

Seagull dancing with Crab

This story reminds me of the many stories and teachings my elders have shared with me over the years. The story shows how beautiful the world works together. It shows the knowledge and skill that creatures need to survive. It shows the cycle of life in the food chain and the connections the creatures have with each other.

For the last seven years it has been an honour to paddle with Geronimo and Lady Esther Canoe clubs, I am so grateful that I have had the opportunity of experiencing being out on the water. Day after day, the crew meets on the beach and practices the techniques of canoe pulling and prepares for the races. It's been a journey in itself. As a canoe puller, I have found real enjoyment in learning how to read the waters, getting to know the dangers of white caps, and becoming aware of how quickly the tides can turn. There is a newfound appreciation of racing in choppy waters, even when the saltwater burns the eyes. Canoe pulling is a lifestyle, where you are travelling every weekend during the summer to different races. It is demanding, and it can be a struggle to commit to it for some.

Canoe pulling brings us to the shores of other communities, and each year there are new adventures, new people, and new teachings. The best part is the irreplaceable time with our families and friends. Being able to be together by the water gives us the opportunity to explore, to wonder, to play as we create new memories at the canoe races year after year. It's been an amazing journey learning about the teachings of the canoe and learning how to prepare your body and mind.

qw'iy'ul'ushtul' thu qwuni 'i' thu 'ey'x ni' 'u tthu tsuwmun 'utl'
muq'e'u

Seagull dancing with crab on the shore at Neah Bay

By Tara Morris | Suwsiw and Ruby Peter | Sti'tum'at

(1) 'een'thu Suwsiw, tun'ni' tsun 'utl' quw'utsun'.

I am Suwsiw and I am from Cowichan.

(2) nilh nu sta'lus tthu Gus Morris, 'i' tun'ni' 'u tthu teti' mustimuhw tthu
shtun'naalhtuns.

My husband is Gus Morris, and his family is a canoe pulling family.

(3) tthunu sqwul'qwul' kwus wulh hay tthu teti', hay 'ul' yulhi'a'qwt stey',
nilh shni' tst 'u tthey' sil'anum.

My story is about when we were at the last canoe races of the year.

(4) 'i tst' tuw' xi'xlhem'ut thu qwuni 'i' thu 'ey'x kwus qw'iiyul'ushtul' ni' 'u
tthu tsuwmun 'utl' muq'e'u.

We watched a seagull dance with a crab on the shores of Neah Bay.

(5) yath tst 'uw' 'uy'stuhw kwutst wulh ni' yu they' 'uw' shhw'uy's tthu
'iwa'tul' stey' 'u tthu nuts'a' sil'anum.

*We always look forward to the last race of the year because we are usually
tired from training and want a break from racing.*

(6) kw'un'a spunhwu 'i' ni' tst 'uw' yuw'en' kwutst nem' tus 'u tthu shni' tst
kwutst q'ulum' tst.

Last year, we arrived a day early to get a better spot in camp.

(7) ni' 'u tthu slhq'etsusth netulh 'i' tst 'uw' xi'xlhem'ut tthu hay 'ul' qux
qwuni kwus lhalhukw'. 'i' nuts'a' thu qwuni 'uwu kws nem' lhakw' 'uw'
ni' 'ul'.

*On Friday morning, we saw lots of seagulls flying around. But there was one
seagull that wouldn't fly away.*

(8) they' nuts'a' qwuni 'uwu kwus nem' lhakw' 'uw' ni' 'ul' 'u tthu stutes 'u tthu ni' shni' tst kwutst q'uq'ulum' kwus 'i'mush.

This seagull did fly at the place near our camp, but he just walked.

(9) 'i tst 'uw' sht'eewun' kwus sum'e'kwlh 'u shus nilh kwus 'uwu kwlh nem' lhakw' huye'.

We thought he was hurt, because he wouldn't fly away.

(10) wulh hwune'unt, wulh tthuw' thu sum'shathut, 'i ni' thulh 'uw' hwun' skweyul.

It was evening time. The sun was down, but still light out.

(11) ni' wulh tth'em tthu qa' susuw' hay 'ul' qux swi'wul' tthu lhuq'us ni' 'u tthu tsuwmun.

The tide was low, and the beach was lined with seaweed.

