

Teiokién:taron Sturgeon



**OHÉN:TON
KARIHWATÉHKWEN
KENTSION'SHON'A**

**Akwé:kon énska
entitewahwe'nón:ni ne
onkwa'nikòn:ra tánon
teiethinonhwará:ton
ne kentsion'shón:'a ne
wáhe kionkhiiá:wis ne
kaia'takehnháhtshera ne
tóhsa aetewatonhkária'ke.**

**Tho niohtónhak ne
onkwa'nikòn:ra.**

**THANKSGIVING
ADDRESS**

THE FISH

**Let us all put our
minds together as
one and greet the
fishes as they give
us norishment so
that we do not go
hungry.**

**Now, our minds are
one.**

Kentsion'neha

Tsi niieienthókwas nikahá:wi
tentewatenonhwará:ton né:'e aonhá:'a
iorihowá:nen tsi ní:ioht tsi kionhnhékie
ne onkwehón:we. Teiethinonhwará:tons
thó:ha akwé:kon tsi naho'tèn:shon ká:ien ne
onhwentsià:ke tsi tewaka'én:ions tsi na'tetewatere
ne ohóntsia, í:i ne kionkwehón:we ionkwáhshon
tsi nitewaweienno:ten aiethina'tón:hahse
ionkwatshennonnia'tahkwen tsi kiónhne tánon
ionkwatshennón:ni tsi tewèn:teron onhwentsià:ke.
Iethina'tón:ni kí:ken ionkwatshennonnia'tahkwen
tsi iethirihwakweniéhstha ne
onhwéntsia, tsi tewaterén:naiens tánon tsi
tentewatenonhwará:tons
tánon karenna'shón:'a tánon
kanonnia'shón:'a.

Shontaiohtonhákie,
onkonkwe'ta'shón:'a
ronnon'weskwaniháhkwe
ahotiiéshon, ahonten'nikonhró:ri
tánon tahontawén:rie tánon
ahonten'nikonhró:ri tsi
nitewaiéhrha ón:wa nikahá:wi
khia'tewenhniserá:ke,
wa'thontawén:rie skáthne
tsi nón:we nihati:teron,
ronwanaterò:ron ne kontírio
tánon otsi'ten'okón:'a
tehonatawén:rie onhwentsià:ke
ohneká:ke tánon tsi iowérarake. Tho nón:we
nontá:we kí:ken iakwaka'én:ions kwah ken'
niiotikiokwake ne iakwatan'nikonroria'tákhwa
kanonnia'shón:'a ionatonhnhé:ton
tehonwatirénhserons ne kariò:ta tánon
otsi'ten'okón:'a tsi ní:kon wa'onkhiháhrhahse.

Rotikstenhokón:ha tho ní:ioht kí:ken tsi
ratikaratónhkhwahkwe.

Tóka shi ahsathahíta tánon iáhsewe
tsi kaniataratákie, kahionhatákie toka
ó:ni ken' nikahionhá:'a, táhsta'ne ken'
nikarihwésha tánon ia'tesatká:neren awèn:ke.
Sheiaterò:rok tekanenhratákie ne kéntsion
iosnó:re ionatawenhákie ne awèn:ke. Ákta
tsi sheiaterò:rok tsi ionatshwa'tonhákies

ionatawenhákie ákte'k nón:we ia'tetsionóien
skanèn:ra tsi kón:ne. Saterò:rok ne sénha
kentsiowá:nen ia'tenwani'tsiónhkwahkwe
ia'tenwatkhnekóhetste ienwakia'takahrhatenia'te
tánon é:neken ienwakia'takahrhátho tóka shi
ro'tshwà:ton.

