

## Epoon (Ebon) Atoll

### BICYCLING

By: Juonjuon George (Edited by Y Shiwata Louise)

Transportation is not a problem on Ebon. Ri-ebons' (Ebon people) main transportation is the bicycle. From the youngest to the oldest, the people of Ebon use bicycles daily just to meet their needs. Ebon has only one vehicle and its only used for important activities and events. The truck belongs to the local government. I laughed the first time I went there, because I had never seen an old lady ride a bicycle before in my life. Older women on Majuro do not ride bicycle; they mostly take taxis.

I was so happy because I rode bicycles everyday on Ebon. Each day was a great day for me. Waking up every single day and riding a bicycle was the best. It gives you energy every morning and everyday. The island has the safest transportation system compared to other islands. The people ride bicycles everyday from one end to the other. Not only do these people get from one place to another on their bicycles, but while they are riding they are improving the health of the people on Ebon.

**Means of transportation on Ebon**  
Bicycles  
Motor Boats  
Outrigger Canoes  
Truck

**Bike Freely  
Block the Wind  
Enjoy the Green  
Be Healthy  
Be Healthy  
Be Healthy**



### Coconut Sugar Written by TJ Mojilong

One of the product of Ebon is Coconut Sugar, which is made from "Jakaro" (coconut sap). The person who made this coconut sugar is Nani Jerilong. She is from Ebon and she lives in Welok en Weto on Ebon. The sugar won 1st place in the One Island One Product competition in May 1st of 2018. Even though many islands also sap coconut, Nani came up with the idea of creating sugar from coconut sap. She said she had to try making sugar from Jakaro. After trying she is able to say that Jakaro is not only for drinking but also can be made into sugar. This is sugar that can be added to sweetened anything. She's able to make sugar from Jakaro after cooking it until it turns brown.

Upon hearing that sugar would be made from coconut sap was unimaginable to me at first. I just couldn't believe that coconut sugar could actually be made from "Jakaro". After my interview with couple locals, I was told that a woman named Nani was able to make sugar from coconut sap. Coconut Sugar is healthy and nutritious. It is good for cooking and baking. This sugar can also be added to any drinks.



## EVERYDAY LIFE

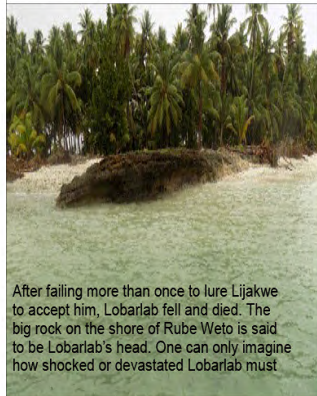
By: Dianalyun Henson

Men and women have different roles in the community, from cleaning the overall surroundings to weaving beautiful mats, or jaki. Materials used for weaving jaki are taken from the pandanus tree. The steps require cutting leaves, cleaning the thorns around the leaves, drying, cutting the leaves into preferred shapes, and weaving the leaves into patterns that make up the Jaki. I am very fortunate to have learned some of the important roles for women within the community in Ebon.

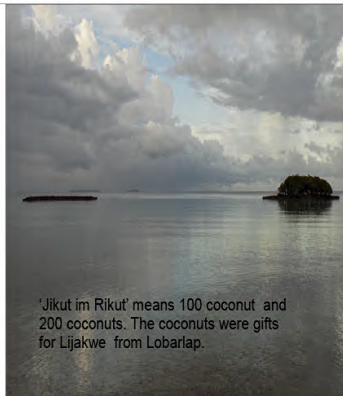
There are some Marshallese foods which I have not tried or even seen before. I am fortunate to have learned how to prepare 'ierajj' or taro crop from women in Ebon. To prepare ierajj you must first wash the crop and then scrape the skin off until it is totally clean. Then, you must cover the ierajj with breadfruit leaves while grating coconuts to be mixed in later together with the ierajj. After you have mixed it together thoroughly, then the food is finally prepared. This is a traditional Ebon delicacy and it is called Jabwator.

