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Annie's cartoon

**UINR Marten
is published
quarterly by
the Unama'ki
Institute of
Natural Resources.**

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What is killing our eagles?

Kitpu, the eagle is a powerful and important symbol for Mi'kmaq people. Some Mi'kmaq believe that the eagle is the only creature to touch the face of the Creator. Kitpu helps us recognize the Creator's spirit among us.

But eagles are dying.

Wildlife experts in Nova Scotia are finding sick and dying eagles and there is no secret to the cause. Eagles are being exposed to highly toxic lead by eating shotgun pellets or bullet fragments. The eagles ingest lead while scavenging animals like deer and moose that have been shot but not recovered by hunters, or by feeding on animals that have been field dressed.

Dangers of lead are well-known and lead has been eliminated in everything from paint to gasoline. One of the only sources of toxic lead left in our environment is from bullets. It's affecting eagles and it's poisoning our food source. It is estimated that 20 million birds die worldwide each year from lead and that in the United States alone, 3,000 tons of toxic lead are left in gut piles and unclaimed kills.

Helene Van Doninck, a veterinarian and co-founder of the Cobequid Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre, sees the effect first-hand. "It's getting to the point now that when I receive an eagle that can't fly and it has no visible signs of injury, I'm immediately suspicious that it's lead poisoning. Sadly, I'm often correct."

UINR and the Moose Working Group are hosting an information session with Helene Van Doninck on how lead bullets are affecting eagles and our health, looking at ways that hunters can help eliminate the risk of poisoning. The session will be held at Wagmatcook Culture and Heritage Centre on Thursday June 14 from 10:00–12:00 PM. Admission is free.

For more information on lead contamination in First Nations communities and what you can do to help, please visit uinr.ca where we have posted a background report and other resources.



What can you do?

If you hunt,
make an effort to
recover what you
shoot.

If you are shooting
nuisance animals,
dispose of them
properly.

Use copper bullets.

If you are field dressing,
take a few minutes to
bury or cover
the gut pile.

Anyone finding a sick
eagle contact DNR
immediately. Its chance
of survival depends
on how fast it gets
treatment.

Tell your hunter friends
about how lead bullets
are killing eagles and
affecting their
families' health.



NEWS

Congratulations to UINR's Director of Administration Annie Johnson on her recent marriage to Blaine Slade. They were married this spring on a Caribbean and Mexican cruise with family and friends...The Atlantic Salmon Fund has contributed to a project at UINR to enhance salmon rivers in Unama'ki by planting native trees on the riverbanks. Location assessments are now underway and planting will begin in the fall....Pitu'paq has been approved for funding of \$140,000 from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada's Climate Change Adaptation Program for 2012-2013... CAMP (Community Aquatic Monitoring Program) training will resume from June to September this year....CEPI's Senior Council met in Eskasoni in May with representatives from federal, First Nations, municipal and provincial governments and committed to continue supporting the initiative...UINR staff will be attending the Atlantic Policy Congress session on "Aboriginal Aquaculture Dialogues" to discuss business development in communities interested in aquaculture as a viable economic development initiative...Selena Cremo attended Envirothon in Truro this spring with students from Eskasoni, Wagmatcook and Waycobah... UINR is a partner in Fish-WIKS, a new project on fisheries governance and decision making...UINR recently held workshops to gather information on salmon, striped bass and cod...

WWW

uinr.ca

Here's where we keep you up-to-date on new stuff online at uinr.ca

If you are interested in important Mi'kmaq plants, you're going to want to check out "Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge, Distribution of Culturally Significant Plants" our new publication identifying plants and their habitats. The report is part of an extensive study that we completed that maps out where plants are located. You can get a free copy at uinr.ca in the Publications section of our on-line library.



Be sure to "LIKE" our UINR Facebook page (facebook.com/UINRpage). It is THE place to go to see photos and keep up-to-date on everything we're doing at UINR.

If you are a Twitter user join the many people who follow UINR's tweets!



Above: Unama'ki Elders join a meeting of the Kluskap Cave committee to share their knowledge on the legend.



Mi'kmaq Youth CAMP

Join us from August 8-14 at **Nikani Awtiken**

St. Peter's, Cape Breton

Participate in Tours, Field Trips and Certified Training
and learn about Career Opportunities
There's no cost for participants



Boating Safety
Sawmill Tour
Hiking Kluscap Cave
Basic First Aid

Medicinal Plant ID
Traditional Aboriginal Knowledge
Eel Spearing
GPS Training



If you are between 15 to 18 years old
and enrolled full-time in high school
go to melcentre.ca for more
information and to apply!
Deadline June 30, 2012

melcentre.ca



UINR is working on
some new publications
on plamu (Atlantic
Salmon), Ji'kaw (Striped
Bass) and Peju (Cod).

