

Basic Detail Report



Dagger

Date

19th Century

Medium

Wood, stingray barb, fiber and beads

Description

This is a stingray barb dagger made and used throughout the Admiralty Islands. While these knives are characterized as having been used in combat, most Admiralty Islands warfare took place at a distance with thrown or wielded spears. Though there are accounts of stingray tooth daggers being used as in combat to attack already downed opponents, many would either have been used as tools—potentially even as hair ornaments—or, depending on the shape of the handle, could alternatively have originally been socketed into a shaft to form a spear. Stingray barb tipped spears often featured the variety of crocodile motif seen here, however they generally have more than one point. The wrapping of the handle also indicates that this would have been used as a dagger.

Dimensions

13 7/8 × 2 1/8 × 2 in. (35.2 × 5.4 × 5.1 cm)