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CHICAGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM—ETHNOLOGY

50-24

252536

Provenience: Western Caroline Islands ; Palau**Field No.****People or Culture:** Palauan**Object:** bone bracelet

55-144

Material: cervical (atlas or axis) vertebra from a dugong**Description:** Formerly worn only by men of high rank and their male children. Placed on the wrist of the wearer in adolescence. The inside of the bone was carved out and enlarged a bit and the hand and wrist of the wearer lubricated with the juice of the hibiscus plant. The task of drawing the hand**Neg. No.****Dimensions:** through the opening was still difficult (in cm.) and painful. Many times the skin was scraped and the knuckles bruised. (over)

Acc. 2574

Collection: Presented by Roland W. Force; Collector, 1956. Tri-Institutional Pacific Program Ethnological Expedition to Palau, 1954-1956.

Such bracelets were symbols of status and prestige and were purchased with the native bead currency. Native name: elechol. Sometimes the bracelets were buried with the wearer at his death and sometimes were cut off (as this specimen has been) and kept. Formerly belonged to Ardang (title), Klourubak (name) of Achlap hamlet in Ngarard municipality on Babeldaob Island. The best vertebrae were considered to come from mature female dugongs.



(1000 m)