Bloch	meratch (N),
& Schneider)	meratk (S)
Epinephelus merra Bloch	chemirchorch,
	mirchorch
Epinephelus microdon (Bleeker)	keksau
Epinephelus tauvina	bachungor
(Forsskål)	1 -1
Gracila albomarginata (Fowler	Dekeurasen-
& Bean)	gerruk,
Diastropomas loop andus	mokas
(Lacépède)	mokas
Plactropomus melanoleucus	katuultiau
(Lacépède)	mutuut
Plectropomus oligacanthus	basolokiil (?)
Bleeker	
Plectropomus truncatus Fowler	mokas
Variola louti (Forsskål)	basongokiil,
	basolokiil

38. TOXOTIDAE (ARCHERFISHES)

Toxotes jaculatrix (Pallas)

uloi

39. CIRRHITIDAE (HAWKFISHES)

All of the Palauan names given below for cirrhitids are also used for fishes of other families. Odiduerabong is the name for the blennies of the genus *Cirripectes* and *Meiacanthus atrodorsalis*. Merirchesengl is the name for *Gomphosus varius*. Basolokiil is the name for *Variola louti*.

Cirrhitus pinnulatus (Bloch & odiduerabong Schneider)

Paracirrhites arcatus (Cuvier & merirchesengl Valenciennes)

Paracirrhites forsteri (Bloch & basolokiil Schneider)

40. THERAPONIDAE (TIGERFISHES)

Therapon jarbua (Forsskål)kliklechol (N),
keskus (S)

41. KUHLIIDAE (AHOLEHOLES)

Besechaml is also the name for adult *Mono*taxis grandoculis and juvenile *Pomadasys hasta*.

Kuhlia marginata (Cuvier &	besechaml
Valenciennes)	
Kuhlia rupestris (Lacépède)	besechaml

42. KYPHOSIDAE (RUDDERFISHES)

Both Kyphosus cinerascens (Forsskål) and K. vaigiensis (Quoy & Gaimard) occur in Palau, but there is no distinction by vernacular name. A dark color phase of these fishes is called **beab**, which is the same as the name for rats and Balistoides viridescens.

Kyphosus spp.	keichul (small), komud (large)	Alectis ci Carangoia (Jorda
43. PRIACANTHIDAN	E (BIG EYES)	Carangoia
Species of <i>Priacanthus</i>	are called dechil	(Forss)
ebakl or dechil a deil. T	hese names literally	Caranx iş
mean "feces from metal" a	and are the Palauan	Caranx li
words for rust flakes. The na	ames therefore refer	Caranx m
to the rust color of these fis	shes.	Valenc

Priacanthus spp.	dechil ebakl, dechil a deil	Caranx mate Cuvier & Valenciennes
44. SILLAGINIDA Sillago sp.	e (whitings) meleches	Caranx sexfasciatus Quo Gaimard Elagatis bipinnulatus Quo Gaimard Gnathanodon speciosus
45. BRANCHIOSTEGI Tengadidik, the nam <i>vittatus</i> , is the same as tha wrasse, <i>Labroides dimidian</i>	DAE (TILEFISHES) te for <i>Malacanthus lato</i> - t applied to the cleaner <i>fus</i> , of similar blue and	(Forsskål) Scomberoides lysan (Forssl Selar crumenophthalmus (H Seriola rivoliana Cuvier & Valenciennes

black color; the cleaner's blenniid mimic, *Aspidontus taeniatus*; and the blue and black kingfisher bird, *Halcyon chloris*.

Malacanthus latovittatustengadidik(Lacépède)Malacanthus hoedtii Bleekerbaiei

46. ECHENEIDAE (SHARKSUCKERS AND REMORAS)

The echeneids are called *rekereked*, which means "to stick to."

