

# **Bakunawa**

This proposal was submitted by 2 people

## **Submission 1:**

### **Brief Description:**

Philippine mythology

### **Explanation:**

Bakunawa is a dragon or giant serpent in ancient Philippine mythology who is said to devour the moon during lunar eclipses. According to a famous tale, Bakunawa would rise up from the ocean to devour the seven moons Bathala had created. Ancient Filipinos would loudly bang pots to scare away Bakunawa, forcing him to spit the moon back in the sky.

As a proud Filipino astronomer I want more of pre-colonial Philippine mythology to be represented in astronomy. I believe Bakunawa would be the perfect name for this quasi-moon since according to a famous version of the tale, Bathala the creator god in Philippine mythology created seven beautiful moons and the giant Bakunawa would rise up from the ocean and eat them. This gigantic mythical serpent devouring the moon is how ancient Filipinos would attempt to interpret the occurrence of lunar eclipses when scientific knowledge about the said celestial phenomena was not yet available to them. I believe the name Bakunawa would suit this quasi-moon because it somehow mirrors the tale of the sky having more than one moon according to Philippine mythology.

## **Submission 2:**

### **Brief Description:**

Philippine mythology

### **Explanation:**

The Bakunawa is a creature of Philippine myth, believed to be the reason behind several natural phenomena, like eclipses and earthquakes. Its form is similar to that of a dragon, and some defining physical characteristics include a looped tail and one horn on its nose. Ancient Filipinos believed that the Bakunawa lived in either the sky or the underworld.

This name, the mythical creature Bakunawa, is a part of my nation's culture, most especially of the belief system of the Philippines' indigenous people. To bring it to the world stage, and to name an astronomical object with a creature of Philippine myth is a great honor and a

good opportunity to immerse the Filipino youth in international science and their ancestor's religion. The Bakunawa is also believed to devour the moon, or cause eclipses, and so upon reading the description of a quasi-moon, I thought the name of this creature from Philippine myth would make a great fit. It isn't really restricted by Earth's gravitational pull, as it is a creature, and since it's not really a moon, it could be thought of as an asteroid that would collide with, or 'devour' the moon. As a quasi-moon is thought to orbit a planet because of its relative movement, the Bakunawa could be believed to move around the night sky/travelling around in space, or in the context of the asteroid, it could be observed to look like it is naturally orbiting the Earth.

## Cardea

This proposal was submitted by 1 person

### **Submission 1**

#### **Brief Description:**

Cardea presides over transitions and liminal spaces. A quasi-moon occupies a unique orbital path, existing in a transitional state between a true moon and an independent asteroid. This mirrors Cardea's domain over thresholds and in-betweens.

#### **Explanation:**

Named after the Roman goddess of hinges, doorways, and thresholds, Cardea is the divine protector of entrances and transitions. She symbolizes change, guardianship, and the passage between realms. This name reflects the quasi-moon's unique orbital path, embodying a celestial gateway between Earth and space.

Selecting 'Cardea' as the name for the quasi-moon offers a compelling blend of creativity, relevance, and thoughtful consideration. It satisfies all the specified criteria and adds significant value through its symbolic connection to the quasi-moon's unique orbital dynamics. The name not only honors a facet of Roman mythology but also enriches the scientific narrative of the celestial object. By choosing 'Cardea,' the panel would be endorsing a name that is distinctive, meaningful, and likely to inspire curiosity and engagement within both the scientific community and the public at large.

## Ehaema

This proposal was submitted by 1 person

### Submission 1:

#### **Brief Description:**

Estonian mythology

#### **Explanation:**

Ehaema (Mother Twilight) is a nocturnal spirit or elf in Estonian folklore. She reminded people not to be idle in the evening and encouraged women to finish their spinning work before going to bed.

