



Al Dufra

Other names: **Finger Conch/Lambis truncate sebae / Ab Jalambu**[Change Image](#)

Domain

TRADITIONAL CRAFTS
Perfume Making

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND LOCATION

Community groups

The dugong is extracted from the coasts of the Red Sea in eastern Sudan, as the Dugonab Bay specializes in producing more than 70% of the world's dugong production. Red Sea fishermen from various groups in eastern Sudan and elsewhere practice dugong hunting between Suakin and Dugonab, along a 70-kilometer stretch of coast on both sides.

Practitioners

Fishermen in the Red Sea are known for their groups of fish, which are a minority compared to the ethnic groups and tribes of the Red Sea coast, such as the Baggara tribes and other groups living off the coast of the Dugonab Gulf and towards Suakin. In addition to fishing for fish, these groups also hunt for "kokyan," which is a coral stone, shells that contain pearls, as well as "zarambak" and "balbil," which are two types of small shells that contain the most precious pearls favored by jewelry traders.

Purpose / Use

The living organism inside the shell is consumed as food, while the shell is used for the production of perfumes, incense, decorations, accessories, and trade.

Knowledge / Skills

Hunting zebra fish requires simple skills and easy knowledge, where hunters roam in the shallow waters with green reeds, known in the Red Sea as "kafab," carrying plastic bags on their backs in the area where the waters transition between shallow and deep in the sea. The hunters separate them from the gradient of water colors in two shades of green. After catching the animals, there is another skill related to extracting the zebra fish's claw, which is done by other women in preparation for selling it in its final form called "al-difra." The claws are boiled in hot water mixed with soap for ten minutes or more to remove the fishy smell that is present on the zebra fish meat. Then the claws are placed in a dish over a low fire and sea sand is added to purify them from any remaining flesh impurities. They are then ground and sifted through a soft cloth until they become a pearl in an advanced stage of preparing the perfume, and sometimes they are sold whole without being ground after the necessary cleaning processes.

Transmission

The experience is gained through practice and life in fishing communities in the Red Sea.

Tools, Equipment, Services

Plastic crates and mesh baskets are very rare, as this fishing skill is still very traditional and does not even require boats to go deep into the heart of the water.

HISTORY

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INTRODUCTION

The zarmbak is a common marine mollusk found on coral reefs, shallow waters, and sandy bottoms near algae. There are two types of zarmbak, the smaller zarmbak and the camel. The shell in which it takes refuge is called the queen's shell and is used for various purposes. It plays an important role in the environment by purifying the surrounding water and turning over the seabed with its rotational movement and burying its six projections in the sand. The zarmbak is a sought-after marine creature by coastal residents, as the living organism inside the shell is eaten, its claw is used in making the finest Sudanese perfumes known as "khamra," its shell is used as a decorative tool in Sudanese homes and shops, and sometimes it is used as a cigarette extinguisher. It is a crustacean animal with a palm-sized folded hand-like leg that it uses to feed on green algae and fish scales. As soon as it senses human footsteps approaching, it digs into the soft seabed with its claw and hides. Fishermen search for it specifically for this claw.

Cultural Value:

The "Dufra" has been used for hundreds of years in preparing the most important perfumes for Sudanese wedding ceremonies, such as "Khumra". Without it, wedding rituals are incomplete or considered deficient. The "Dufra" completes the ritual of creating the raw fragrance, a source of pride for the groom and his mother, as local perfumes are considered the most important elements of Sudanese wedding rituals. From them, "Khumra", "Dilka", and their many derivatives are extracted in another distinct ritual known as the "Dag Al-Reeha" ritual.

Associated Practices:

Weddings and perfume making

Cultural Expressions

Sheikh Siroh, seven pots of mahlab, seven pots of sandalwood, seven pots of niaouli. His relative said a little, "I won't let Sheikh Siroh in." Al-Kabli.

You, the arrogant girls, missed the passing train. Khalil Farah. The incense and massage oil are driving me crazy tonight. The apple of my eyes, the scent of her skin, if you see her, your life will extend for years. Ahmed Shawish.

VIABILITY

Threats:

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Natural Resources used

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