Echeneis naucrates Linnaeus	rekereked
Remora remora (Linnaeus)	rekereked

47. CARANGIDAE (JACKS)

Caranx melampygus is sometimes called by its Japanese name, hira aji. Esuuch, the Palauan word for C. sexfasciatus, is the same as that for the Palau scops owl, Otus podarginus. We have been unable to obtain a specimen of a small carangid called **buuch**; the same name is given to the Areca or betelnut palm. Megalaspis cordyla (Linnaeus) occurs in Palau but has no vernacular name.

Alectis ciliaris (Bloch)	ulekreoul
Carangoides orthogrammus	otewot
(Jordan & Gilbert)	
Carangoides fulvoguttatus	iab
(Forsskål)	
Caranx ignobilis (Forsskål)	cherobk (N),
,	chederobk
	(S)
Caranx lugubris Poey	chomuktutau
Caranx melampygus Cuvier &	oruidl
Valenciennes	
Caranx mate Cuvier &	klspeached
Valenciennes	
Caranx sexfasciatus Quoy &	esuuch
Gaimard	
Elagatis bipinnulatus Quoy &	desui
Gaimard	
Gnathanodon speciosus	wii
(Forsskål)	
Scomberoides lysan (Forsskål)	yas
Selar crumenophthalmus (Bloch)	terekrik
Seriola rivoliana Cuvier &	mekeim
Valenciennes	

IO

Trachurus boops (Cuvier &	terekrik
Valenciennes)	
Trachinotus blochii (Lacépède)	luichlbuil
Uraspis helvola (Bloch &	recherachd
Schneider)	

48. CORYPHAENIDAE (DOLPHINS)

Coryphaena hippurus Linnaeus chersuuch

49. LEIOGNATHIDAE (SOAPIES)

The general Palauan name for leiognathid fishes is **deluai. Keyam** is also the name for the monodactylids and a species of nut-bearing tree.

Gazza minuta (Bloch)	deluai
Leiognathus equulus (Forsskål)	keyam

50. LUTJANIDAE (SNAPPERS)

Metngui is also the name for a lethrinid. Kedesaulyengl means kedesau "so large that it takes up a whole fish stringer." Sakuradai is a Japanese name. The name mengeselblad means "jokes when biting." This is because of the fish's habit of picking at a baited hook as if it were a much smaller fish.

Aphareus furcatus (Lacépède)	krong .	
Aphareus rutilans Cuvier &	metngui	
Valenciennes		
Aprion virescens Cuvier &	udel	
Valenciennes		
Caesio spp.	ulekiued	
Etelis marshi (Jenkins)	sebus	
Lutjanus argentimaculatus	kedesaulyengl	
(Forsskål)		
Lutjanus biguttatus (Cuvier &	kesebii	
Valenciennes)		
Lutjanus bohar (Forsskål)	kotongl (<25	
	cm), kedesau	
	(large)	38
Lutianus gibbus (Forsskål)	keremlal	1
Lutianus malabaricus (Bloch	sebus	
& Schneider)		3
I utianus monostiama (Cuvier	derringl	1
& Valenciennes)	uennigi	2
Lutianus fulnus (Bloch &	torrall tracabil	1
Lutjanus juivus (Bloch &	reyall, kesebli	
Schneider) (= valgiensis		1
Quoy & Gaimard)		
Lutjanus vitta Day	dodes	-

Lutjanus sp.	sakuradai
Lutjanus sp.	debull (N),
	mengeselb
	lad (S)
Macolor niger (Forsskål)	ngkalalk
Pristipomoides brighami (Seale)	sebus
Pristipomoides zonatus (Cuvier	turang
& Valenciennes)	
Pterocaesio spp.	ulekiued
Symphorus spilurus Günther	edui

51. pomadasyidae (grunts and sweetlips)

The young stage of *Plectorhinchus obscurus* lives at mangrove edges near river mouths; it is called **melimralm**, which means "to drink fresh water."

