

Cultural Traditions 6:00 min

JOANN GREEN Hereditary Chief, Heiltsuk Nation; Executive Director, Heiltsuk College

Our elders say that, you know, you open your front door and you have all the fish, the shellfish. You open your back door and you have all our traditional medicine. You know, you go up the woods and you get all the Indian medicine there is to use. So my aunt always says, you know, when you open the door, your table's set for you.

GARY WILSON General Manager, Heiltsuk Economic Development Corporation

Usually there's a number of us that go out, family units, just to harvest for elders and other family members that can't afford to go out. Or don't have the vessels or the time or energy, so we usually harvest a fair amount for the purpose of sharing and trading.

CONNIE (Teacher)

They're in grade 3-4 and we're taken taking them out to pick some of our sea weed, which we call black gold. And our people have been harvesting seaweed for many, many, many years.

GARY WILSON General Manager, Heiltsuk Economic Development Corporation

And they are highly regarded by not only ourselves but others. It's a vital part of our diet.

ERIC WILSON, SR

This is the best...My father in law used to go, her dad, used to go to Nalu Pass in the first week of April and get the best kind of seaweed, nice and black and shine...

PERCY STARR Hereditary Chief, Kitasoo/Xais'Xais Nation

So we lived off the fat of the land, aquatic resources, halibut, shellfish, you name it, everything, abalone, sea urchin, sea cucumber, all of those my people used.

CRYSTAL SCHOONER Nuxalk Nation

What I've been taught is you say a prayer to the tree, give thanks to what it's contributing to, whether it be regalia, cedar hats, or cedar mats.

We are gathering bark for the Qatuwas tribal journey that's happening in Bella Bella. We're going to weave it so we will braid baskets and head bands for the give-aways for the Nations that will be coming.

Our people have been doing this for thousands of years. They say that the cedar tree is the tree of life. We used it for everything, we've used it for our clothing, we've used it for bedding, our housing, our ceremonies, we've used it for everything and you know by continuing this practice we're honoring what our ancestors have left for us.

WILLIAM HOUSTY Chair, Heiltsuk Integrated Resource Management Department

Everything we eat, whether it's inter-tidal, whether it's bottom fish, whether it's herring, whether it's herring spawn, whether it's salmon – everything comes out of that ocean. It's a lifeline. It's a lifeline for our people.

When you look at the intricate life cycle that exists between all the species that are in there, and if you remove one you start to have a collapse like dominoes.

So it's really important that we keep everything health so these life cycles can continue on and thrive off each other. From the top of the chain to the bottom of the chain, we all depend on one another, right through the top, right down to the bottom.

Traditional Knowledge 7:45min

Trevor Russ, Vice President, Council of the Haida Nation

This is the area where the first harvest happens for some of the people at home.

So, we got a couple hours before low water so the area here should dry off a little bit more and we'll be able to get down inside the tideline to look for some seafood there.

Might get lucky.

All of the kids that grew up in the coastal communities hear from their parents and grandparents, that is "when the tide is out, the table is set," meaning that once the tide recedes and the shoreline is exposed there's opportunity to get out and harvest clams, chitons, mussels, our seaweeds, abalone, if you're lucky enough, sea scallops. There's so many different little creatures out there that you can harvest and have good meal from.

My oldest great uncle he owned a little mosquito vessel, so as young as I can remember to be old enough to hold a knife, so whenever he went out anywhere, he took me along with him and showed me the areas, and where I needed to go to harvest, and what times. And that's where it started.

Some chitons, in Haida language we call it T'aa You use the juices to season your seaweed and as well what I like to do with them is, I clean them when I get home and then I'll pickle them and we eat them as a snack. Some people use them in different dishes as well.

The harvesting is what I base my timing around a lot of the year. A lot of it works around the seasons of the year. The moon. The different moons. The different tides. That all effects on what we're harvesting, and the time of year we're harvesting it.

The newer moons, and the full moons are the bigger tides. So those are the times to get out onto the beaches and try to harvest what you can.

I just found this purple urchin in this tide pool here. I caught him eating the same thing I've just been harvesting this morning, some chitons.

