

# WITHIN OUR SIGHTS

WINTER 2023

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**BCMANR**  
British Columbia Métis Assembly  
of Natural Resources ∞

*"The land is our life. Without the land, we can't survive. It's as simple as that."*

George Smith, Métis trapper

# BLACK BEAR EUTHANIZED IN B.C

Since 2011, British Columbia's conservation officers have killed 5,632 black bears. Experts are calling on communities to take simple steps to reducing human-bear conflicts. Many of these bears were killed after becoming comfortable with easy to access meals within suburbs; garbage bins, ripe fruit from trees and food left unattended from backyard picnics.

The group called Fur-Bearers, an organization that describes themselves as a charity that seeks to "promote solutions for wildlife coexistence in communities", compiled the statistics after submitting a freedom of information request to the Province.

In 2021, 36 black bears were killed in Prince George, 22 in 100 Mile House, 19 in Quesnel, 17 in Burns Lake and 16 in Vernon. The Fur-Bearers charity is asking, "Why hasn't there been enough education for the community?"

In Nelson, within a seven-year period (2015-2021) conservation officers have killed 64 black bears and 12 more just this year. Nelson has seen more black bears this year, many have attributed this to the cold spring followed by a dry summer, meaning less food for B.C's black bears. According to The Narwal, a late spring meant that huckleberries at higher elevations never took, the berries at lower elevations are gone along with other plants from the drought, which has also been impacting salmon in B.C. All of this has led bears to look for food elsewhere, for instance within populated neighbourhoods.

Residents of Nelson have asked their local municipal government to adopt "bear smart" policies.

Mayor John Dooley of Nelson has said to be working with WildSafe BC to implement a bear smart initiative

for the city, such as fruit picking program, community education and installation of bear proof bins in public areas.

Vanessa Isnardy, program manager for WildSafe BC told The Narwal, "If a bear doesn't find food there is no reason to stick around." Isnardy, encourages local governments to lead residents in supporting with reducing conflict. Isnardy stated:

"First, city governments should develop education programs to help make residents aware of the steps they can take to reduce human bear conflicts. And, where education alone doesn't work, they need enforceable bylaws."

MNBC, has teamed up with WildSafe BC in offering a free comprehensive WildSafe Training Course. This Course will provide Citizens with the knowledge and understanding to make decisions that will reduce conflict with wildlife in B.C. MNBC recognizes that it is each individual's responsibility to ensure that our recreational and cultural pursuits are not contributed to human-wildlife conflict within the province.

If you would like to register for the course or have any questions, please contact [sdhillon@mNBC.ca](mailto:sdhillon@mNBC.ca)

## References

<https://thenarwhal.ca/bc-black-bears-killed-conflict/>

<https://bc.ctvnews.ca/humans-behaviour-may-change-if-they-realized-how-many-black-bears-are-killed-every-year-in-b-c-advocate-1.5747815>

<https://thefurbearers.com/blog/number-of-black-bears-killed-in-british-columbia-communities/>





# A DROP IN THE BUCKET: COASTAL TAILED FROGS

*First published in Footprint Press Issue 27: 2021*

I plunge my hands into the cold mountain stream, one hand gently lifting up rocks to look under them, the other holding a green aquarium net downstream. As I pick up the rocks, I watch carefully for a dark streak to slip into my net, pushed downstream by the natural flow of water. Once in my net, I transfer the small creature into a bucket filled with cool water with its other relatives. My search is complete, and I turn to the bucket to measure these amazing creatures.

At a quick glance, these little individuals remind me of leeches, particularly because they suction to the bottom rocks with their mouths to avoid getting swept away by the current. But up close, they're clearly tadpoles, with dark bodies and a bright white spot on their tails.

"Don't tadpoles only live in ponds and wetlands?" I used to believe. That is, except for the Tailed Frog: the only species of frog in North America whose tadpoles hatch and live in mountain streams.

In the Pacific Northwest, these frogs can be found in steep mountain streams ranging from Northern California to the middle of British Columbia. The most surprising fact I learned about Coastal Tailed Frogs was that the tadpoles can take up to four years to become young frogs, unlike other frogs that only take a couple of months. So why in the world do these ones take so much longer??? After a summer of searching for them, I understood clearly why - the water they live in is cold! These little tadpoles feed on algae, which grows slowly in the cold water, meaning they can't get enough food in one summer to transform into frogs and leave the stream.

What I love about these little tadpoles is that in one survey, I can see all the stages of transformation. First the young ones grow their front legs, then their back legs. My favorite stage is just before their mouths change, and they look like a frog with a long tail, but still have their suction cup mouth! Eventually, their tail recedes into their body, and they lose their sucker mouth, ready to leave the stream.

