



## Neck pendant

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**Not on display**

**Title/Description:** Neck pendant

**Object Type:** Pendant

**Materials:** Clam shell, Fibre, Turtle shell

**Measurements:** h. 160 x w. 219 x d. 23 mm

**Accession Number:** 755

**Historic Period:** 20th century

**Production Place:** Oceania, Pacific, Solomon Islands, Southeast region

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Crescent-shaped neck pendants of this type were made in the Malaita and San Cristobal area and were worn by men. The turtle shell overlay depicts a frigate bird clutching a fish, probably a bonito. Both these species feature prominently in local iconography, for the frigate bird is associated with protective spirits and is often seen at sea above shoals of bonito, acting as a guide to fishermen.

Special fishing expeditions for bonito were formerly an important part of male initiation rites (see Fox, 1925; Davenport, 1981). Ivens (1927: 393-5) noted that whereas small pendants like 833 were made from local black-lip pearl shell, large examples like 755 had been made since the late nineteenth century from gold-lip pearl shell obtained from European traders.

Steven Hooper, 1997

Entry taken from *Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection, Vol. 2: Pacific, African and Native North American Art*, edited by Steven Hooper (Yale University Press, 1997) p. 73.

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