

AMPHIBIANS IN STIKINE KIKS.ADI CULTURE AND THE ABILITY OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE TO INFORM THE FIELD OF HERPETOLOGY

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS



By Joshua Ream



LOCATION

Understand the nature and frequency of human – amphibian interactions

Document the historical and contemporary cultural importance of amphibians

Collect baseline data on amphibian populations

Gain insight on differences between native and non-native herpetological knowledge



Bowhead whale (*Balaena mysticetus*), caught in an Inuit subsistence whale hunt in Igloolik, Nunavut in 2002. Photo By Ansgar Walk.

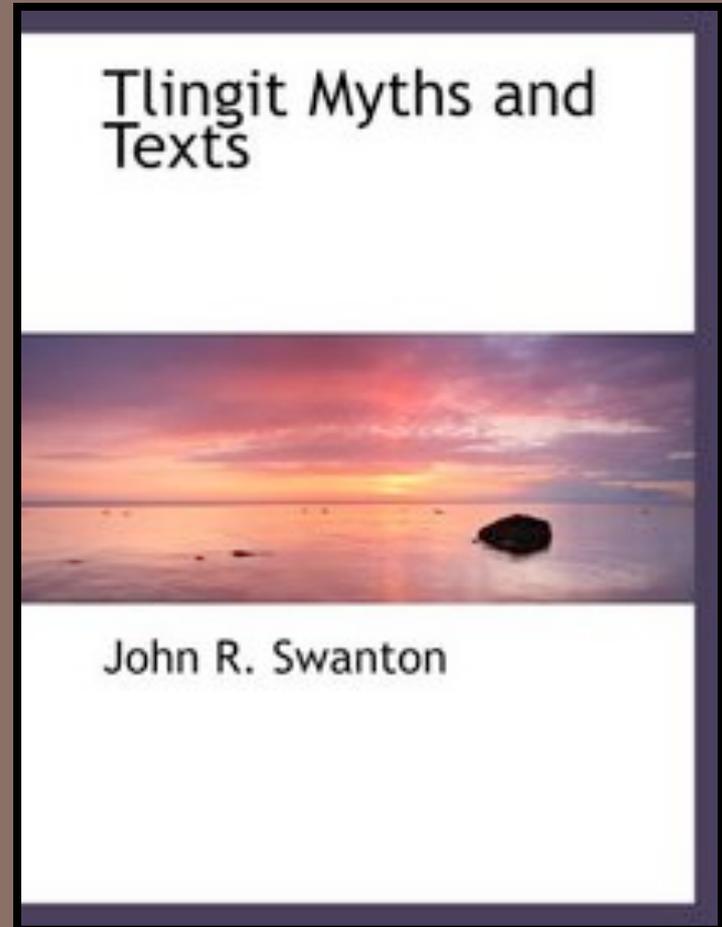
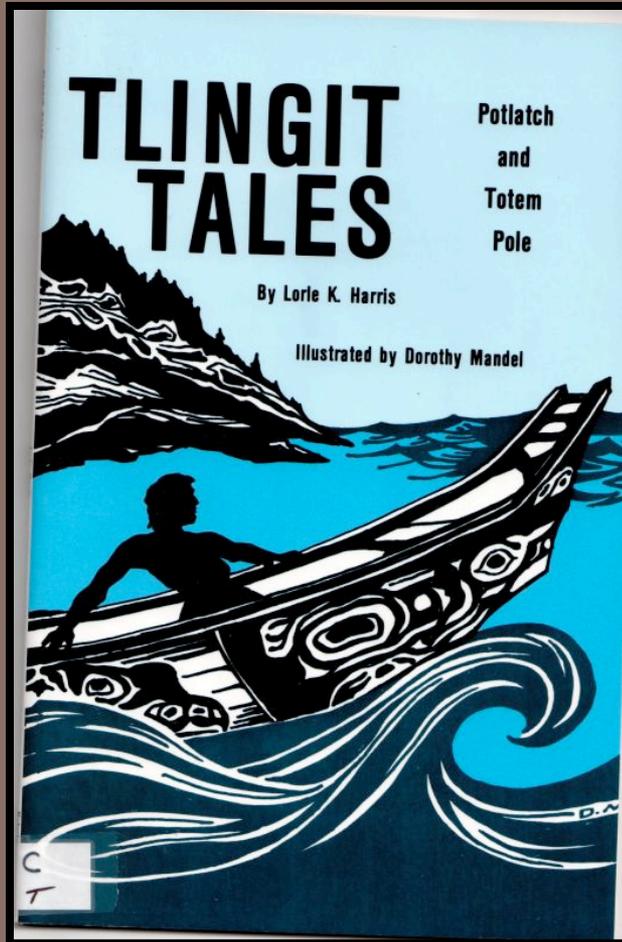
INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

Interviews with Culture Bearers



METHODS

Oral Traditions



METHODS

Artistic Expressions



METHODS

Historical Literature and Media



METHODS



Marge Byrd

“These people went out in their canoe and it got foggy out there and the people on the canoe heard this noise and then spotted the frog on the water and the frog swam and lead them to shore”

“You don’t ever hurt a frog or bad luck will come to you and if you treat them good then you will always have good fortune. “

“My father was fishing way out and he’s a gillnetter so he’s fishing way out away from land and he found a little frog hanging onto his cork line. They didn’t have outboard motors in those days but he took that little frog and he road to shore and put it on shore. He [then] caught very many fish.”

“Leave them in their environment. We were taught things like that so that we respect what we see”



Christine Jenkins

“the Kiks.adi honor and respect the frog designs on blankets and regalia. They would never hurt or kill this animal in the wild.”