I turn back to the bucket, and to my delight, spy a fully grown adult sitting on a moss-covered rock. I gently pick him up to take a closer look. He stares back at

me silently, unable to make noise, while his claw-like feet gripping my fingers strongly. I can imagine the purchase they give him when moving around in the stream, and crawling up the steam banks. This one is a deep brown colour, although I have seen other adults that are green, or even a pinkish colour! His thumbs have a dark raised patch that he'll use to help him grip a female when he mates with her, indicating that he is at least 9 years old and ready to reproduce. But if I was ever unsure of the sexual maturity of this frog, his tail would have quickly dispelled any doubts! This is another unusual characteristic, used for internal fertilization with the females, more like a human than other frogs, where the female releases her eggs and then the male fertilizes them.

I release him gently onto the stream bank and return to collecting information for my research. These frogs are listed as special concern by COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada). However, they were downlisted to yellow (ie. least risk of being lost) in 2016 in BC. The reason for this was because since their status was first determined, scientists have found them in many more places, making them more commonly found than first expected!

Despite being downlisted in BC, there are still threats to their habitats. One of the threats I am investigating with these frogs is the potential impacts of small hydropower projects on their populations. Since tadpoles rely on the stream for a home and food for multiple years, the diversion of water could reduce habitat for tadpoles, or the dam could create a barrier so tadpoles couldn't move downstream. Another risk to Coastal Tailed Frogs is forestry. The adult frogs depend on moist habitats to survive, and because many of their streams are non-fish bearing, there is much less protection for these streams.

I release all the tadpoles in the bucket, having finished measuring them. I watch the male frog glance warily at me, ready to escape into the moving water in an instant if needed. Despite all the threats, these amazing frogs have persisted to live in the trying conditions of cool mountain streams. And if these individuals are lucky, they'll survive the hydropower project and the nearby forest harvesting, and live to be 20 years old - a good life for these frogs.

# MÉTIS HARVESTING

Métis people were established in Canada well before European Control. We are a direct product of the Fur Trade and were integral to the Fur Trade and the opening of Canada from Ontario west to BC, and from the North down into the United States.

In our role in developing Western Canada, we harvested throughout the country we lived and travelled in. Anywhere the Fur Trade was, the Métis were. We were often the first non-First Nations people to venture west. We labored, we ran Fur Trading posts, we lived and worked throughout Canada. This was our home, our lives and our culture.

Our harvesting was not limited to specific regions that might be considered a "homeland". We were, and are, a roaming people by nature and by culture. We were not subjected to treaties or reservations that tied us to a specific land base. That is not who the Métis are. We are Western Canada. We were based in many areas, such as the Red River, Northern Saskatchewan, Alberta and BC, but we ranged and harvested throughout the whole of Western Canada.

Our harvesting rights predate Canada and range beyond Canada. Our Harvesting rights, and our rights to have the tools to harvest and protect

ourselves were never given up. They remain our rights regardless of specific barriers within Canadian Law and Policy.

Looking at our rights in terms of a land base is to ignore our history and deny our rights based on an incorrect concept of who we are. We are not First Nations. We are not immigrants. We are Métis.

We did not exert control over any particular region. We shared, we traded, and we lived with our First Nations relations on the land. We are not looking to exert control; we wish to continue our right to harvest as we did before Canada came. Our rights are equal to First Nations rights, but our circumstances are different. Our relationship with First Nations is a Nation-to-Nation relationship, independent of Canadian interference. We recognize First Nations rights and stewardship within their land base.

We wish to harvest where we traditionally harvested: everywhere the Fur Trade was conducted - all of Western Canada. This is our right. Along with this right comes the responsibility of stewardship guided by Métis traditional knowledge and values. The Métis are committed to work with our partners to ensure sustainability of our joint harvesting.

## ANNUAL HARVESTER SURVEY

opened January 1, 2023

To maintain a valid harvesting card, *please complete your survey before it closes on*  
June 30, 2023

To keep your harvesting card valid the online survey must be completed each year.  
The survey collects land use information, including: harvesting, recreational & cultural uses.

**The survey year runs from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023.**

The survey is available at:

**<https://secure.bcmetiscitizen.ca/survey>**

The harvest survey closes on June 30, 2023. Thank you to those who have completed the survey.

# THE PRICKLY ROSE

"Years ago many of our ancestors were not able to write. Stories and knowledge were beaded or embroidered into clothing and items of everyday use. As they drew the design, they told the story of the plant..."