Thí:ken kéntsion ionatawenhákie ne thí:ken
awèn:ke, oh nahò:tenk aori:wa tsi thokón:nes,
tóka shí:ken ne sa'nikòn:ra skén:nen akénhake
tóka ó:ni aontakónhtka'we ne aotiiá'ta'shón:'a
ok naiá:wén'ne aionkwakhwaién:ta'ne aetewake
né:'e aori:wa kiótkon tahshenonhwaratónhsheke

ne kéntsion. Tho nón:we
nikiawé:non tsi iontonhnhé:ton
ne kentsionhnéha. Nó:nen
ne rotikstenhokón:'a
tahatinónniahkwe,
ratiweientehtón:ne oh ní:ioht
tsi ahontoriahnerón:ko.
Tethatiiehshon'táhere
tánon ronatonhnháhere
wa'thatinónniahkwe
tsi ka'nahkwá:'e.
Skanèn:ra akwé:kon tsi
tehotinonniahkwenhákie
tehonahkwatasehákie
ronatorià:neron iosno':re
tánon ióhskats tsi ní:ioht
ne skanèn:ra ne kéntsion

awèn:ke ionatawenhákie. Tsi ní:ioht tsi
ne rotikstenhokón:'a wa'thatinónniahkwe,
wa'thontkahrhaté:ni tánon wa'thontatká:neren
ia'thatí:iehste tsi ní:ioht tsi ronatorià:neron tánon
ronahsi'takénrie.

Ón:wa wenhniserá:te, tsi roti'nahkwá:'e tánon
tehotinonniahkwen sénha iosnó:re tsi niióhtón:ne
ne wahón:nise. Tsi iosnó:re tsi roti'nahkwá:'e
karennasé'stsi wahonterennón:ni tánon
tahoti'nikonhratihéntho ne ken' nithotiión:sa
takanakerahtsheratákie. Né:'e aori:wa, ó:nen
tekaren:nake ionkwarén:naien ne kentsionhnéha
nikanonniò:ten aorenná'shón:'a. Skarén:na
enkonwanaterennóthahse ne kéntsion tsi
niká:ien kontinákere tsi kaniatarahrónnion.



Fish Dance

Thanksgiving is a major part of our way of life as Iroquois people. We give thanks to just about everything in creation which sustains life. In observance of our interactions with nature, we the Onkwéhon:we people have created ways to show our appreciation of being alive and happy as we dwell upon the earth. We show this gratitude through our respect for nature, through prayer and ceremonies, and through music and dance.

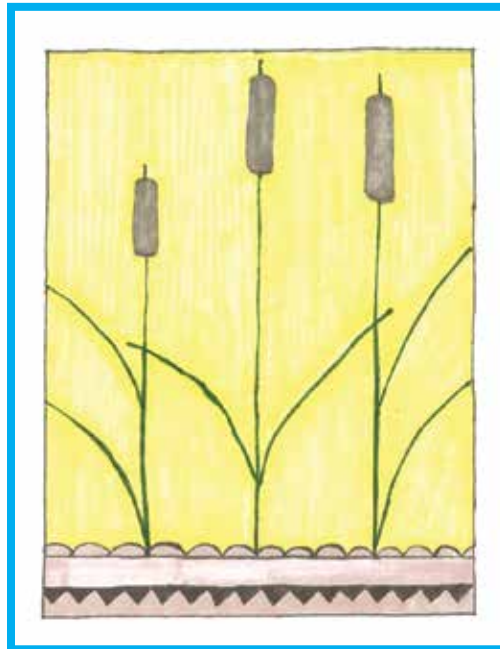
In the past, our people loved to laugh, socialize and have fun just as we do today. Everyday, they interacted with their natural surroundings, watching as the animals and birds moved about by land, water and air. It was from these observances that a number of our social dances were born, honouring the animals and birds for the many gifts which they have bestowed upon us.

The old ones use to tell it this way:

If you should take a walk and come upon a river, a creek or a stream, you should stand still for a while and peer into the water. Watch for a school of fish to quickly swim by in the water. Watch them closely as they playfully swim in all directions as one body.

Watch as a larger fish jumps out of the water and does a flip as if he was playing. Those fish swimming in that water, are there for a reason, whether it be to make your mind at ease, or to give of their bodies so that we may have food to eat. It is for that reason that you should always express thanks to

the fish. It was in this way that the Old Fish Dance came to be. When the old people would dance, they had their own special body movements. Full of laughter and joy, they danced hard to the beat of the drum. They all danced as one in a circular motion, moving their bodies as quickly and gracefully as the schools of fish swimming in the water. As the old ones danced, they turned and faced one another incorporating their fancy moves and footwork.