“The crest, its really important and uh, Im proud to wear it and uh, I think its something you wear with honor and it just tells who you are. And people see the frog or the, ya know on the back of your blanket or the back of your vest, and they know what tribe you are. So, and that’s important to have that identification. “

“Yea it almost seems like you want to protect them when you see em. Uh, like theres a connection yea, to the culture. “

“I think they [frogs] are more important [than Raven]. I mean Im not out there feeding Ravens. Even though I don’t see the frogs that often, , I just feel like theres a connection “



Frog Helper Story

“We respect it, because it’s the clan.”

“I don’t think the frog would want to be a pet. Like if it did that one downstairs would have stayed with me. It stayed with me a long time until we started prospering.”



Left: Tlingit Totem in Wrangell, Alaska

Middle: Haida Totem in Hydaburg, Alaska

Bottom: Salish Totem, B.C. Museum of Anthropology

RESULTS



Anchorage Museum of History & Art. Library & Archives.

Left: Xixch'i Hít (Frog House) of the Kaach'ádi clan, Wrangell, Alaska ca. 1900

Top Right: Boreal Toad

Bottom Right: Blanket of Kiks.adi Elder, Wrangell, Alaska



RESULTS

Lessons from the Past

Native amphibians as pets

Interactions on the landscape

Respect and prosperity

Annual Cycle

Weather and Water

Lessons from our Lifetimes

Population fluctuations

Species diversity and distribution

Human impacts



Ecological and Ethical Lessons

Cultural Identity

Self Identity

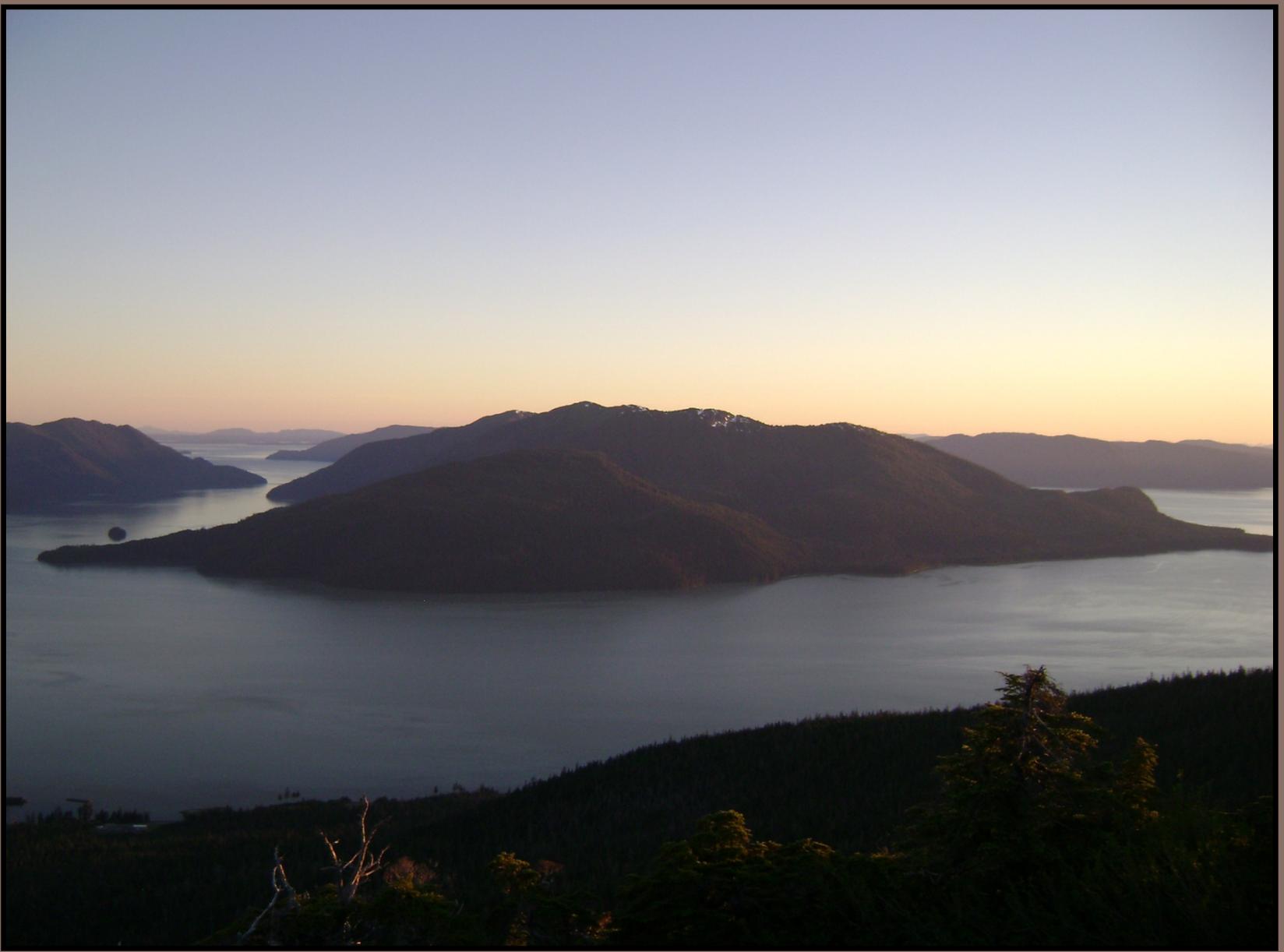
Spiritual Connections

Power and Wisdom

Ancestral Guidance

Artistic Expressions





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