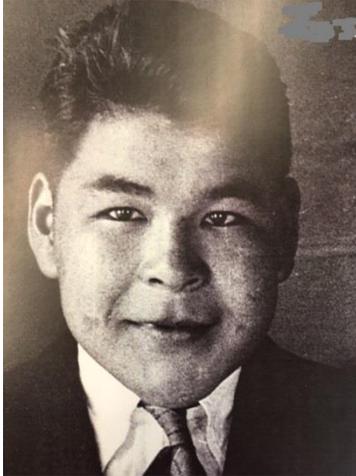


**FOOD FROM THE SEA: HERRING SPAWN GR: 6-8 (LESSON 10)**

**Elder Quotation:**

‘The herring were more plentiful. They had no nets and they waved a dip net out of branches and roots. They would build a fire along the beach and when the herring were near, the light would attract them and it would be like a holiday. Everyone was at the beach, young and old filled up the containers they would find and everybody had herring... In the spring we watch the seal, you can tell when the herring was spawning because the seal would be covered with spawn, then we knew that we were not far from the spawning grounds. – Bobby Stamp p.11



Bobby A. Stamp (1926-2005) was born to a French Canadian father and Dorothy Vlasoff from Nuchek. He moved to Chenega at the age of seven where he lived a subsistence lifestyle and was taught cultural values and lore by the village Elders.

**Grade Level: 6-8**

**Overview:** The return of the herring has traditionally meant that spring has arrived. Fresh fish after a long winter of preserved and dried food was welcome and herring roe was especially appreciated.

**Standards:**

<i>AK Cultural:</i>	<i>AK Content:</i>	<i>CRCC:</i>
<p><b>C1:</b> Perform subsistence activities in ways that are appropriate to local traditions.</p> <p><b>D1:</b> Acquire in-depth cultural knowledge through active participation and meaningful interaction with Elders.</p>	<p><b>Science C (2).</b> A student should understand and be able to apply the concepts, models, theories, facts, evidence, systems, and processes of life science and should (2) develop an understanding of the structure, function, behavior, development, life cycles, and diversity of living organisms.</p>	<p><b>SS3:</b> Students should be able to gather plants, berries, and other edible foods.</p> <p><b>L1:</b> Students should understand the value and importance of the Sugt’stun language and be actively involved in its preservation.</p>

**Lesson Goal:** To learn about the harvest and preparation of herring spawn.

**Lesson Objectives:** Students will:

- Review potential intertidal subsistence harvest foods
- Discuss relative abundance of subsistence herring spawn opportunities
- Compare herring spawn harvest methods.
- Observe or prepare herring egg salad
- Learn the Sugt’stun and/or Eyak vocabulary listed below.

**Vocabulary Words:** Sugt'stun Dialects

English:	PWS:	Lower Cook Inlet:	<a href="#">Eyak:</a>
spring	<i>iciwaq</i>	<i>icuwaq</i>	<i>xahLch'aad</i> (lit: toward summer)
herring	<i>iqal_uahpat</i>	<i>iqal_uahpat</i>	<a href="#">waaw</a>
herring eggs	<i>iqal_uahpat qahyait</i>	<i>iqal_uahpat qahyait</i>	waaw <a href="#">k'udA'uhdg</a>
Bon appetit! Good eating!	<i>Tepkegtut!</i>	<i>Cacat tepkegtut!</i> (This smells good!)	

**Materials/Resources Needed:**

- 'Looking Back on Subsistence' Elder Interviews – handout, one per student
- Cooking implements and heat source to demonstrate harvest preparation
- Serving utensils, small bowls, forks for salad servings

**Kit Library:**

- Garza, Dolores A. Common Edible Seaweeds in the Gulf of Alaska. (2012)
- Garza, Dolores A. *Surviving on the Foods and Water from Alaska's Southern Shores.* (2007)
- Poling, Donald Robert. *Chenega Diaries: Stories and Voices of Our Past: Life and Times in the Native Village of Chenega, Alaska 1944-1948.* Chenega Future, Inc., 2011. (p.171 ling cod spawn harvest story – *quoted below*; p.252 fish egg preservation, survival food)

**Web Resources:****Herring Spawn Harvest:**

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BdX5m0rY\\_CY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BdX5m0rY_CY) Retrieved 12.6.2017 Tatitlek Subsistence Story (27:28) opens with Lidia Robarts Quayana song, herring spawn (16:40-21:15)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oln3YwBzy0k&t=84s> (7:14 – first 2.47 on how spawn is collected) Herring spawn harvest (Sitka), Salad (Alaska Native Hospital)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEp1fxDp6-8> Herring spawn on hemlock from tree felling to ocean to drying
- [http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/fedaidpdfs/rir.1j.2017.02.pdf?\\_ga=2.250536326.1004914198.1524510710-1463821139.1524510710](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/fedaidpdfs/rir.1j.2017.02.pdf?_ga=2.250536326.1004914198.1524510710-1463821139.1524510710) Retrieved 4.23.2018 p.7 Description of subsistence fishery considerations and how ADF&G currently sets herring roe subsistence harvest limits (Copying of paper contents not permitted)