- Elder Rose Richardson

As the Métis people moved across the land and settled in different regions, traditional knowledge travelled too and not all familiar medicinal plants could be found along the way. Yet the exceptional wild rose has welcomed communities to the Métis Homeland across the provinces. A heavy motif used in beading works, the significance of this plant medicine cannot be dismissed. From the 35+ Wild Rose species across the Nations, the Prickly Rose or specifically *Rosa acicularis*, plays a prominent role in traditional medicine. The many Métis uses of the plant from its roots to hips, to petals have been documented and reproduced below with the help of Christi Belcourt's compilation 'Medicines to help us: Traditional Métis plant use'.

## How to identify the Prickly Rose:

The plant is deciduous, usually 1.5m tall.

Stems are densely covered in thorns.

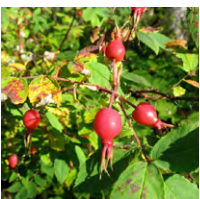
Petals are pink, solitary and broad.

5-7 oblong leaflets are characteristic of the Prickly Rose, especially if they are double-toothed and somewhat hairy on the underside.

The plant grows abundantly on low plains, clearings and other disturbed areas.

The rosehips are scarlet, round or pear-shaped with sepals remaining on top.

**Oginii-Waabigwanaatig** (Prickly rose bush in Anishinaabemowin), **Lii bon tiirozh** (Rose hips in Michif-Cree)



## ROSEHIPS:

**Kishpahkipahiwak lii batoon'd roozh e'ushochik e'shishupehok kaa kiyakishit la poo**

"Boiled hips make a thick paste to alleviate itchy skin, remedy for hemorrhoids" [Michif-Cree].

Rosehips are one of the highest natural sources of Vitamin C. It also provides a high amount of Vitamin A, B, Calcium and Phosphorus.

Elder Olivia Whitford recommends boiling Rosehips in water until soft and straining using cheesecloth. To the remaining juice, add an equal amount of sugar and boil to thicken. The jelly must be stored in a sterilized jar. The Métis use the jelly or syrup to flavour ice cream.

In autumn and winter, Coyotes, Bears and other wildlife consume Rosehips.

## PETALS:

**Li tii aapahtan pur malajii au 'keur**

"Tea used for heart trouble" [Michif-Cree].

Brew the petals in a tea to consume the benefits.

## ROOTS:

**Wiichitaw chi pêkitaat li pwêzoñ dañ li kor ucchi pi chi wêpinahk kêkway kaa pannatak**

"Helps cleanse the body of toxins and wastes".

The root can be consumed to remedy a cold, fever, diarrhea, liver and stomach problems. Gargling a root decoction can stop bleeding in the mouth and is good for sore throats.

## References:

Flamand, R., Whitford, O., Burnouf, L., & Richardson, R. (2007). Wild Rose. In *Medicines to help us: Traditional métis plant use: Study Prints & Resource Guide* (pp. 61-62). essay, Gabriel Dumont Institute.

Lloyd, D., Parish, R., Coupé Ray, Antos, J., Ignace, M., Douglas, G. W., Pojar, R. A., Goward, T., & Roberts, A. (2018). Shrubs. In *Plants of Southern Interior British Columbia & the Inland Northwest* (pp. 64-65). essay, Partners Publishing.

## IMPACTS OF B.C. DROUGHT ON SALMON

Record breaking fall temperatures and drought have cast a shadow on a lot of B.C.'s flora and fauna. One of the many affected species is salmon, which has already been struggling for years in areas like the Fraser River. A combination of many factors such as warming water, salmon farms and overall pollution has created a decline in the return numbers in recent years.

In early October, pictures showing thousands of dead salmon on dried up river banks in Heiltsuk Territory were circulating online showing just how badly the lack of rainfall has been effecting our ecosystem. Sadly, this is only one of the areas that has gained some attention online. Some salmon are waiting in the ocean for their streaming route to open and others are left stranded in streams that have started drying up. These salmon may never be able to reach their spawning streams, which will impact future salmon returns in a few years from now.

There is no denying how much climate change is impacting our ecosystems. Katrina Connors, Director of the Salmon Watersheds Program, Pacific Salmon Foundation wrote that it is time "[w]e need to stop treating these climate events as emergencies. Climate change is already negatively impacting salmon ecosystems across B.C. and our management systems need to be responsive to the rapid changes unfolding before us."

The last week of October has treated us to some good amounts of rain which will hopefully help some of the salmon that have been waiting for their streams to open up. This may bring yet another challenge for them as river banks may be unstable from the drought and there is now potential for landslides and flooding such as the ones we saw in 2021.