Plectorhinchus celebicus	merar
Bleeker	
Plectorhinchus chaetodonoides	bochol
Lacépède	
Plectorhinchus gaterinus	korriu
(Forsskål)	
Plectorhinchus goldmani	yaos
(Bleeker)	
Plectorhinchus obscurus	melimralm
(Günther)	(small), bikl
	(large)
Plectorhinchus orientalis (Bloch)	yaos
Pomadasys hasta (Bloch)	besechaml
	(small), mek-
	edchelewel

52. LETHRINIDAE (EMPERORS)

(large)

The suffix toachl means "deep water off the reef," and is used for two unidentified fish in this family, mentnguiltoachl and kllibeil-toachl. Metngui is a shallow water Lethrinus, while kllibei is the name given to large, barred pomacentrids of the genus Abudefduf. Kllibeiltoachl appears to be a new genus and species and is allied to Gnathodentex. We are unable to identify five species of Lethrinus, a genus greatly in need of revision.

Gnathodentex aureolineatus	ulekiull, bodes
(Lacépède)	
Lethrinus kallopterus Bleeker	menges

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Lethrinus mahsena (Forsskål) Lethrinus microdon Cuvier &	krol mechur	Parupeneus trifasciatus (Lacépède)	bang
Valenciennes		Upeneus tragula (Richardson)	uleangl
Lethrinus miniatus (Foster)	mlangmud	Upeneus vittatus (Forsskål)	uleangl
Lethrinus sp.	elewikl		8
Lethrinus sp.	chudch		
Lethrinus sp.	rekruk	56. MONODACTYLIDAE (F	INGERFISHE
Lethrinus sp.	metngui	Monodactylus argenteus	kevam
Lethrinus sp.	itotch	(Linnaeus)	J
Monotaxis grandoculis	besechaml	Monodactylus sebae Lacépède	kevam
(Forsskål)		5	
lethrinid	kllibeitoachl		
lethrinid	metnguiltoachl	57. PEMPHERIDAE (S	weepers)
lethrinid	chesichucher	Pempheris qualensis Cuvier &	ubid

53. NEMIPTERIDAE (SPINE-CHEEKS)

Scolopsis spp. are called madelcharm, which means "bird's eye" and may refer to the relatively large eyes of these fishes. One unidentified nemipterid is named chibars.

Scolopsis	spp.	madelcharm

54. GERREIDAE (MOJARRAS)

The general Palauan name for gerreids is chedochd.

Gerres abbreviatus Bleeker	chedochd
Gerres oblongus Cuvier &	chesall (small),
Valenciennes	kotikw
	(large)
Gerres punctatus Cuvier &	omoket
Valenciennes	

55. MULLIDAE (GOATFISHES)

h
ſ
ase)
,
aso

s)

Pempheris oualensis Cuvier & ubid Valenciennes

58. CHAETODONTIDAE (BUTTERFLYFISHES)

All fishes of the genera Chaetodon, Forcipiger, and Coradion have the same name, chelebesoi, with the interesting exception of Chaetodon unimaculatus. This fish has a large black spot on either side. Its Palauan name, temengula melechtadui, relates to its being held between two fingers when presented to a deity as food, thereby giving it the spots. The species of Heniochus are called kaming, the same as that for goats. Adults of some species of Heniochus have two horns on their foreheads.

Chaetodon spp.	chelebesoi
Chaetodon unimaculatus Bloch	temengula
	melechtadui
Coradion spp.	chelebesoi
Forcipiger spp.	chelebesoi
Heniochus spp	kaming

59. EPHIPPIDAE (SPADEFISHES)

We have collected Platax orbicularis (Forsskål) and P. pinnatus (Linnaeus) in Palau. Both are called **llelameduu** when smaller than about 13 cm and buls when large. Llelameduu means "leaf of the breadfruit tree" in reference to the resemblance of the young Platax orbicularis to drifting leaves.

Platax spp.

llelameduu

(< 13 cm),**buls** (> 13 cm)

60. SCATOPHAGIDAE (SCATS)

Scatophagus argus (Linnaeus) chubei

61. POMACANTHIDAE (ANGELFISHES)

The name **mud**, applied to most species of the small pomacanthid genus *Centropyge*, is also used for many of the damselfishes (see Pomacentridae). A similar confusion of pomacanthid and pomacentrid names has been found in Tahiti (Randall, in press).