## Bwebwenato n Lijakwe

Once there lived a woman name Lijakwe who lived on Jitaken Ebon. Growing up with her parents, Lijakwe had a beauty that couldn't be compared to the other women on Ebon. Lijakwe also had an 'ao' or inner charm to herself that was far too much for people to accept. At night when Lijakwe bathed in the ocean the skies would turn red. Her skin had such a shine to it that it made everything around her shine. A man named Lobarlab lived on Toka, Ebon and wanted to seek Lijakwe's approval to be his wife. Lobarlab was full of himself and doubted Lijakwe would ever disagree to the proposal. Taking as many coconuts from Jit-toen, Lobarlab went to Lijakwe house to present his gifts. With excitement, Lobarlab told Lijakwe what he had prepared for her. Lijakwe accepted the gifts and told Lobarlab to go and never return. Lobarlab fell down and died from feeling rejected.



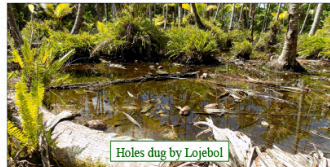
After failing more than once to lure Lijakwe to accept him, Lobarlab fell and died. The big rock on the shore of Rube Weto is said to be Lobarlab's head. One can only imagine how shocked or devastated Lobarlab must



'Jikut im Rikut' means 100 coconut and 200 coconuts. The coconuts were gifts for Lijakwe from Lobarlab.

## Inedel

Once upon a time, there lived a boy name Inedel who lived a happy life with his mother and father on the island of Toka, Ebon. His father was a chief by the name of Lejebol. One day Inedel's mother became very sick and later passed away. This made Lojebol and Inedel very sad. It wasn't long after that that Lojebol found a wife who would become Inedel's step mother. As time passed, Inedel's step mother started treating him badly. The step mother made Inedel do all the hard works regardless of whether extra hands were needed. Lojebol knew this and he didn't object to any of his new wife's ideas. The bad treatment would continue on until



Holes dug by Lojebol

the mother tried to come and take inedel away to her spirit world. Knowing what Inedel's mother was trying to do, Lojebol became really nice to his son. He went so far as to make a kite for Inedel without knowing that this would bring an end to his relationship with his son. The mother finally succeeded after she and Inedel flew away, leaving Lojebol to die after digging hard into the ground trying to get his son back from the spirit world.



## SOME HISTORICAL SITES

- THE FIRST PROTESTANT CHURCH IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS**  
The church is located in 'Rube' Weto  
The missionaries first landed Ebon on the Morning Star Ship in 1857
- THE OLD BELL**  
This bell here is said to have been carried using ropes and man power. Hearing the locals chanting away, the men from Ebon were able to pull using rope and raised the bell to where it is in the church.
- THE BEAUTIFUL ROAD ON EBON**  
An indication of community collaboration  
'Ut Lat' was decided by the community as the plant to be laid along the road  
The road is also a 'MO' which prohibits the presence of truck
- THE MIZPHA HALL - Meeting Hall; Sometime used for church sessions; Sunday school was also carried out in this building**
- REMAINS OF IROIJLAPLAP LITOKWA'S RESIDENCE**  
The remains of Litokwa's residence on 'Waikiki Weto'  
Pier Concrete with wooden house with thatch roof  
2 bedroom; 1 dining room facing the lagoon side  
1 guest room facing the road
- GRAVES BELONGING TO MR. DWIGHT HEINE and WIFE MRS. MORGIANA HEINE**  
Mr. Dwight was the first District Administrator Representative during the Trust Territory of Pacific Islands era



Photo A. The First Protestant Church in the Marshall



Photo B. The Old Bell



Photo C. The Beautiful Road on Ebon



Photo D. The Mizpha Hall



Photo E. Remains of Iroiijlaplap Litokwa's Residence

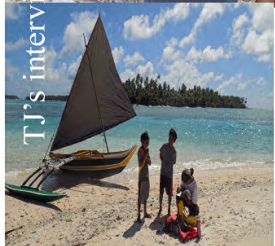


Photo F. Graves Belonging to Mr. Dwight Heine and Wife Mrs. Morgiana Heine



TJ's interview with young sailors

photo by Yshiwata



The Island of Ebon is great because the locals still travel by canoe in both the lagoon and ocean. There are few motor boats around but more canoes that are still sailing to this day. Some students on some of the communities on the island still ride canoes to their schools. They also ride canoes to go fishing. Many Marshallese novadays are used to riding motor boats. A boat uses gasoline which can create more air pollution leading to more climate change problems. Climate change is a big problem in the Marshall Islands as it is often debated among our government leaders sometimes. Gasoline is also expensive. Canoes only uses wind that is free of charge.