If you want to volunteer to help B.C.'s salmon, you can reach out to organizations such as:

Pacific Salmon Foundation:  
<https://psf.ca/volunteer/>

### Sources:

<https://thenarwhal.ca/bc-fall-drought-impact-2022/>

<https://psf.ca/blog/drought-effects-warm-dry-streams-impact-salmon-migrations/>

## HOPE TAKES FLIGHT

*Note that the author was not present for the events described in this article and used their trusty imagination!*

It's August in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. The weather has been hot for what feels like an eternity and the land is parched. Forest fires light with little effort, and cooler weather is still a long way out. But tucked away on a restricted forest service road in the Fraser Canyon lies an oasis. An aviary made of chain link fencing spans the forest service road. Butted up against the mountain side, the aviary is built to provide as much protection from the sun as possible using the natural environment and wooden slats. An extreme amount of effort has been expended to protect its precious contents: three young Northern Spotted Owls. Their eyes are wide with curiosity as they look around, unsure of this new environment.

Historically, Northern Spotted Owls were commonly found in old growth forests in Southern British Columbia. Now, only one owl has been confirmed in the wild for many years, a by-product of habitat loss due to logging and competition with an increasing Barred Owl population. The three owls that sit quietly in the aviary are part of a breeding program that started in 2007 with only four owls but has successfully grown to 30 owls in the facility. Raised from hatchlings in the facility, these owls have had to spend time in their temporary aviary to acclimatize to their traditional environment. But today is the day they will be released into the wild, a first in North America and the world.

The gate to the aviary is opened, but the owls don't leave right away. Unaware what the gate means, they take their time investigating the opening from a safe distance. One finally is brave enough to spread its wings and take flight, the other two close behind. The audience watches in awe as all three fly off into their traditional environment for the first time, the owls igniting hope in each person's heart as they disappear into the forest. Hope that one day these owls won't need human help to persist in their traditional home.



# Recipe: Salmon Pie



Fall brings out the hearty recipes of comfort food. The recipe below can be made either with your own canned salmon, store bought canned salmon or even a freshly cooked salmon/leftover. If you do not have salmon, you can also replace it with other fish such as cod and halibut. You may choose to have this pie open face or to cover it with more pie dough.

## Ingredients

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### PIE CRUST:

- 1/2 cup of cold salted butter
- 1-1/4 cup of flour
- 1/4 cup of cold water

### SALMON FILLING:

- 2-3 cans of salmon
- 3-4 large potatoes. Some prefer a starchy potato such as russet, other prefer the smoothness of a Yukon gold. The choice is yours!
- 4 green onions. You may choose to use chives if you have them in your garden.
- 1/3 cup mayonnaise
- 1-2 eggs depending on size
- Salt to taste

## Process

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### PIE CRUST:

For pie crust, you can use a food processor or go by hand with a pastry cutter (or fork), instructions below for food processor:

- Pulse flour and cold butter in short bursts until butter is a bit bigger than the size of a grain of rice
- Slowly add cold water and pulse until dough just comes together
- Pour out on lightly floured surface and just gather pie dough together. Set aside in fridge while you make the filling

### FILLING:

- Peel, cube and boil potatoes. Drain once cooked
- In a large bowl, add potatoes, chopped green onions and drained salmon. Mix together until salmon is well incorporated in the potatoes
- Add and mix in mayo and salt. Taste and adjust salt level
- Add eggs and mix well

### MAKING THE PIE:

- If making open face, roll out your dough on a floured surface and put into pie dish. Poke holes at the bottom of the crust with a fork to allow air to circulate. Add in salmon pie filling. If bringing up the overhang of dough into a crust edge, brush egg wash onto it.
- Bake at 400°F for 30-45 minutes, until the edge and bottom are both golden brown



# BCMANR

British Columbia Métis Assembly  
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### BCMANR VISION STATEMENT:

*"To help revitalize Métis culture and nationhood pride through the wise use of our natural resources."*

### MANDATE:

*"To establish a natural resource policy to support the sustenance and cultural needs of the Métis people in British Columbia through the conservation and management of our environment using both traditional and educational knowledge."*

## MÉTIS NATION BC

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### [BCMANR/GUARDIANS VIDEO: MÉTIS GUARDIANS](#)

British Columbia Métis Assembly of Natural Resources (BCMANR) and MNBC often discuss what conservation and stewardship looks like to Métis in BC and the importance of contributing to conservation and stewardship initiatives. This introductory video highlights pieces of these discussions and explores these topics through a more holistic lens. As Minister Hooper states "in order to know where you are going, you need to know where you come from". Please enjoy listening to the Captains perspectives on the Métis connection to the land as they chat about family, Métis traditional knowledge (MTK), Rights, stewardship, and hope for the future.

SCAN THE QR CODE  
TO VISIT THE VIDEO  
ON YOUTUBE