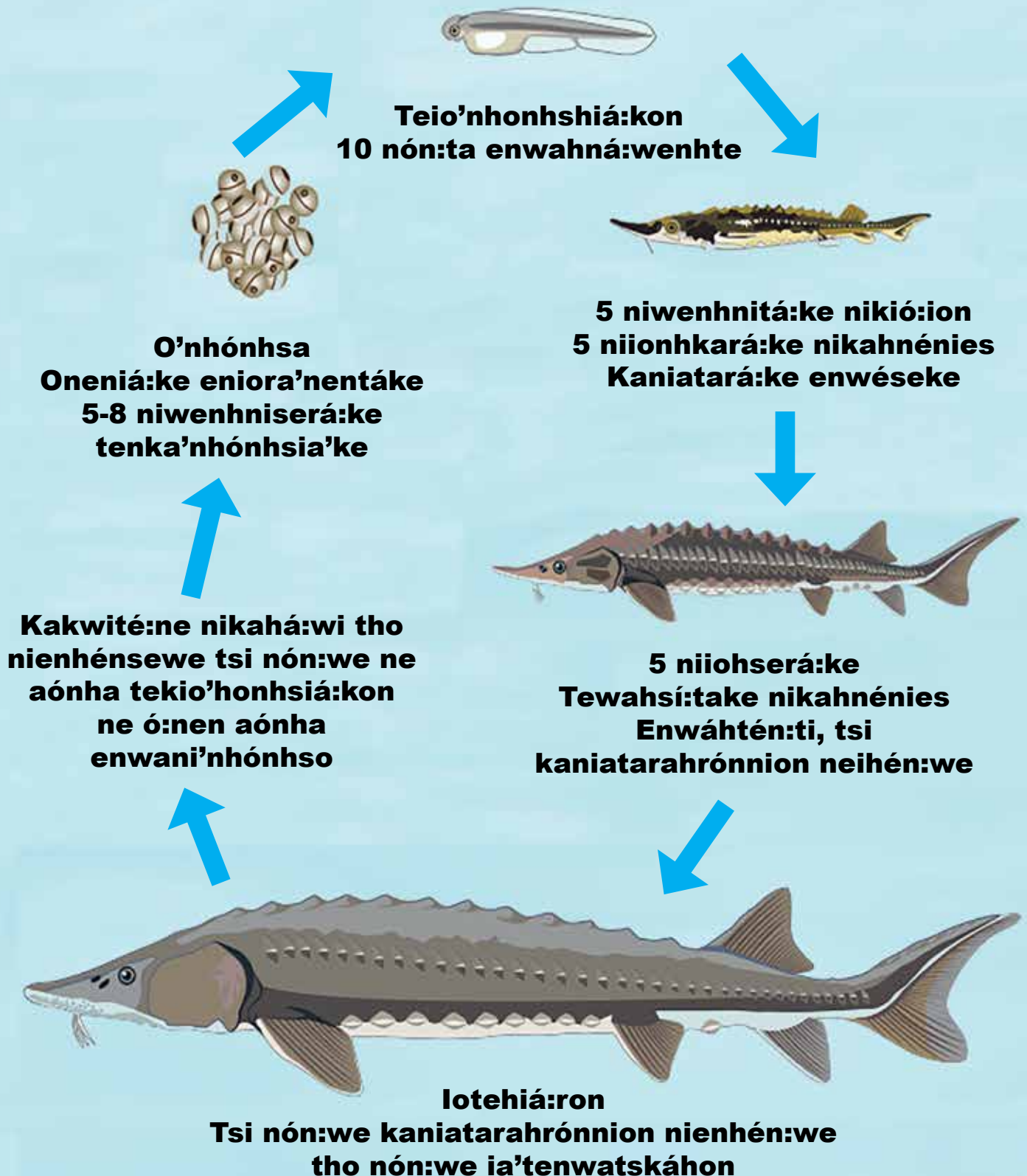
Today, the beat and step has become much faster than in the past. With the faster beat, new songs were made up and have become very popular among the younger generation. As a result, there are now two sets of fish dance songs done in honour of the fish that live in the many bodies of water.

