

Tsi niionkwarihò:ten Ioríhowá:nen

Kanien'kéha tsi niwanonhtonniotsherò:ten ne onhwentsia'kékha rontonhwentsianónhna, tho nón:we nikaia'takwe'ní:io tsi na'tekiá:tere ne karihwanó:ron, tsi nihotiio'tenhserò:tens tánon ronwatiniahehshá:'on né:'e sha'oié:ra onhwentsià:ke. Kí:ken tho nón:we niiawe'nétston ne. Ohén:ton Karihatéhkwen karihonnién:ni né:'e ronwati'nikonhraientahtén:nis ne Kanien'kehá:ka ahonhrióhkawi'ne, ahontó:rate tánon ahatirò:roke kaniahehrshá:on.

Kaniataráhere Teiokién:taron ronhriohkawí:nes ne Ahkwesahshne né:'e ne wahón:nise né:'e rononhéhkwen ne kahwatsirà:ke tánon onkwe'tà:ke tehontatenón:tens. Rotiksten'okón:'a Kanien'kehá:ka ronhriohkawí:nes né:'e ratíhsere tsi nihatiweiennò:tens tánon tsi niionkwarihò:ten ronwatirihonnienníhahkwe ne ronwati'nihókón:'a tánon ronwatinoha'okón:'a ronwati'níha tánon (Kanien'kéha tsi ronwatirihonnién:ni) iotká:te (Kanien'kéha owén:na).

Iaontahsón:terake orihwakaión:seron tsi ní:ioht tsi ahonhrióhkawine, ahatitsiahserón:ni, ahatiien'kwará:rikte tánon ahonéksheke ne khia'tekéntsiake ne Ahkwesahshne. Kwáh é:so tsi ronhská:neks. Sewakié:rens wató:ken tsi nón:we ne teiokién:taron, kaia'tà:ke ó:ni rónstha ne onónhkwa tánon ahotítsien'te.

Kaniataráhere Teiokién:taron konnónhnhes tánon iotiia'takenhé:ion ne iakontiia'taié:ri'ne akontthwatsirón:ni. Sewakié:rens ohén:ton tsi niió:re aontaiotiién:take ne énska iaká:ienhte ne akonni'nhónhso ok naiá:wen'ne aontakonwatíhnhe'ne kí:ken tsi niionkwarihò:ten ioríhowá:nen tsi nikontiia'tò:ten kéntsion. Teiotsteríha ne Kanien'kehá:ka onkwehshón:a orihwakaienhnéha akonwanehià:ron teiokién:teron. Tewaten'nikonhrahtká:wen kahiá:ton kí:ken kahiatonhserà:ke ia'teka'nikonhraientá:'on tahontaten'nikòn:ren ne Kanien'kéha tsi nikari'ho'ténhne tsi ní:ioht tsi rónstha tánon ahonwatihretsiá:ron ne onkwehshón:'a iaontahsón:terake tsi nihatiiehrháhkwe ne wahón:nise tsi ní:ioht tsi ronniatsiató:ratskwe né:'k tsi tóhsa aontahatirihwá:reke tánon ahón:neke ne teionkién:taron.

Ne Kaná:takon Kanien'kéha Raotikióhkwa (SRMT) Rontonhwentsianónhna lokwèn:rare ronatatshén:nare tsi rotirihwahnirá:ton. Kaniataráhere Teiokién:taron ronhriohkawí:nes iaontahsón:terake ahontonhwentsianón:na ne Ahkwesáhshne tánon ne tsi niionkwarihò:ten tánon tsi nahò:ten ratirihwaiénté:ri enhshonwatirihónnien ne tontahatikonhsotónkie.



Cultural Significance

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. It is these traditional teachings that instruct Mohawks to fish, hunt, and gather responsibly.

Lake Sturgeon fishing in Akwesasne is a traditional practice based on family and community sharing. Elder Mohawk fishermen follow the skills and traditions taught to them by their father and uncles, father's father, and so on; often learned in *Kanien'kéha* (Mohawk language).

Maintaining traditional practices related to fishing, cleaning, smoking, and eating of this species in Akwesasne is highly desired. At times, parts of the sturgeon are also used for medicine and healing.