Centropyge bispinosus (Günther)	ngemngumk
Centropyge spp.	mud
Euxiphipops sexstriatus	cher
(Cuvier & Valenciennes)	
Euxiphipops xanthometapon	ngemngumk
(Bleeker)	
Pomacanthus imperator (Bloch)	klbou
Pygoplites diacanthus (Boddaert)	ngemngumk
	0 0

0	Bin (0222)	(
Zanclus	cornutus (Lin	nnaeus)	karamarama-
	а С		duu

62. ZANCLIDAE (MOORISH IDOL FAMILY)

63. POMACENTRIDAE (DAMSELFISHES)

These small fishes are generally lumped together into two main groups by Palauans, a *Dascyllus-Chromis* division (cheremelamerand, "animal of the coral") and an *Abudefduf-Pomacentrus* division (mud). We employ the genus *Abudefduf* in the broad sense; it needs to be subdivided into several genera.

Abudefduf bengalensis (Bloch)	kllibei
Abudefduf sordidus (Forsskål)	kllibei
Abudefduf spp.	mud
Chromis spp.	cheremela-
	merand
Dascyllus spp.	cheremela-
	merand
Pomacentrus perspicillatus	etitl
Cuvier & Valenciennes	
Pomacentrus spp.	mud

64. LABRIDAE (WRASSES)

An interesting nomenclatural distinction has arisen with the largest (and by Palauan standards most edible) fish of this family, *Cheilinus undulatus*. Fish smaller than 60 cm in length,

which are primarily creamy white and brown, are called ngimr. Larger fish undergo a color change to bluish green and are generally called maml. Two kinds of maml are distinguished: didmecheilmaml, which is almost entirely blue-green, and triidlmaml, which is darker than didmecheilmaml and has more black in the bars on its scales. Triid is also the name for the white-browed rail, Poliolimnas cinereus. Palauans have nicknamed Choerodon anchorago eitin because of its comparative strength when fighting a spear-likening it to an 18-horsepower outboard motor. Udoudungelel is also the name for Scarus xanthochir. Epibulus insidiator is called ngerengerodl, which means "a boat with a sail that is hoisted," and refers to the highly extendable jaw of the fish. Ngetngot and kayeb are wrasse names for which we have not been able to determine scientific names.

Anampses caeruleopunctatus	udoudungelel
Rüppell	C
Cheilinus fasciatus (Bloch)	kerdeu
Cheilinus trilobatus Lacépède	adeyaoch
Cheilinus undulatus Rüppell	ngimr (< 60
	cm), did-
	mecheil-
	maml
	(> 60 cm),
	triidlmaml
	(> 60 cm)
Cheilio inermis (Forsskål)	ngiuut
Choerodon anchorago (Bloch)	budech, eitin
Coris aygula Lacépède	uluch
Coris gaimard (Quoy &	dudalm
Gaimard)	
Epibulus insidiator (Pallas)	ngerengerodl
Gomphosus varius Lacépède	merirchesengl
Halichoeres spp.	sisir
Hemigymnus melapterus (Bloch)	klsieb
Hemipteronotus taeniourus	dudalm
(Lacépède)	
Labroides dimidiatus (Cuvier	tengadidik
& Valenciennes)	
Pseudodax moluccanus (Cuvier	udoudungelel
& Valenciennes)	
Stethojulis bandanensis	tilobed recho-
(Bleeker)	mesangl
Thalassoma fuscum (Lacépède)	telebakl (male),
	ngot (female)
I halassoma purpureum	sechiir (male),
(Forsskål)	ngot (female)

