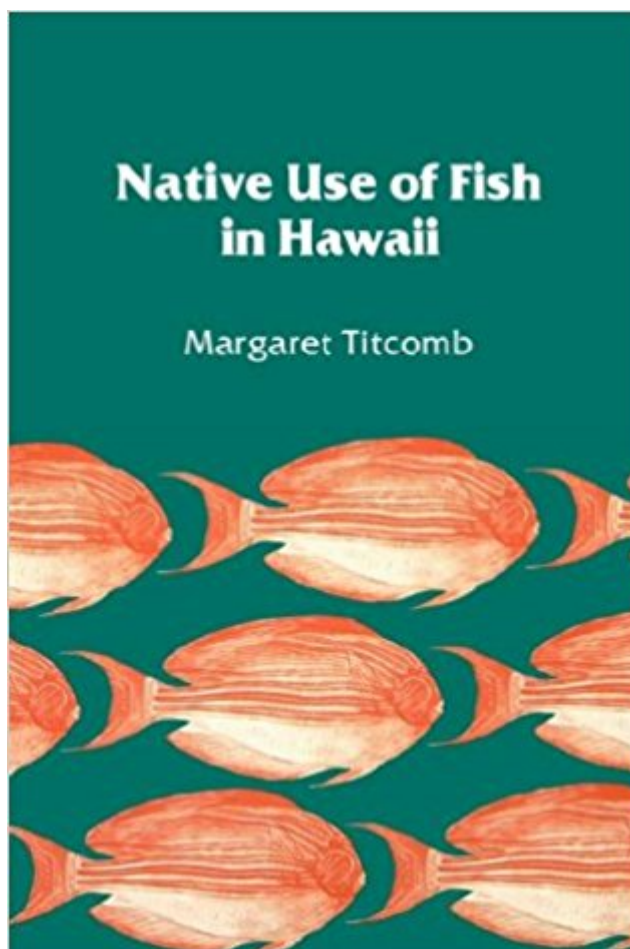


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# Native Use Of Fish In Hawaii



## Synopsis

This book provides a lot of information on the importance of fishing in ancient Hawaiian society. It includes drawings of fish with both Hawaiian and scientific names.

## Book Information

Paperback: 188 pages

Publisher: University of Hawaii Press; 2 edition (November 1, 1982)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0824805925

ISBN-13: 978-0824805920

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.4 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,632,650 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #48 in [Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Field Guides > Fish](#) #298 in [Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Natural Resources > Fisheries & Aquaculture](#) #813 in [Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Animals > Fish & Sharks](#)

## Customer Reviews

Great book! Fast delivery

This book is an essential reference for folks interested in how native Hawaiians interacted with their primary protein source: fish. I've checked this book out at least once every year for the past 9 years. I really ought to buy my own copy! The book primarily focuses on an overview of each species utilized in Hawaiian waters: the various names used (Hawaiians often had different names for different sizes/ages of fish), a description and usually a line drawing, fishing methods, and preparation methods. The first third of the book reviews the use of fish in all phases of Hawaiian life. Here are some favorite snippets (from the hardback 1972 edition):\* A 1923 letter writer in a Hawaiian language newspaper said "This [matter of fish supply] is going to be an important question for several generations, to understand why there was so much fish in the days of our ancestors and so little in our time although meat and fish is now imported to help supply the people with food" (p. 12).\* "Many factors influenced the problem of getting an abundance of fish food for Hawaiians in 'haole' (literally foreigners -- post discovery) times, the let-down of the strict discipline of the tabu system, with which the replacing 'haole' forms of laws and government control did not coincide perfectly, the

bringing in of other racial elements, as the Chinese and Japanese, who had strong commercial instincts, even to holding the price by limiting the supply in the markets, a scheme completely foreign to Hawaiian concepts, and the changed condition that took many Hawaiians away from shores and into a more urban way of living" (p. 17).\* "It is evident that the principle of conservation was a strong factor in the Hawaiian sea-food economy" (p. 17).\* "Many Hawaiians would think the fish lacked flavour [sic] if the viscera were removed. This fondness for all parts of a fish is general to all Polynesia. Anyone who picks at fish served, discarding the dark flesh near the bones, or the skin of any except a very tough-skinned fish, or one strongly malodorous, as the 'palani', was pitied as one who does not know how to eat fish -- an uncultivated person" (p. 19).\* "A cut crosswise of the fish was called 'poke'. ... The pieces were chunks, not thin steaks" (p. 20). [I always wondered about the etiology of 'poke'.]\* "At modern feasts, the menu is hardly complete without a dish of salmon 'lomi', salmon ('kamano') being imported from the Northwest Coast of America. This importation started in very early times. Soon after discovery (1778), Hawaiians began shipping on as crew aboard vessels in the fur trade of the Northwest Coast. They took a liking to salmon at once, and brought it back salted. This trade became a steady one. A keg of salt salmon was always on hand in well provided households, those who could afford it getting the choice bellies ('alo piko'). The tail part, not so easy to 'lomi', was saved for cooking with greens. The missionary families found in salt salmon a substitute for salt cod -- the New England standby. Salt salmon, lomied with raw onion and raw tomato, as a fish for a feast ('aha'aina'; modern term is 'lu'au') did not appear until late years..." (p. 22).\* "For fisherman in ancient days, the 'ulu' [parrotfish] was the most telltale of all fish, they revealed what sort of behaviour [sic] was going on at the fisherman's home. If the 'ulu' capered and frolicked in the water it was a sure sign of too much levity at home, instead of the sober conduct a fisherman's wife should display when her husband was at sea. If two 'ulu' seemed to be rubbing noses, it was a sure sign that there was flirting going on at home. The only course open to the fisherman was to quit fishing and go home and punish his wife..." (p. 148-9). All in all, an interesting book.

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