Written by Skahendowaneh Swamp for Akwesasne Freedom School (AFS), 2003

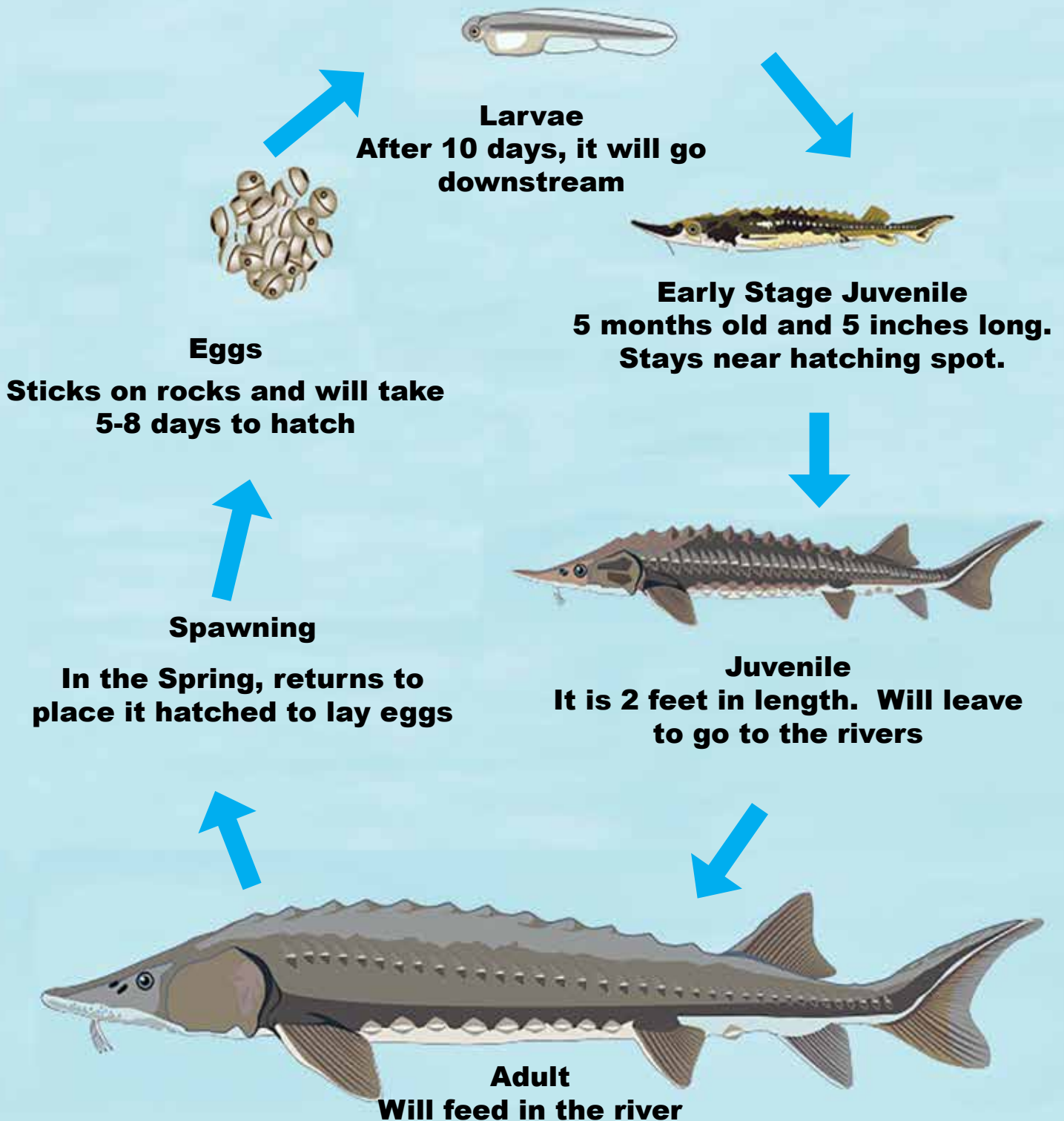
Translation by Karihwénhawe (Dorothy Lazore) and Kakiokwaronkwás (Jennifer Smoke), December 2015