65. SCARIDAE (PARROTFISHES)

There are two general names for parrotfishes in Palauan. The most common is butiliang. This comes from botella, the Spanish word for bottle, and is now the Palauan word; it particularly applies to the blue and green Japanese sake and shoyu bottles. The other general name is mellemau, which is the Palauan word for both the colors blue and green. In both instances, the Palauan name for the family refers to the predominant blue and green colors of many of the fishes. An antiquated name for this family is mengetaoch, which means "eats the boat channel near the village," referring to the group's grazing habits. Udoudungelel means "money teeth," and describes the green teeth of Scarus xanthochir. Kiuid is also the name for the Micronesian starling, Aplonis opacus. Uloiltoachl distinguishes the females of Scarus oviceps and S. scaber from uloi, the archer fish. We have been unable to obtain specimens for three reported members of this family, melchotchachau, mertebetabek, and kmull. Parrotfishes may exhibit dramatic differences in color with sex. When two names are given for scarid fishes, and the second is labelled "(male)," it refers to the terminal male phase, which is often primarily green.

Bolbometopon muricatus	berdebed (small),
(Cuvier & Valenciennes)	kemedukl
	(large)
Calotomus spinidens (Quoy	dekedekuuked
& Gaimard)	
Chlorurus bicolor (Rüppell)	beadl, ngesngis (male)
Leptoscarus vaigiensis (Quoy	kesuu
& Gaimard)	
Scarusrubroviolaceus (Bleeker)	mesekelatlelebt
Scarus bleekeri (Weber &	besachelutengl
de Beaufort)	C
Scarus blochi Cuvier &	ngemoil
Valenciennes	
Scarus chlorodon Jenyns	mesekelat
Scarus forsteri Cuvier &	mul
Valenciennes	
<i>Scarus ghobban</i> Forsskål	telebakl, chelop- techukl, molo- kidubch (male)
Scarus gibbus Rüppell	chotord

Scarus globiceps Cuvier &	ngemoil, elebt,
Valenciennes	butiliang(male)
<i>Scarus harid</i> (Forsskål)	ngyaoch (small),
	bergism (large)
Scarus lepidus Jenyns	mesekelat
Scarus oviceps Cuvier &	uloiltoachl,
Valenciennes	butiliang
	(male)
Scarus scaber Cuvier &	uloiltoachl,
Valenciennes	mengetaoch
	(male)
Scarus sexvittatus Rüppell	mesekelat,
	ngesngis
	(male)
Scarus sordidus Forsskål	derbetelloi,
	butiliang
	(male)
Scarus venosus Cuvier &	kiuid, menge-
Valenciennes	taoch (male)
Scarus xanthochir Bleeker	udoudungelel
	O

66. BLENNIIDAE (BLENNIES)

Chotord is also the name for Scarus gibbus.

Cirripectes spp.	odiduerabong	
Entomacrodus spp.	bunguk	
Istiblennius spp.	bunguk, chotord	

67. GOBIIDAE (GOBIES)

The general name for gobiid fishes, modechel, is also used for the electrid Ophiocara porocephala. The amphibious genus Periophthalmus, which is sometimes classified in a family by itself, is called temaitolok.

Periophthalmus spp. temaitolok

68. ELEOTRIDAE (SLEEPERS)

Eleotris spp.	soloch
Ophiocara aporos (Bleeker)	soloch (small),
	klakesol (large)
Ophiocara porocephala	modechel
(Cuvier & Valenciennes)	

69. ACANTHURIDAE (SURGEONFISHES)

No single general Palauan name applies to all of the surgeonfishes. Rather the family is broken into two groups: the species of *Naso* are called **borch**, and the fishes of the genus *Acanthurus* and other genera are termed **ches**- engl. Several of the acanthurids, particularly those of the genus *Naso*, have different names in the northern and southern sectors of the Palau Islands.