Based on the upbringing that we all have, that everything is interconnected to each other, and we have to understand the balance. We all learn that growing up. If you happen to go to an area, and you see it's been harvested quite frequently, try to move to a different area. Or otherwise, you know, we're gonna deplete the stock that's in the area. Then it all depends on what you're harvesting, right. For me it makes a lot easier to get a little further away from town. The stuff's that closer to town, is more accessible, so a lot more people get out to harvest that stuff.

Traditional knowledge is knowledge that's been passed on through the generations, so from our ancestors on down to our grandparents, to our own parents, our aunts and uncles, and now, my generation, we're passing on to our children, and on to our nieces and nephews. That's what I consider to be our traditional knowledge.

I truly take pride in is preserving our foods, and sharing it with my friends, and neighbors, and other family members, and I try to pass it on to my kids to let them know as young people that's kind of the role is to get out and to harvest, and share it with the Elders. And make sure that people in your family have an opportunity to have a taste of what we have around us.

Typically in the prime harvest time you get nice long strands of it. Here you see some of it is quite long actually but it's just starting so. This stuff is the first batch of the season, and it's the closest to town so the majority of the members of the community won't venture very far, most guys are just running little skiffs. This is the area they come harvesting in the next couple of weeks.

The marine plans have identified specific areas that are of frequent harvesting areas for ourselves that are set aside with certain protections that only allow uses for Haidas to get in there and harvest specific species. So that's gonna be key for our future generations to have the opportunity to get out and harvest what's there, set aside for us.

Right in behind the village there is where the kids are going tomorrow to harvest.

„Where did you guys go with the boat yesterday?“

„We went just over to just past Yan, to the point just before the sandy beach there. We just went to grab some mussels and chitons and check on the seaweed.“

„How is the seaweed?“

„Most is about that long. I managed to get a bundle that big of some nice long stuff. Probably next weekend it should be ready over there.“

Traditional knowledge was a huge component to the Haida Gwaii marine plan process. When we first engaged in back in the mid-2000s, community consultation happened through door-to-door visits, individuals were identified that were frequent harvesters of all species, and we did a lot of one-on-one interviews with a lot of the older Haidas, middle-aged Haidas, and young Haidas that were experienced in harvesting. That identified the key areas for ourselves to set aside for our own uses. So that played a big role, and then once the community consultation process ended, we developed a work group that provided input into the technical planning piece to help us develop a solid plan.

SEAS1 2:45 min Short Video Clip about Supporting Emerging Aboriginal Stewards

Hi, I'm Lauren Orton, I am 15 years old. I am a part of Kitsoo-Xaixais Nation, and I will be going into Grade 10 this year.

SEAS2 2:35 min Short Video Clip about Supporting Emerging Aboriginal Stewards

I applied for the Seas Program because, I guess first of all, experience.

Last year, 2013, I was privileged to be a part of the Seas Program, and again this year. My interest in exploring my territory, and see what more it has to offer that I haven't already saw.

What I'd like to do this year is talk to our elders more.

I'm very open to new things. They are putting out our remote cameras. This camera we labeled "Seas 1," and we found this trail that looks like there's a lot of bear activity.

We are collecting bear fur for the Spirit Bear Research Foundation. This is the rub tree that the bears scratch themselves and stuff on. And we're collecting the fur for DNA.

Clam Gardens 1:45min

**Dr. ANNE SALOMON Marine Ecologist, Simon Fraser University
MaPP Marine Advisory Committee**

We are here on Quadra Island, in Waitt Bay, and in this bay alone right here, there are 49 clam gardens. Clam Gardens are prehistoric rock walls that people made in ancient times to, we think, increase the productivity of clams. And, what you can see right here is one of the rock walls. So if you look at the dark strip in the water, that's the rock wall. So, people rolled, as we hear from elders, rolled rocks down to the edge of the water at low tide to make these walls. And here we are at high water, high tide, so you can see the clam garden's flooded. So the clams right now have their siphons out, and they're filtering phytoplankton from the water, but it's this clam garden structure that creates like a terrace, and what we're doing here today is we're picking up an experiment where we're actually measuring the growth rates of the clams to ask "Do you get faster-growing clams and more clams in clam gardens than non-clam gardens?" So really how did people actually perform these ancient forms of mariculture?

We have all these little baby clams that are in a mesh bag that my student Amy and colleagues carefully put little tags on, little vinyl tags, that have numbers on them. And, we've got the length and width and weight of these tagged clams, which we are now going to retrieve to see if they grew any bigger, and if they weigh any heavier.