Lake Sturgeon are long-lived and slow to mature and reproduce. Often times they are harvested before they are even old enough to spawn once. In order to protect this culturally significant species it is critical for Mohawk people to conservatively harvest sturgeon. Details provided in this publication are intended to share knowledge of Mohawk traditional use and to encourage sustainable practices, **but not advocate harvest and consumption of sturgeon.**

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (SRMT) Environment Division is committed to ensuring Lake Sturgeon fishing continues with good stewardship in Akwesasne, and that tradition and knowledge is passed on to future generations.

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.”



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 tewaká'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'tewehniserá: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 iowérarakie. Tho nón:we
nontá:we kí:ken iakwaká'én:ions kwah ken'
niiotikiókwake ne iakwatan'nikonroria'tákhwa
kanonnia'shón:'a ionatonhnhé:ton
tehonwatirénhsarons ne kariò:ta tánon
otsi'ten'okón:'a tsi ní:kon wa'onkhiháhrhahse.

Rotikstenhokón:'a tho ní:ioht kí:ken tsi
ratikaratónhkhwahkwe.

Tóka shí:ken 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 áktek nón:we ia'tetsionóien
skanèn:ra tsi kón:ne. Saterò:rok ne sénha
kentsiowá:nen ia'tenwani'tsionhkwahkwe
ia'tenwatkhnekóhetste ienwakia'takahrhatenia'te
tánon é:neken ienwakia'takahrhátho tóka shí:ken
ro'tshwà:ton.

Thí:ken kéntsion ionatawenhákie ne thí:ken
awèn:ke, oh nahò:tenk aorì: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 aorì:wa kiótkon tahshenonhwaratónhsheke

ne kéntsion. Tho nón:we
nikiawé:non tsi iontonhnhé:ton
ne kentsionhnhéha. Nó:nen
ne rotikstenhokón:'a
tahatinónniahkwe,
ratiweientehtón:ne oh ní:ioht
tsi ahontoriahnerón:ko.
Tethatiéhshon'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
tahotí'nikonhratihéntho ne ken' nithotiión:sa
takanakerahtsheratákie. Né:'e aorì:wa, ó:nen
tekaren:nake ionkwarén:naien ne kentsionhnhéha
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.

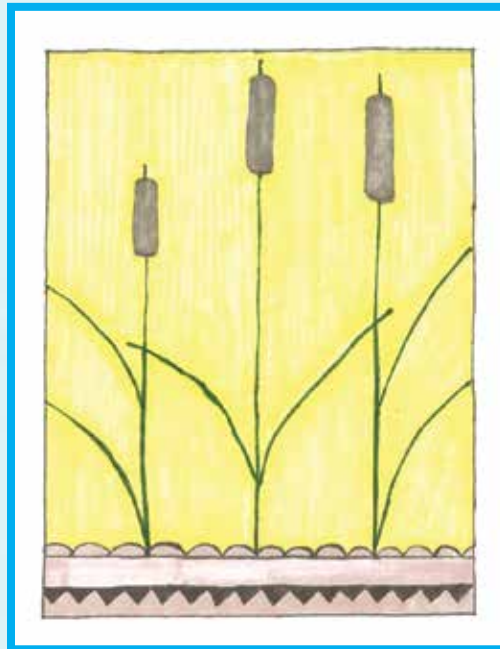
In the past, our people loved to laugh, socialize and have fun just as we do today. Everyday, they interacted with their natural surroundings, watching as the animals and birds moved about by land, water and air. It was from these observances that a number of our social dances were born, honouring the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