Mesekuuklbad means mesekuuk "from rocky regions." Sechou is the name for Naso brevirostris, a species with a very long rostral horn as an adult. It is also the name for reef herons and cattle egrets, which have long bills. **Chongchutl** is the Palauan word for sucking on a piece of sugarcane; it applies also to two species of Naso because of the Palauan practice of sucking on the soft parts of the skull of these fishes. Chum is also the Palauan name for hermit crabs. Daraboksos is the word for "a file" and refers to the skin of Naso vlamingii. Finally, **bisch**, the name for Zebrasoma veliferum, is often used in connection with plants and animals that will cause a rash if eaten; Z. veliferum is not considered good food by many Palauans.

Acanthurus gahhm (Forsskål)	mesekuuklbad
Acanthurus glaucopareius	urur
Cuvier	
Acanthurus guttatus Bloch	isaseb
& Schneider	
Acanthurus lineatus	belai
(Linnaeus)	
Acanthurus mata (Cuvier)	chesengl
Acanthurus nigrofuscus	masch
(Forsskål)	
Acanthurus nigroris Cuvier	masch
& Valenciennes	
Acanthurus olivaceus Bloch	kalelaumai (N),
& Schneider	merebas (S)
Acanthurus pyroferus	uais
Kittlitz	
Acanthurus triostegus	chelas
(Linnaeus)	
Acanthurus xanthopterus	mesekuuk
Cuvier & Valenciennes	
Ctenochaetus binotatus	masch
Randall	
Ctenochaetus striatus (Quoy	masch
& Gaimard)	
Naso brachycentron (Cuvier	chongchutl
& Valenciennes)	1 (3.1)
Naso brevirostris (Cuvier &	sechou (N),
valenciennes)	demrechi (S)
INaso hexacanthus (Bleeker)	demelengis (N),
	borch (S)

Naso lituratus (Bloch &	cherangl
Schneider)	
Naso tuberosus (Lacépède)	chongchutl
Naso unicornis (Forsskål)	chum
Naso vlamingii (Cuvier &	daraboksos,
Valenciennes)	melangesakl
Paracanthurus hepatus	mases
(Linnaeus)	
Zebrasoma scopas (Cuvier)	masch
Zebrasoma veliferum (Bloch)	bisch

70. SIGANIDAE (RABBITFISHES)

Four species of this family have the same Palauan name, **reked**, which means "to be close to" an object. This refers to the pairing habit of all four predominantly yellow species. **Klels** is used as a nickname for *Siganus lineatus* and also applies to a siganid species we have not collected.⁵

Siganus corallinus (Cuvier &	reked
Valenciennes)	
Siganus doliatus (Cuvier)	reked
Siganus canaliculatus (Park)	meyas
Siganus lineatus (Cuvier &	klsebuul
Valenciennes)	
Siganus puellus (Schlegel)	reked
Siganus punctatus (Bloch &	bebail
Schneider)	
Siganus argenteus (Quoy &	beduut
Gaimard)	
Siganus spinus (Linnaeus)	chepsall
Siganus vulpinus (Schlegel &	reked
Muller)	
Siganus sp.	klsebuulimerang
~ .	

71. GEMPYLIDAE (SNAKE MACKERELS)

Promethichthys prometheus and the trichiurid Trichiurus lepturus have the same name, telouchedui; however, the Palauans are aware that they are different fishes.

Promethichthys prometheus	telouchedui
(Cuvier & Valenciennes)	

72. TRICHIURIDAE (CUTLASSFISHES)

Trichiurus lepturus Linnaeus telouchedui

⁵ S. punctatissimus Fowler & Bean and S. vermiculatus (Cuvier & Valenciennes) occur rarely in Palau but have no native names. D. J. Woodland (personal communication) has advised us on the specific names of signaid fishes.