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Tsi Rononhnhékie Takaratákie



Life Cycle



Tsi Taionathwatsironnikákie

- 1. O'nhehkien ienkontia'taie:ri'ne tóka ó:ni kaié:ri iawén:re niiohserá:ke tsi niió:re ne ahsen niwahsen ahsen nikiotí:ion. lotká:te tewáhsen kaié:ri tsi niió:re tewáhsen iá:ia'k niiohserá:ke nikiotí:ion, enkonkia'tísa.**
- 2. Sha'té:kon tsi niió:re tekeni iawén:re niiohserá:ke nen' né:'e ne rá:tsihn né:'k tsi sewakié:ren tsi niió:re ne tewáhsen tékeni niiohserá:ke nenthotiién:take, enhonkia'tísa.**
- 3. Otihnhéhkien kaniataráhere teiokién:taron enkonni'nhónhso énska ieká:ienhte ne kaié:ri tsi niió:re ne kióhton niiohserá:ke. Na'tekónteron ná:'a ne ratí:tsihn enho'nehtarón:ti, enska ienka:ienhte tsi na'tekiátere ne tékeni tánon tsiá:ta niiohserá:te.**



Reproduction

- 1. Sexual maturity in females is reached between 14-33 years. Most often from 24-26 years.**
- 2. Sexual maturity in males is reached between 8 to 12 years but may take up to 22 years.**
- 3. Female lake sturgeon spawn once every 4-9 years while males spawn every 2-7 years.**