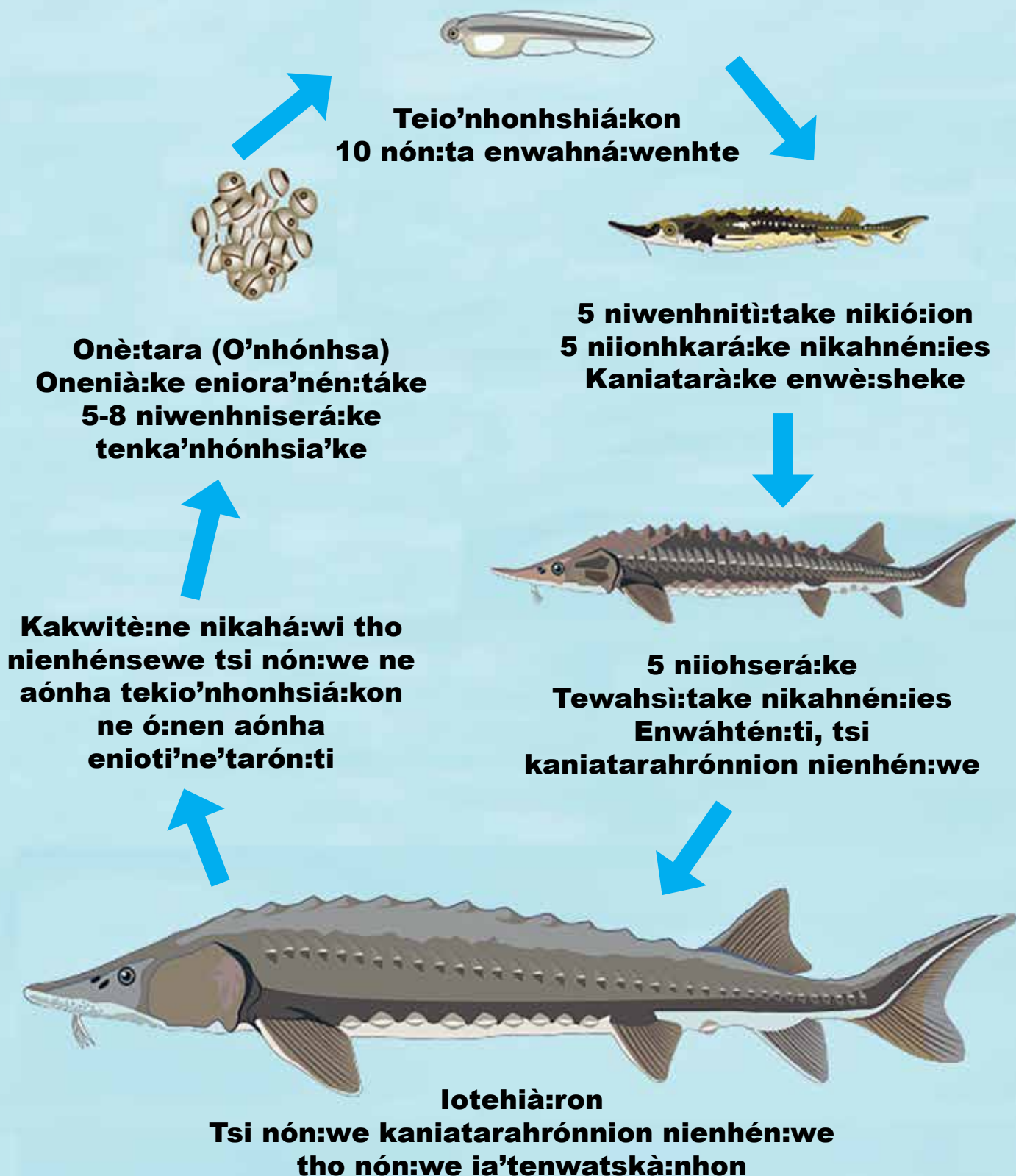
Written by Skahendowaneh Swamp for Akwesasne Freedom School (AFS), 2003

Mohawk translation by Karihwénhawe (Dorothy Lazore) and Kakióhkwaronkwas (Jennifer Smoke), December 2015