Twilight is a magical and mysterious time of day when it is not entirely dark, but also not quite lit. In old times, people had then stopped their daily hard work, but were not ready to go to bed yet. The body could already relax, but the senses were heightened. In the tranquil house, people started to hear ticking or clicking sounds from old wooden walls and furniture. The sounds were made by wood boring insects, but the old Estonians believed it to be Ehaema (eha = twilight, ema = mother), a supernatural creature who came to remind people not to be idle in the evening and to encourage women to finish their spinning work before going to bed. Ehaema was just one of the many 'mothers' and spirit animals who were believed to influence the daily life and fate of people in the old days. Estonian folklore is based on fascinating animistic beliefs and shows how colorful the stories of our ancestors were. Estonian is a language spoken by about one million people in the whole world. It is worth preserving the small languages and their cultures, because diversity makes our lives so much richer. For these reasons, I think that the Estonian mythological Ehaema would be the perfect name for a celestial body like the Earth's quasi-moon.

## **Enkidu**

This proposal was submitted by 4 people

### **Submission 1**

#### **Brief Description:**

Sumerian

#### **Explanation:**

Enkidu is the name of the wild man from the ancient Sumerian Epic of Gilgamesh, one of humanity's oldest stories. Enkidu was the adversary, and later, friend of Gilgamesh.

The 'wild man' character of Enkidu mirrors the nature of this near-Earth quasi-moon. It exists in Earth's periphery much the same way the mythological Enkidu did in relation to Uruk. In the story, Enkidu is not a part of Uruk, but is not entirely apart from Uruk. Sumerian mythology is also an untapped well of mythological names for celestial bodies. If Sumerian mythology is used as a future source of names the prominence of Enkidu in modern culture befits the proximity of the near-Earth position of this quasi-moon. Finally, for science fiction enthusiasts the story of Gilgamesh and Enkidu holds a tangential reference to a beloved Star Trek episode.

### **Submission 2**

#### **Brief Description:**

Mesopotamian

#### **Explanation:**

Enkidu was a great protector, companion, and rival to the Mesopotamian king Gilgamesh. When Gilgamesh went mad, Enkidu was summoned by a goddess from the wilds to fight him. Though he lost, their battle forged a long-standing friendship. Though Enkidu joins human civilization at Gilgamesh's side, he stays wild at heart and often longs to return there.

Enkidu is a fearless companion and equal. He is both a part of and separate from the life of Gilgamesh, like a moon and a planet. He represents both wildness and a deep connection to the emotions and laws of human communities. He was, at his time, something new and necessary. I can't think of a better reason to name a new discovery like this after him.

### **Submission 3**

#### **Brief Description:**

Mesopotamian - Gilgamesh

#### **Explanation:**

Gilgamesh and Enkidu are besties, a Mesopotamian bromance. But Gilgamesh is the super badass hero king with a perfect smile and perfect hair, and derpy Enkidu isn't as cultured or all high society. Gilgamesh with a chiseled ab and jawline, convinces dumpy Enkidu but still kinda buff under those peasant clothes to fight the god bull, Humbaba. And Enkidu dies.

Enkidu is best friend of Gilgamesh, and doesn't get much attention outside of being in the orbit of something far more flashy. This little quasi moon, like Enkidu, is only getting attention because of its proximity to Earth. Had it never met Earth, it would be a nameless rock floating in solar system catalogued by a number. When this quasi moon's time is up, maybe like Gilgamesh, the earth will remember the scrappy Enkidu, and know for a brief time in astronomical terms, they shared an orbit. Also, Gilgamesh is one of the world's oldest myths. I'm surprised that nothing has been named Gilgamesh or Enkidu yet. Those rocks out there are older than our society. I'm surprised the most ancient of myths haven't been taken.

#### **Submission 4**

##### **Brief Description:**

Mesopotamian mythology

##### **Explanation:**

The companion and wartime comrade of Gilgamesh. The two travelled and fought together for a time, but were separated during a trip to the netherworld.