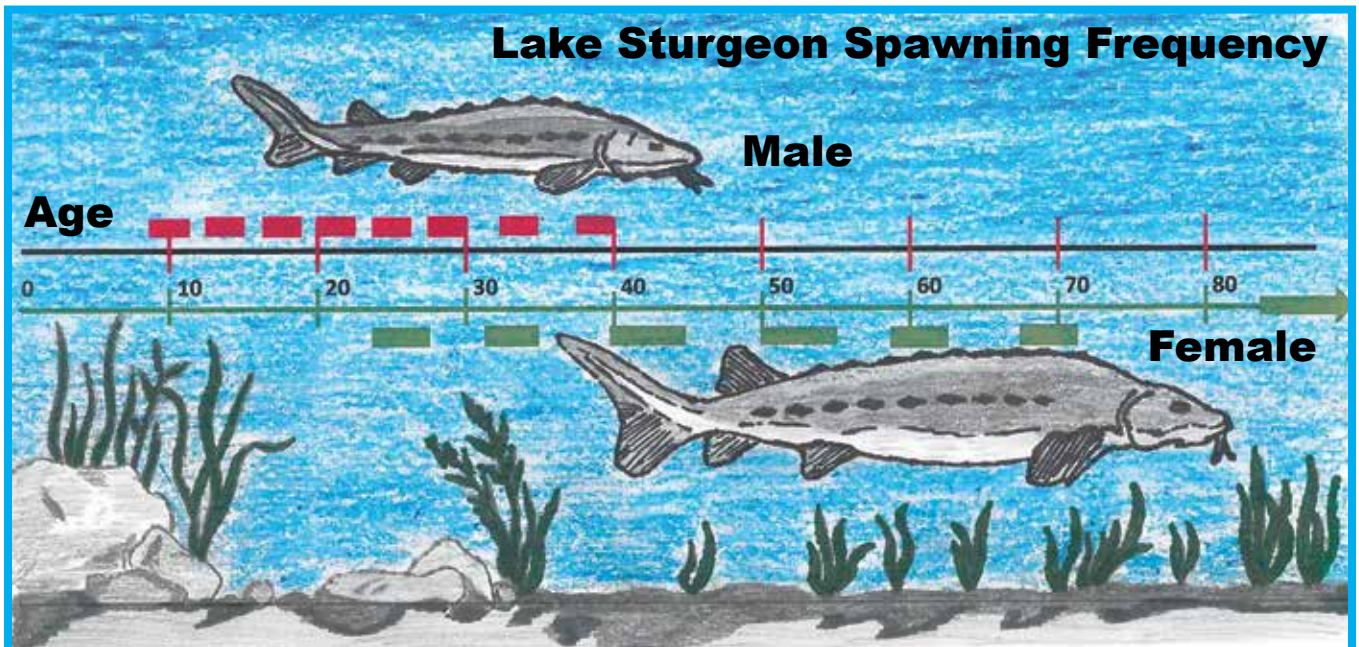


“ Try to go (night lining) early spring and fall before the big females run. ”

Danny Jacobs

Tsi Nikontiia'tò:tens

1. Onerahtókha tsi niió:re Ohiarí:ha nikahá:wi enkonni'nhónhso tsi niió:re í:iah tha'teiohneká'tsion kahnekí:io tánon í:iah sótsi teiohnó:tes tsi kaneniakè:ron. Tóka ó:ni kahiónha iohná:wate tánon ratirákwas iohné:kano ne 55-64°F ne Onerahtókha tsi niió:re ne Ohiarí:ha.
2. Otihnhéhkien teiokién:taron 4 teiohsénhseronte tsi niió:re 7 teiohsénhseronte ne Skakón:tshera tsi nioia'tákste enkonni'nhónhso ne kéntsion.
3. Tehonttihanion tsi nenhontehià:ron tánon tóhkara niiorí:wake entkarihón:ni kontiniahéhsa's tsi nio'tarihen tsi nikakhwanákere, tánon tsi nikahnekí:io.
4. Tsi nihonnónhnhes ne kaniataráhere teiokién:taron, wísk niwáhsen wísk niiohserá:ke ne ratí:tsihn tánon sha'té:kon niwáhsen tsi niió:re énska tenwen'niáwe tánon wísk niwáhsen niiohserá:ke ne otihnhéhkien.



Characteristics

- 1. Spawning occurs on clean, gravel shoals and stream rapids from April to June in water temperatures of 55-64 °F**
- 2. Female lake sturgeon lay 4,000-7,000 eggs per pound of fish**
- 3. Growth rates are quite variable and depend on temperature, food availability and water quality**
- 4. The typical life-span of lake sturgeon is 55 years for males and 80-150 years for females**



“ I remember being surprised because it was the first time I had ever seen a real big fish. I was jumping up in the seat. I was probably about 6-7 years old. Back then, it was a wooden boat with a little motor. Probably only a 10-15HP.”

Vaughn Adams when asked about his favorite memory sturgeon fishing.



Á:ria Ronóntha, Rontshí:rohs

1. O'nesharónhkwao'neróhkwakonentehséta.
2. Tsion kwé :takaná :tsiakonenhatá hko ne á :ria.
3. Shaiá:taenhsakoia'taniiónten ne kaniiónta. Tsi ka hsa ka rónteenthatá hsawenten h rohétste ne á : riatá nontsi kentá hsonteien ka iá : ken hwe
4. Wató : ke ntsi na'te kó n :te rentá n onsh a'te n kon kié : ra'tetsi enhaniiontónnion ne á:ria.



“ Uncle Joe (Adams) and George Sharrow taught me how to smoke sturgeon. My father used to net perch, walleye, and all kinds of fish. But I used to go sturgeon fishing (night lining) with my uncle. ”

Vaughn Adams

Catching

- 1. Put sand at the bottom of a wooden box**
- 2. Another person takes hooks out of the bucket**
- 3. Use cubed sucker or minnows as bait. Take hooks and put through minnow mouth and push it through the bottom of the minnow. If it is the back half, put through the cut side then push through bottom.**
- 4. Evenly space hooks and make sure they all face in the same direction**