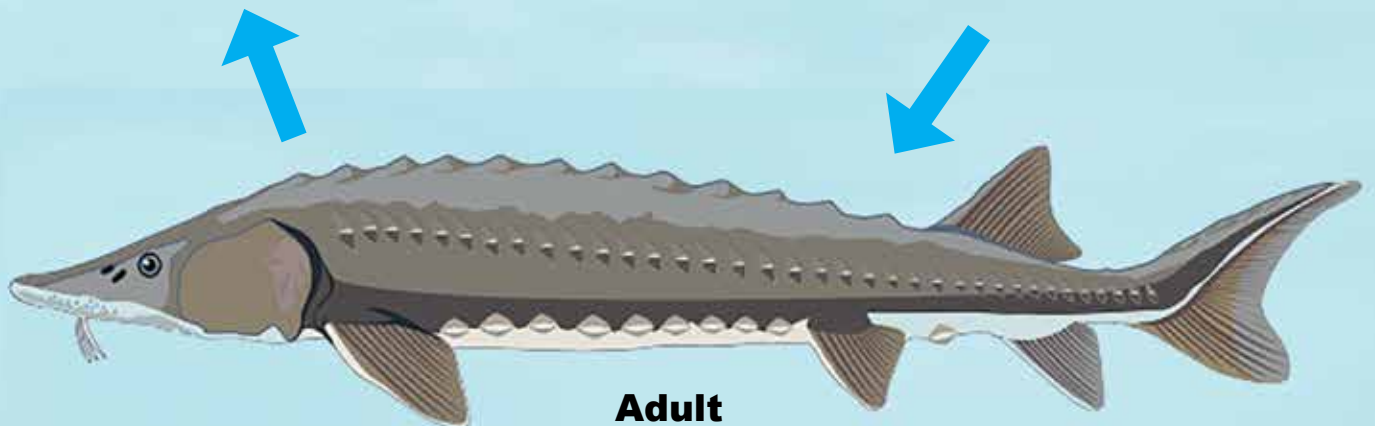
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Artwork by Kaia'tahente