I think the symbolism of a friend and fellow traveller who is destined to go their own way after a time fits with this quasi-moon's fate. Also, while many of the constellations have their origins in Mesopotamia, most of the names come from other myth cycles. Given our cultural debt to Mesopotamia, as well as our historic use of the sexagesimal number system in time-keeping and astronomical positions, we should use a Mesopotamian name for this object.

## Ótr

This proposal was submitted by 1 person

### **Submission 1**

#### **Brief Description:**

Norse mythology

#### **Explanation:**

Ótr was a dwarf, who could change into any shape and he used to spend his days in the shape of an otter.

Ótr, who was a dwarf and liked to spend his time in the shape of an otter. Dwarf and otter. A small creature that constantly hovers around people, sometimes friendly, sometimes mischievous. In a way, this also defines this quasi moon, because so far it has been unnoticeably located in the vicinity of all humanity, it has been secretive, it can be malicious and friendly towards people, but it depends only on the future. Just like the otter, it is constantly close to human habitats, always at a distance, usually unnoticed, wandering around people minding its own business.

## **Tarriaksuk**

This proposal was submitted by 1 person

### **Submission 1**

#### **Brief Description:**

Inuit Mythology

#### **Explanation:**

The Tarriaksuk are the shadow-people of Inuit mythology, beings whose forms closely resemble ours but are uniquely defined by the shadows they cast. Similarly, this quasi-moon mirrors our own moon, echoing the existence of the Tariaksuq, coexisting with us in its own unique way, destined to disappear into the shadows.

Like the Tariaksuq, which appear briefly and then 'disappear' into darkness, this quasi-moon will be visible for a short time before drifting away from our orbit into the vastness of space. This celestial body acts as a smaller mirror of our own moon, reflecting the way the Tariaksuq lead lives parallel to ours, yet engage in distinctly different actions and experiences. As the quasi-moon orbits Earth, it echoes the existence of the Tariaksuq, who coexist with us in their own unique way. I believe that by exposing the world to Inuit mythology through this name, Inuit culture can be highlighted similar to how Greek mythology highlights its own culture.



## Tecciztecatl

This proposal was submitted by 3 people

### Submission 1

#### **Brief Description:**

Aztec mythology

#### **Explanation:**

In Aztec mythology, Tecciztecatl is the god of the moon. He ascended to the moon after his unsuccessful bid to become the sun.

Tecciztecatl became the moon when he failed to become the sun. His story can relate with this quasi-moon as it's too small and too far away to be a moon.

### Submission 2

#### **Brief Description:**

Aztec

#### **Explanation:**

Tecciztecatl & Nanahuatzin vied to become the next Aztec sun god. Courageous Nanahuatzin jumped into the fire; Tecciztecatl hesitated then followed, forming two suns. Angered by rich, proud Tecciztecatl following humble Nanahuatzin, the gods threw a rabbit at Tecciztecatl. This left a rabbit imprint & dimmed his light so he only shone at night.

To name this quasi-moon after Tecciztecatl would be appropriate for several reasons. First, in some depictions of this story, Tecciztecatl carried a tēucciztli, large white seashell, on his back representing the Moon; in others he had butterfly wings. The irregular shape of the quasi-moon could be likened to a broken seashell. The non-circular orbital path the quasi-moon takes around Earth could be compared to the flight of a butterfly; regular wingbeats producing undulating flight. Second, much like the quasi-moon has lingered in Earth's orbit but will someday leave, Tecciztecatl hesitated to leave Earth. Third, the pantheon of gods that come from indigenous cultures of the western hemisphere are underrepresented amongst the named bodies in space. Fourth, just as the gods threw a rabbit at Tecciztecatl to leave their mark on him, the naming contest will throw a name onto this quasi-moon.

### Submission 3

#### **Brief Description:**

Nahuatl

**Explanation:**

Tecciztécatl is an nahuatl god who wanted to be the sun but became the moon because of his cowardice, being quasi-sun and ending up being the moon.

Most celestial bodies have names from Greco-Roman mythology, it would be fair that they also had names from indigenous mythologies.