Molecular Systematics & Ethnobotany Case Study: Breadfruit

Thanks to Tim Motley & Nyree Zerega for pictures and information.

- Hawaii, California, Bering Straight
- “Bounty-hunting”
- “Pandora’s Box”
- Breadfruit
- Molecular systematics

William Bligh

- James Cook’s sailing master (2nd Voyage; 1776)
- Captain, HMS Bounty (1787-1789)
The voyage of the HMS Bounty, 1787-1789

- 23 Dec 1787, departed for Tahiti

**Mission:** To collect breadfruit for West Indies.

**Crew:**
- Bligh (Captain)
- Fletcher Christian (Master’s Mate)
- 2 Civilian botanists
- 42 other s

…the truth behind the legend.
Cape of Good Hope (Kaap die Goeie Hoop)

Cape Agulhas

Great White Breaching for Lunch in False Bay © 2000 Chris Fallows
The voyage of the HMS Bounty, 1787-1789

-28 Oct 1788, reached Tahiti
  5 mos. collecting & preparing 1015 breadfruit trees.
-4 Apr 1789; set sail for West Indies

-29 Apr 1789, mutiny.
  Led by Fletcher Christian

After the mutiny, 1789

Bligh sailing on (ultimately) for Timor and the Malay Archipelago (3618 nautical miles; 6701 km).

Painting by Robert Dodd.

Bligh went to Timor and the Malay Archipelago (3618 nautical miles or 6701 km over 47 days with only a sextant, pocket watch, and no compass).
After the mutiny, 1789

- Mutineers: attempts to settle Tubuai (3 mo.; cannibals), then 14 back to Tahiti. For Hawaii Islands along with a Tahitian man, 11 Tahitian women, and 1 baby.

Why the mutiny?

- 14 mutineers in Tahiti caught, held in “Pandora’s Box”

Pandora (G.) =
- first woman, a gift from Zeus & other gods
- She comes bearing another gift – a mysterious jar.
- The rest is history (or myth).

HMS Pandora

Pandora by John W. Waterhouse, 1896

Pandora engraving based on painting by F.S. Church
After the mutiny

HMS Pandora
- 14 mutineers in Tahiti caught, held in "Pandora's Box."
- Return (1791): Great Barrier Reef, 4 prisoners and 31 crew lost, Timor refuge.
- Britain (1792): 10 surviving "mutineers" tried.

Pandora by John W. Waterhouse, 1896

Pandora engraving based on painting by FS Church

Pitcairn Islands
- 1789: 8 mutineers, 6 Tahitian men, 11 women and 1 baby.
- 1783: 4 mutineers & 10 women plus their children remaining. Cristian not among them.
- By 1808: "discovered" by British, 1 surviving mutineer plus original women and descendants.
- Today: ca. 50 inhabitants.