

Aunt Julia's True Stories

The Mulletts or Banak

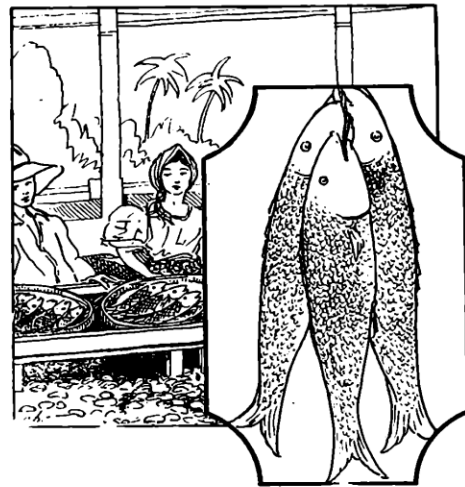
BECAUSE it is silvery and shiny, the *banak* is sometimes mistaken for *bangos*. But the *banak* is superior to the *bangos* in flavor and in freedom from fine bones which make the *bangos* unpopular to children.

There are about fifteen kinds of *banak* in Philippine waters. Some live only in salt water while others thrive in both fresh and salt water. They are not so good-looking as the *bangos*. Their bodies are thick and snouts broad. The stomach is large and looks like a gizzard. In the small kind called *kapak*, the stomach is filled with mud because it feeds upon tiny plants contained in the mud.

Ask your mother about the common kind of *banak* popularly called *talilong* or *aligasin*. How is it prepared? Both *talilong* and *banak* are salted and dried and sold as *daing* in all markets.

Some High-Priced Fishes

Among the best liked fishes which command high prices are the *lapo-lapo*, *apahap*, *pampano*, *talakitok*, and *bakoko*. The *lapo-lapo* and *apahap* belong to the same family although they do not look alike. The *lapo-lapo* has a thickset body and a very big mouth. Its body is covered with big brown spots and tiny scales. The flesh is white and flaky. The *apahap* is silvery in color. It has a high arched back



and depressed head. Its flesh is very tender, flaky, and white. Plenty of *apahap* are found in *bangos* fish ponds because they find their way into the ponds when they are in the fry stage.

The *pampano* and the *talakitok* belong to the same family. The *pampano* has a very broad, almost rounded, body. The *talakitok* is long and slender but very thick. Its tail is broadly forked and very powerful. The *pampano* is slow while the *talakitok* is swift in movement.

The *bakoko* belongs to a family of fine food fishes. It has a strong set of teeth that can grind up crabs and shells. Its flesh is tender and has a fine flavor.

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS

My brother Ben
Is very fat,
He crawls around
The buri mat.

My sister Bel
Has curly hair,
She loves to climb
Up on a chair.

My brother Al
Is two feet-four
He loves to close
The kitchen door.

I love them all
These naughty three,
We are all good
As good can be.

MY RELATIVES

My uncle Juan
Is big and tall,
He makes me look
So very small.

My auntie Chong
Is sweet and good
She treats me well
And gives me food.

My cousin Luz
Has big black eyes,
She eats a lot
Of fish and rice.

Alvaro L. Martinez