Tsi Rononhnhékie Takakaratákie



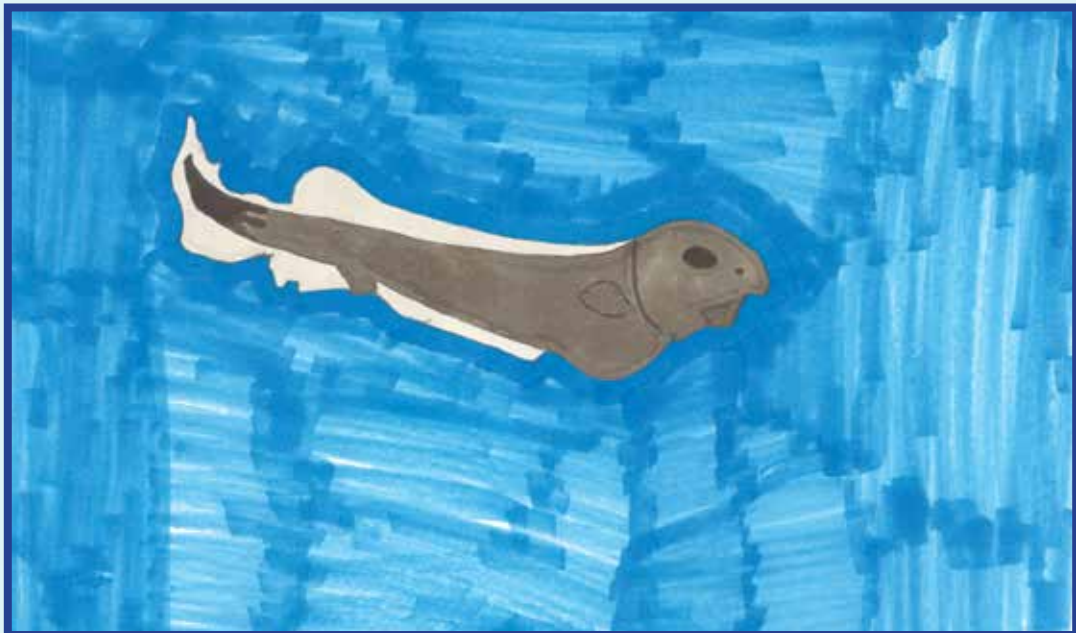
Life Cycle



Spawning
In the Spring, returns to place it hatched to lay eggs

Tsi Taionathwatsironnihákie

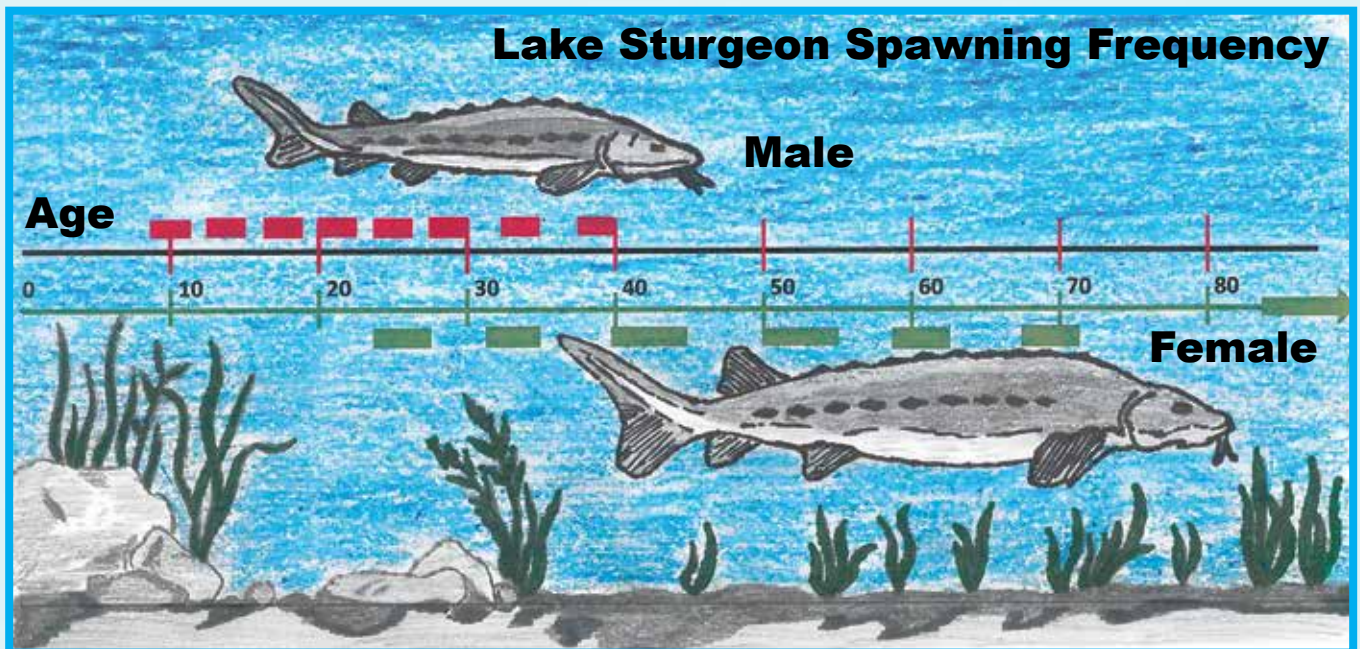
- 1. O'nhehkien ienkontiia'taié:ri'ne tóka ó:ni kaié:ri iawén:re niiohserá:ke tsi niió:re ne áhsen niwáhsen áhsen nikiotí:ion. lotká:te tewáhsen kaié:ri tsi niió:re tewáhsen iá:ia'k niiohserá:ke nikiotí:ion, enkonkia'tísa'a.**
- 2. Sha'té:kon tsi niió:re tekeni iawén:re niiohserá:ke nen' né:'e ne rá:tsihn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



Tehonwenniserathe Herne

Reproduction

1. Sexual maturity in females is reached between 14 and 33 years. Most often from 24 to 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 to 9 years while males spawn every 2 to 7 years.



Artwork by Jay Wilkins

Reproduction and characteristics information
from the Great Lakes Sturgeon Collaboration
website at www.fws.gov

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 enioti'ne'tarón:ti ne kéntsion.**
- 3. Tehonttihanion tsi nenhontehià:ron tánon tóhkara niiorì:wake entkarihón:ni kontiniahéhsa'as 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 10-15 HP. My uncle would take my hand and put it in the (sucker) mouth of the sturgeon. I was scared because I thought it was a shark with teeth. He would laugh.

Vaughn Adams when asked about his favorite memory sturgeon fishing.