(12) wulh m'i 'i'mush they' qwuni m'i t-suthut ni' 'u tthu sheshum' kwus m'i yu 'i'mush stutes 'i tthu ni' shni' tst kwutst q'uq'ulum'.

The seagull started walking in the shallow water in front of our camp.

(13) 'i' ni' tst 'uw' lumnuhw thu hay 'ul' thi 'e'yx sqwuqwis 'u thu qa'.

That's when we finally saw a big crab in the water.

(14) 'i tst wulh tul'nuhw kwus niis nutsim' 'u shus 'al'mutsun' thu qwuni kws nem's tth'em thu qa'.

We realized the seagull was waiting for the tide to go down.

(15) t'ut'a'thut thu qwuni kws kwunnuhws thu 'ey'x, thi 'ey'x.

The seagull was trying to catch the big crab.

(16) yelh sus kwunnum 'utl' qwuni thu 'ey'x sus nem' 'uw' lhakw' kw'i' sus 'uw' kwe'tus ni' 'u tthu tsuwmun.

The seagull finally managed to grab the crab and flew up and dropped him on the beach.

(17) yu sesut-stum 'utl' 'ey'x thu tl'e'luqt qw'xwa'luw'tsusth, saay' kws kwun'tuls.

The crab had his big claws up in the air and was ready to fight.

(18) 'i' shlheth'tul' thu qwuni ni' 'ulmutstus yelh sus lhkwatus.

The seagull was smart and was waiting for the right time to peck at the crab.

(19) yu kwey'xum' tthu shtl'up'i'nuts tthuw'nilh qwuni kwus thuythithut.

His tail would wag back and forth.

(20) ni' tul'nuhwus 'i' st'es 'i' ni' wulh' lhkwatus tthu 'ey'x 'u kw' hay 'ul' xwum.

Then he would peck really fast.

(21) ts'uhwle' 'i' nuw' yu lhukwnum 'utl' 'ey'x tthu qwuni kwus q'iq'ukw'utus.

There were a few times that crab pinched the seagull on the beak.

(22) tthu ni' shni's kwus sht'e 'uw' ni' kwin'kwun'tul' 'i' sht'e 'uw' niis qw'uy'ul'ushtul' tthu 'ey'x 'i' tthu qwuni.

Both the seagull and the crab fighting but it looked like they were dancing.

(23) nuw' le'num 'utl' qwuni tthu 'ey'x sus 'uw' hwu shkw'uqen' 'uw' t-hwthey'she'num' 'ul'.

The seagull managed to flip the crab on its back, and his legs were wiggling in the air.

(24) 'i' nuw' st'e 'ul' kwus lhekwtum 'utl' qwuni tthu 'ey'x 'i' tthu kw'ul'usth tthu 'ey'x kwus lhey'xtus.

Seagull continued to dance around the crab and stab at his tummy.

(25) hwun' xut'u 'i' ni' wulh q'uynum 'utl' qwuni tthu 'ey'x, 'unuhw kwus they'she'num'.

Finally, the seagull killed the crab, and his legs stopped moving.

(26) hay 'ul' ni' thi syaays 'utl' qwuni kwus kwunnuhwus tthey' 'ey'x.
Seagull worked so hard for that crab.

(27) wulh nilh 'ul' susuw' lhey'xtus, 'uy' s'ulhtuns.
And the seagull quickly feasted on the crab.

(28) 'uwu stl'i'us 'utl' qwuni 'u kws ts'iyultewut 'u tthu ni' lhalhukw' stutes.
The seagull didn't want to lose his crab to another bird.

(29) kwutst wulh nem' 'itut 'i' ni' tst 'uw' yu he'kw' me't tthu ni' sht'es kwthu
qwuni 'i' kwthu 'ey'x ni' sul'uthut-s kwthu ni' lumnuhwut.
We went to bed remembering about how what that seagull was doing.

(30) nan 'uw' stsuw'et tthey' qwuni.
That seagull was very clever.

(31) nilh 'ul' 'uw' hwu shhway tthu ste' 'u tthu sil'anum.
We had worked hard all season.

(32) ni' tst 'uw' 'iyus 'ul' kwutst ni' 'utl' muq'e'u, wulh shhway tthu teti'.
It was our time to enjoy the last race of the season there in Makah.