73. SCOMBRIDAE (TUNAS AND MACKERELS)

During the Japanese occupation of Palau between World War I and World War II, there was a long-line and bait-boat fishery for tunas. Many Palauans were employed in this fishing industry. At that time, they adopted the Japanese names for the three most important commercial tunas, and these are now the "native" designations. Since the early Palauans seldom fished outside the lagoon, the replacement of the little-used Palauan names by the Japanese names is readily understood. The Japanese names still in use are soda katsuo, katsuo, and manguro. A second name for the yellowfin tuna, tekuu, comes from Tobi, a small island 500 km southwest of Koror with an entirely different language and culture. The second name listed for Grammatorcynus bicarinatus, biturturch, means "smell of urine" because of the odor of the flesh while cooking. The old Palauan name for Katsuwonus was mokorokor, and for Euthynnus, chesodm. Large Katsuwonus are sometimes called diba (from the English "diver") because of their sounding habit when hooked.

Acanthocybium solanderi (Cuvier) Auxis thazard (Lacépède) Euthynnus affinis (Cantor) Grammatorcynus bicarinatus (Quoy & Gaimard)	keskas (N), mersad (S) chesodm soda katsuo, chesodm mokorokor, biturturch
Gymnosarda unicolor	kerengob
(Rüppell)	
Katsuwonus pelamis	katsuo,
(Linnaeus)	mokorokor
Rastrelliger brachysoma	smaach
(Bleeker)	
Scomber japonicus Houttuyn	smaach
Scomberomorus commersoni	ngelngal
(Lacépède)	
Thunnus albacares	tekuu, manguro
(Bonnaterre)	

74. XIPHIIDAE (BROADBILL SWORDFISH FAMILY)

We are not certain if the swordfish, Xiphias gladius Linnaeus, occurs in Palauan waters, but

individual specimens unloaded from Japanese long-line vessels receive the name **meluis**, the same as for the various species of marlin. Kami et al. (1968) recorded one specimen of 2 meters from Guam, so it seems likely that this wide-ranging fish reaches Palau, 1,000 km to the south.

75. ISTIOPHORIDAE (BILLFISHES)

Istiophorus platypterus (Shaw tekrar & Nodder) Makaira spp. meluis

76. BOTHIDAE (LEFTEYE FLOUNDERS)

Bothus mancus (Broussonet) rrai Bothus pantherinus (Rüppell) rrai

77. OSTRACIONTIDAE (TRUNKFISHES)

Riaml is also the name for the tree *Pangium* edule, which has fruit similar in shape and color to *Ostracion*.

Lactoria cornutas (Linnaeus) karamasus Ostracion cubicus Linnaeus bubeu (small), riaml (large)

78. BALISTIDAE (TRIGGERFISHES)

The following names refer to fishes of this family (or possibly to the related monacanthids), but we have not seen specimens: brober, ewilt, klbeob, lungribtal, ngelengelt, and cholikltungch.

Balistapus undulatus	ilambrokl
(Mungo Park)	
Balistoides niger (Bonnaterre)	tetachruchel, tungibtall
Balistoides viridescens (Bloch	beab
& Schneider)	
Pseudobalistes flavimarginatus	cherakl, dukl
(Rüppell)	
Rhinecanthus aculeatus	tungch
(Linnaeus)	
Rhinecanthus rectangulus	tungch
(Bloch & Schneider)	0
Rhinecanthus verrucosus	tungch
(Linnaeus)	0

Sufflamen bursa (Bloch &tungchSchneider)Sufflamen niger (MungoPark)tungch

79. MONACANTHIDAE (FILEFISHES)

The name **lung** comes from the word for "stupid." Palauans state that this refers to the general ease with which *Alutera* may be approached and speared.

Alutera scripta (Osbeck)	lung
Cantherhines pardalis	yalk
(Rüppell)	
Oxymonacanthus longirostris	moichall
(Bloch & Schneider)	

80. TETRAODONTIDAE (PUFFERS)

Arothron stellatus (Blochtiaultelbudl& Schneider)Arothron nigropunctatustelbudl(Bloch & Schneider)

81. DIODONTIDAE (PORCUPINEFISHES)

Drutm is also one of the names for the cattle egret, *Bubulcus ibis*.

Diodon hystrix Linnaeus drutm Diodon holacanthus Linnaeus drutm

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