Enhsitsiahserón:ni

1. Enshia'taniión:ten
2. Senia'takwè:taron
3. Ákta ne tsiwatonriéthatánon ne. ohé n :to ntsite
iotá:rontewáta kie nón :wee n hskwè:taron.
4. Karonhkwe'ná:kekahskien'tatákieéntshereenhskwè:taron.
Skwè:tahr ne ona'áhta.
5. Entehsatihén htho ne onón :tsi,
6. ka ron h kwe' nà : keka hskien'tatá
kietá non ne oka h róhsta
7. Né:'ene tsiieióhte ne
kahskien'takwe'ní:ioénhsia'ke, ne
ióre'sen enhstáhko.
8. Enhse'wahanentáhsi ne ona'
ahtà:ke
9. Enskwè:taren ne ióre'sen ne
kanekwen'tà:kenón:we.
10. Ó:nenenhseríhte ne
teiokién:taron

Teiokién :ta ron Ka ien' kwa ra ríhton

1. Kaien'kwararíktaenhséta
ne teiokién:taronó'wà:ron. Ehtá
:kenenhsié:ra'te ne kenhna :ke
2. Ostón:hatenhsio'tsistáhrho.
3. E n hsatsien hón : n i, sewa h ió
:wa ne ó: kwi : re ó:iente én hsatste.
4. Ahsonta kwé : konen hsien' kwa ra ríhte.



Cleaning & Eating

Preparing

1. Hang the sturgeon, then cut a slit in the neck
2. Cut along the top scales and bottom of the fins
3. Cut along the spine
4. Cut through the ribs
5. Pull the head, spine and guts out
6. Break the head away from the spine to take out the spinal cord
7. Cut the tip off of the spinal cord to take the fat out
8. Cut the ribs away from the meat
9. Cut the belly fat off
10. It is ready for cooking



Smoking

1. Start fire with applewood
2. Place in the smoke skin down
3. Salt the fish lightly
4. Smoke overnight



Conservation & Education

Lake Sturgeon is a species of cultural significance to Mohawks; a listed New York State Threatened Species; and is currently being considered by the Canadian Federal government to be placed on the Species at Risk Act (SARA). Mohawk people still practice fishing and consumption rights to this species in Mohawk waters, but future federal regulations may further influence a vanishing practice. The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (SRMT) and Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) Environment Divisions are actively engaged in conservation management of this species, while preserving Mohawk traditions.

SRMT Environment Division has worked in collaboration with NYSDEC, USFWS, USGS, and other resource agency partners to stock lake



sturgeon in and adjacent to Mohawk waters. This process is inclusive of the egg take from ripe spawning adults in the spring, to the fall release of fingerlings. SRMT Environment Division has also received funding from USEPA (GL-97221410) to conduct studies on contaminant impacts on sturgeon reproductive health and viability of enhancing and/or restoring lake sturgeon spawning riffle habitat. Education outreach efforts have been conducted in schools and with target youth groups.

Collectively, all efforts are geared to protect and preserve future Lake Sturgeon populations and Mohawk cultural uses.

Acknowledgements

Mohawk perspective on environmental stewardship is centered on the relational values, duties, and responsibilities to the natural world. This is demonstrated by Ohén:ton Karihwatékwén teachings passed on by elders, oral tradition, and ceremony.

Lake Sturgeon fishing in Akwesasne is a traditional practice based on family and community sharing. Elder Mohawk fishermen follow the fishing skills and traditions taught to them by their father and uncles, father's father, and so on; often learned in Kanien'kéha (Mohawk language). One sturgeon fisherman in Akwesasne today is at least a 4th generational sturgeon fisherman (but it could be more, he doesn't know because he never asked).

Maintaining traditional practices related to fishing, cleaning, smoking, and eating of this significant cultural species in Akwesasne is highly desired. The practice of collective sharing in the family and community of smoked sturgeon continues today. At times, other parts of the sturgeon are used for medicine and healing as well. The Ase Tsi Tewaton program at Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (SRMT) Environment Division is committed to ensuring Lake Sturgeon fishing continues with good stewardship in Akwesasne, and the tradition and knowledge is passed on to the youth.

When asked how many generations of sturgeon fishermen have been in his family, Danny Jacobs responded,

“At least three, but I didn't ask any further.”





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