I was amazed myself seeing 3rd grade students sailing canoes by themselves. I haven't seen young kids travelling by themselves on a canoe before in my lifetime. In my own opinion, I think it is good to keep our traditional skills which were passed down to us by our ancestors. Losing our skills means losing our identities as Marshallese.



Top Right Photo: Take the taro out of the soil, Take out remain soil and roots, cut the stem from the taro plant

Top Right Photo: Cut banana leave to lay scraping tool on and start scraping



Taro crops on Ebon (photo by Yshiwata Lomae)

### Food Crops

By Jaunjuon George (edited by Yshiwata Lomae)

There are a lot of trees that you can eat from and even drink from in Ebon. I was so amazed when I landed on Ebon. I was not able to count the different variety of trees that were planted by the people. They planted banana, pandanus, limes, apples, cucumbers and of course the island's favorite "lara" (taro). Not only did the locals plant so many food crops but also they pretty much had them everyday. I am happy because I have tasted all of the mentioned plants.

For Ri-ebon(Ebon people), these trees are very important. I was shocked when I first saw how they made jam from banana. They even made sugar from "Jakaro" (coconut sap). People in Ebon are so lucky because they can do these things that the other islanders can not. They noted that "we don't have to waste what's on the land, it is a gift". They also mentioned that the jam and sugar were once winning one island one product in the past.



Bottom Left Photo: Clean the outer part of taro, peeling the outer skin layer, roots, and dirt, and wash with water

Squeeze scraped taro into tiny bits to be dried under the sun. The team highly recommend using pans or other clean materials to spread scraped taro on.



Top Photo Bread Fruit Flour: Cutting, Peeling, and Scraping 'Ma' (breadfruit)



Top Right Banana Jam: Cutting Banana and Squeezing Limes



Ebon is a beautiful Island that has a lot of trees and fruits. There are healthy fruits that grow on the island such as pandanus, banana, breadfruit, and more. Phosphate can be found on Ebon which make the plants grow so well. According to the locals, birds flown over Ebon have been depositing their droppings which after millions of years became what is now phosphate. I've travelled to so many other atolls and have not heard about or seen phosphate used for farming or planting crops. During our Gem Trip, we interviews the locals about phosphate. We asked why plants or trees were growing so healthily. In fact, we asked why the plants were greener and healthier on Ebon than other atolls. The locals responded by saying that Ebon had phosphate while other atolls did not have phosphate. The locals on Ebon can be trained to plant other types of plants such as vegetables. Healthy food is good for our body. Even when there are lots of local foods on Ebon, there should be more healthy plants like vegetables. Vegetable is still in shortage and the locals have to plant more. The community also need to have the children eat more vegetables. (Written by TJ Mojilong)



### Clockwise Photo

#### Coconut Sugar

Add as much "jekaro" (coconut sap), cook in light fire while stirring continuously, stir until only sugar is left in the pot  
Pack in clean air tight Ziploc

#### Breadfruit Flour

Wash and clean breadfruit  
Using peelers peel off the outer skin of the breadfruits  
Cut the breadfruits into long slices  
Scrape the breadfruits into thin slices  
Dry under the sun  
Pass through the scraping machine until the substance become powdery and flaky  
Pack in clean air tight Ziploc

#### Banana Jam

Peel and clean banana. Cut into thin slices. Fill 2 cups with the banana slices.  
Using clean limes, cut and squeezed up to 1/2 cup. Use a strainer to take away seeds, extract lime juice only.  
Add 2 cup of sugar and the 1/2 cup lime to mix with the thin cut bananas.  
Cook in light fire while stirring. Continue stirring to make sure the jam is not overcooked



Bottom Right Bread Fruit Flour: Scraping, Drying, and Packed Ready Breadfruit Flour



Bottom Left: Cooked after adding sugar and water , mix until the Jam thickens