Enthatíhné ne tánon Enhonwati'nikonhraientáhten

Kaniataráhere Teiokién:taron (*Acipenser Fulvescens*) tsi nikentsiò:ten. Kanien'kéha tsi niionkwarihò:ten iorihowá:nen; kahsén:nare Kanón:no Ohstoronòn:ke ióttèron ne akónhton tsi nikentsiò:ten tánon ronnonnónnion ne Koráhne Kakoráhtshera akonwatihsén:naren tsi nikentsiò:ten ne lóttèron Aoianerénhsera (Sara). Ne Kanón:no Ohstoronòn:ke í:iah teiò:wis aesentsiaién:take kí:ken kéntsion tánon ranitsiató:rats kahró:ri aonsahonwanáhtka'we ne kéntsion awèn:ke kwáh óksak tóhsa aiotikarawáhton. Né:'k Kanien'kéha rotiri:waién tsi nahò:ten thonehtáhkwen tánon tsi nihotiriho'ténhne raotiianerénhsera ne ahonhrióhkawine tánon ahón:neke ne teiokién:taron ne kanien'kéha awen'kéhshon nikiawé:non.

Kwáh é:so tsi iorihowá:nen tsi ronhská:neks ne Wahstoronòn:ke, Kakoráhtshera tánon ne onkwakoráhtshera tsi Kanenhstó:ton Raotikióhkwa ne aontahatíhnhe'ne tsi niionakióhkwa shé:kon kontinákere ne awen'kéhshon kí:ken nikentsí:io.

Kanón:no Wahstoronòn:ke Kanónhsote ne Rontonhwentsianónhnha Rontoweien:tons (NYSDEC) rotirihwahnirá:ton aontahatíhnhe'ne

tánon ronahkwíson rotiió'tákie ne tóhsa akónhton ne Kaniataráhere Teiokién:taron shé:kon konnónhnhe. SRMT Rontonhwentsianónhnha Kanónhsote wa'thatiié:na ne Kenkiokwaién:ton ne thonateróhon (NYSDEC,USFWS and USGS) ahatítsiaien ne Kaniataráhere Teiokién:taron tánon ne ísi na'kaniatará:ti

ne Kanien'kéha awen'kéhshon. Kí:ken tsi nikaié:ren entewatáhsawen enkonwati'nhonhsákhwa ne ionatehià:ron. Konni'ne'taronkies, kakwitè:ne nikahá:wi ne kaniatarà:ke (St. Lawrence) ioni'ne'tarónkion o'nhónhsa tánon kentakenrí:ta enkonwanehià:ron tsi tekonní'nhonhsiakstákhwa tánon ne ken'nikiotiión:sa kéntsion ienhskonwanáhtka'we kaniatarà:ke kanenna'kè:ne nikahá:wi.



SRMT Rontonhwentsianónhnha Kanónhsote wahatihwistatáhkó ne US ahonterihwahténkia'te ahontóweienste ahóntken'se tó: niionata'karí:te ne Teiokién:taron tánon ahatirihwí:sake ka'nón:we niioiánere akonni'nhónhso ne Teiokién:taron sénha aonsaionakiohkwáhnha'ne.

Protecting & Educating

Lake Sturgeon (*Teiokién:taron*; *Acipenser fulvescens*) is a species of Mohawk cultural significance; a listed New York State Threatened Species; and is being considered by the Canadian Federal government to be listed under the Species at Risk Act (SARA). In New York State it is illegal to possess this fish, and anglers are mandated to release the fish unharmed to the water immediately. However, Mohawk people maintain the cultural and traditional right to fish and consume sturgeon from Mohawk waters.

It is of great desire by State, Federal, and Tribal Resource Agencies to protect the populations of this majestic species.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) has strong protection and stocking

efforts in place to work towards recovery of Lake Sturgeon populations. SRMT Environment Division has collaborated with agency partners (USFWS, USGS, USEPA and NOAA) to stock Lake Sturgeon in and adjacent to Mohawk waters. This process begins with eggs taken from spawning adults in the spring from the St. Lawrence River; fertilized

eggs and fry are then raised in a hatchery; and the juvenile fingerlings are released back to the rivers in the fall.

SRMT Environment Division received funding from USEPA to conduct studies to assess

chemical impacts on sturgeon's health and explore viable spawning habitat for sturgeon population restoration.



