

Abstract

Bear Mother, gidostsu' version
 Patalas to Beynon, 1947

Local winter

The young people of the gidostsu village on Laredo Islet caught a hellediver (*t'sams mə'w'n*, thought to be related to the loon *g.ɔ'!* - which has great supernatural powers) and scooped at it. It began to snow, and the village was snowed in. One day a blue jay appeared in the smokehole carrying a spray of elderberries. They moved away from the local winter to *max tə k'un'ə'n* (Matheson Channel).

The chief had a daughter whom he kept in seclusion. She went berry picking with the others, stepped in bear excrement, and cursed the bears all day. When leaving, her packstrap broke several times and she was left behind. A young man helped her, and led her to a village where people wore bear costumes. Mouse Woman told her what had happened to her and what to do. She married the bear prince. When she went to 'excrete' she dug a hole, covered it up, and put a copper bracelet on top, which the chief returned to her. The bears used wet firewood.

The girls & brothers began ^{purification} fasting for the winter bear hunting season, hoping to find their sister in one of the dens. The girl gave birth to two cubs (male & female) and went with her husband to a den at *Ka'ə'ə'xə* "cavernous place", in the mountains near Matheson Channel. The bear husband knew that the three oldest brothers had violated their purification rites, and feared the youngest brother. He instructed his wife as to how he was to be treated when killed. The young brother came, and the woman dropped a

snowball bearing her finger imprints to lead
him to the place. The bear swung its dagger and
diverted the spear to its heart.

Back home with her children, the woman's
father erected a Play Pole for the children to
play on. They became great hunters but finally
returned to the bear people.

This Play Pole became a crest of the Wolf
Clan of the git g. a' 'a t s and also of the
gid s t s u where a similar pole was erected and
called w i l l i g. a' a m i' l k "where in play"

Wolf Clan!