**Herring Population Decline**

- <https://www.newsdeeply.com/oceans/articles/2017/10/13/boom-and-busted-lessons-from-alaskas-mysterious-herring-collapse> Overview of herring run failure post Exxon Valdez oil spill
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LlpqIc6fsY0> (also [www.pwssc.org/herringsurvey](http://www.pwssc.org/herringsurvey)) Overview of collapse of herring population in Prince William Sound and still unknown cause

## Recipes

- <https://snapguide.com/guides/make-herring-egg-salad/> Illustrated recipe with peas, cheese...

## **Teacher Preparation:**

- Review activity plan and practice Sugt'stun or Eyak vocabulary.
- Contact your Local Education Coordinator or local Tribal Council for a list of Elders that could provide some herring spawn with which to make herring salad.  
OR Arrange a field trip to gather herring spawn.
- Invite an Elder or Recognized Expert to describe his or her experience with the harvesting or preparation of herring spawn to the class.
- Before the Elder or Recognized Expert arrives review with students how to interact respectfully with the Elder during his or her visit.

**Opening:** After a long winter with little fresh food the return of the herring was a clear sign of spring for the Native people of the Chugach region. The Sugpiaq and Eyak peoples learned to target the spawning grounds to harvest fresh herring roe deposited on kelp strands, popweed, or specially laid hemlock branches.

## **Activity**

### **Class I:**

1. Review Tidal Edibles cards and discuss which are available locally, which are still actively consumed (tastes change over the generations!).
2. Optional: Show final section (P.S. Making Stink Eggs Today) of 'Food from the Sea, Leona Olsen Interview' (See above.) above changing taste for fermented fish eggs.
3. Introduce Elder and invite him or her to comment on which of these foods are abundant locally, when and where they are available and if she or he has observed fluctuations in particular tidal food populations or heard about changes.
4. Read aloud this excerpt of a 1946 letter home from Chenega teacher John Poling describing an impromptu ling cod egg harvest when out with his young sons and 11-year-old Wally Brizgaloff:

“We rowed near the shore and Wally asked me to stop. He saw a huge cluster of ling cod eggs deposited in a cleft of rock at the low tide mark. It was low tide at the time. He warned me to be careful as the male codfish guards the eggs and will seize an invader. Wally got over on the rocks with a hand axe and chopped about ten pounds of the eggs off and Wally started to eat some of the crunchy pink raw eggs. Mitchy and Donny demanded some, so I gave them a chunk each, and ate some myself. They had a salty flavor that wasn't bad. The people cook them by boiling, but the children eat them raw, Wally said. We gave all the children in the village a big chunk of spawn, as it is called, and they were all happy.”

- *Chenega Diaries*, p.171

5. Show Sitka Herring Spawn video (see above): first 2:47 on how spawn is collected.
6. Invite Elder/Expert to describe local herring egg harvest (See also Bobby Stamp quote above) and demonstrate how to prepare herring egg salad or prepare your own.

7. Recipes:

Fresh Herring Eggs

Dip blanched herring eggs in soy sauce or seal/olive oil



OR

Alaska Native Medical Center Herring Egg Salad

Blanch herring eggs (dip in hot water and then place immediately in ice water)

Gently pull the herring eggs from the hemlock branch and place in bowl

Mix in by hand: sliced green onions, halved cherry tomatoes, shredded carrots & radishes

Add lemon juice to flavor mayonnaise and add to egg mixture to taste

Serve over bed of greens

OR

Leona Olsen's Herring Egg Salad

Cook rice and allow to cool

Blanch herring eggs on popweed (dip in hot water & then place immediately in ice water)

Place herring eggs with popweed in bowl

Mix in by hand: chopped onion, chopped celery, chopped carrots

Add just enough mayonnaise to adhere ingredients

*Optional:* Add cooked peas; Flavor with dill

8. Place servings in small bowls. Share and enjoy! Bon appetit!/ *Cacat tepkegtut!*

**Assessment:**

- Students are able to list and describe traditional intertidal subsistence foods.
- Students can explain the relative abundance of subsistence herring spawn opportunities.
- Students described the differences in egg harvest methods and can demonstrate or describe one recipe to prepare herring eggs.
- Students correctly pronounced the Sugt'stun or Eyak vocabulary words.