“ *Uncle Joe (Peters) 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

Konwennehrahrónkie



1. Enkonwati'nehtarontá:ko, enkonwati'nhonhsatáhko ne ioti'nhéhkien.
2. Milt (sperm) enhonnetáhko ne ratí:tsihn.
3. Tenhse'nhonhsawénrie tánon skáthne ne milt ohstó:seri éhnsatste.
4. O'nhónhsa tsi thati'nhonhsia:ktha ienhatíhawe tsi nón:we tenkonni'nhónhsia'ke tánon enkontehià:ron kaié:ri niwenhni:take nikari:wes.
5. Ken' nikiotiíon:sa tóka kaié:ri tsi niió:re ià:ia'k nikatsiweionhkará:ke níkon:na'as nó:nen onhshonwanáhtka'we kaniatarà:ke kanenna'kéhstsi.



Artificial Spawning Cycle

1. Eggs are taken from females.



2. Milt (sperm) is extracted from the males.

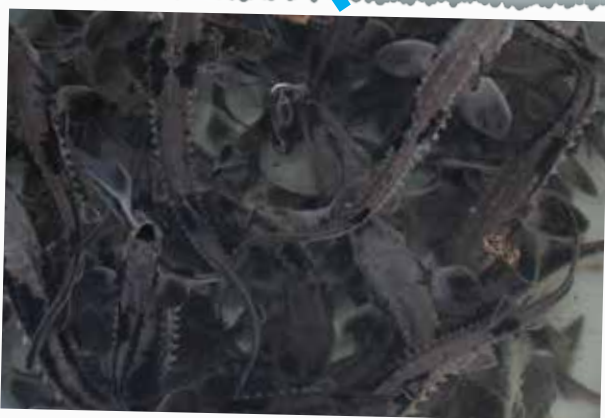


5. Early stage juveniles are four to six inches long when released back into the rivers in the early fall.

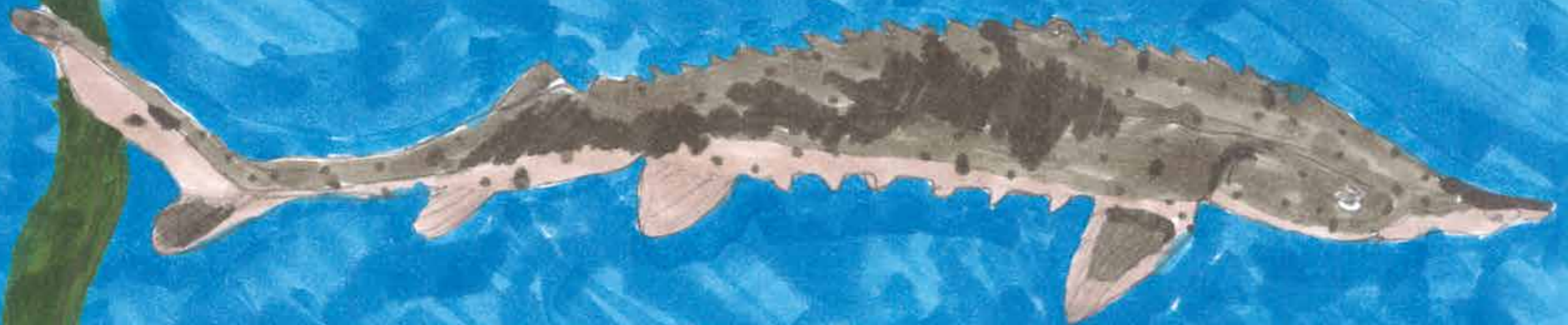


3. Stirring eggs and milt gently together with a feather fertilizes the eggs.

4. Fertilized eggs are taken to a hatchery where they hatch and grow for four months.



Teiokién:taron Sturgeon



This publication was created by the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (SRMT) Environment Division, with collaboration and contributions by the Á:se Tsi Tewá:ton Program, Akwesasne Freedom School, and contributing artists. Funding support provided by U.S. EPA Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) GL-97221410 and St. Lawrence River Research and Education Fund (SLRREF). Images/art work may not be redisplayed on a web site, reprinted on other media, or used in any way without permission.

Cover art by Niiakohontesha Gray

**OHÉN:TON
KARIHWATÉHKWEN**

KENTSIONH'SHÓN:'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 niihtónhak 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 nourishment so
that we do not go
hungry.**

**Now, our minds are
one.**