We need photos of
people fishing, cleaning
fish or even eating
them! Old pictures, new
ones, all are welcome.
If you have some
photos that you are
willing to share, please
get in touch.

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WELCOME

WELCOME

After a record mild winter, we are enjoying a nice warm spring instead of the extended winter we usually have. The trees are budding earlier than usual and now we can look forward to an early crop of black flies and mosquitoes!

We've been getting a lot of attention with our Facebook page. This spring we had a lot of discussion on the problems with grass fires and it sparked a lot of feedback and comments—more than anything we've posted! In Eskasoni, grass fires have been banned and we're hoping that other communities do the same. To get news on issues that are affecting your community, just go to facebook.com/UINRpage and click on the LIKE button to stay up-to-date.

With all the plants and trees growing, you might want to check out our latest publication "Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge, Distribution of Culturally Significant Plants." It's the final report of our two-year long study of Mi'kmaq medicinal and culturally significant plants. Now that we have this information we can work towards protecting these important plants.

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Elder Allister Marshall. Allister was involved with UINR since its inception over ten years ago and he worked tirelessly over the years to help the environment. In our next issue we will do a feature profile on Allister's life and work.

We're pretty excited about holding our first youth camp this summer. If you are interested in attending, or know someone who is, take a look at the details on our website. There are full details at MELCentre.ca and the deadline for application is June 30.

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Don't miss out on MELC's Summer Camp! It's open to high school students between the ages of 15 and 18. There is no cost and it's a great way to spend a week this summer learning about natural resources and the environment. Go to melcentre.ca for details. Deadline is June 30.

UINR's second annual clean-up in Malikewe'j was a great success this year, with participation from students from Wagmatcook School, community members and Guardians. If you missed this year's clean-up, please hold on to large items until next spring for pick up. There are NO designated dumping areas in Mala.



Mawmaliptmnej HELP US HELP Malikewe'j



Above: Students from Wagmatcook lend a hand in the clean-up of Mala.

Salmon Journey

In the last issue, I spoke of one of the harvesting techniques passed down by our Elders—snaring plamu (Atlantic salmon) in our local river systems. Spearing is just one of many ways to harvest salmon. There's jigging, netting and casting with fishing rods. In this story I would like to talk about the plamu's life cycle.

This story begins with me wondering what to write about for the next issue. One evening I sat looking out the window, staring at my bird feeder and my granddaughter, Kristina with a K, who helps me feed the birds everyday. As a reward for her duties she gets a popsicle and when she was done she came in and while enjoying her popsicle, she looked through the last issue of the UINR Marten. She asked "Grandpa, where do you work?" It kind of surprised me and I responded "at UINR." Then she asked, "What do you do there?" I answered, "I tend to all kinds of chores concerning fish and wildlife." Of course the questions kept coming about what fish and wildlife and I tried to explain to the best of my ability.

I used our newsletter as an example—kataq and plamu. All of a sudden she said, "My father fishes plamu." Of course I had to ask the question, "Where?" Margaree was her reply. Of course I knew the answer, I was just letting on. Then she asked a question I didn't expect, "Where do plamu come from Grandpa?" Kind of startled me for a minute before I could come up with an answer.

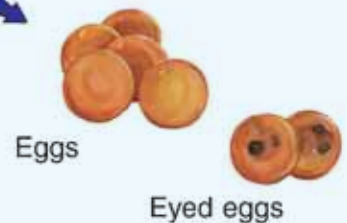
To this day I wish I had a tape recorder to record my story for the next issue. It would have saved a lot of time and effort. I used Qamsipuk (Indian Brook) as an example. After explaining where the church and the bridge are Kristina with a K responded, "Where the new playground is?" "Yes tu's, that's where."

This is how my story begins as I tried to explain to her as simply as I could. "Listen tu's, two plamu are swimming in the ocean for a couple of years and they get this urge to go home, where they were born, the Bras d'Or Lakes." At the same time, I pointed towards the beach, telling her, "Just behind the sand bar are the Bras d'Or Lakes." She was fascinated and kept saying "oh yes".



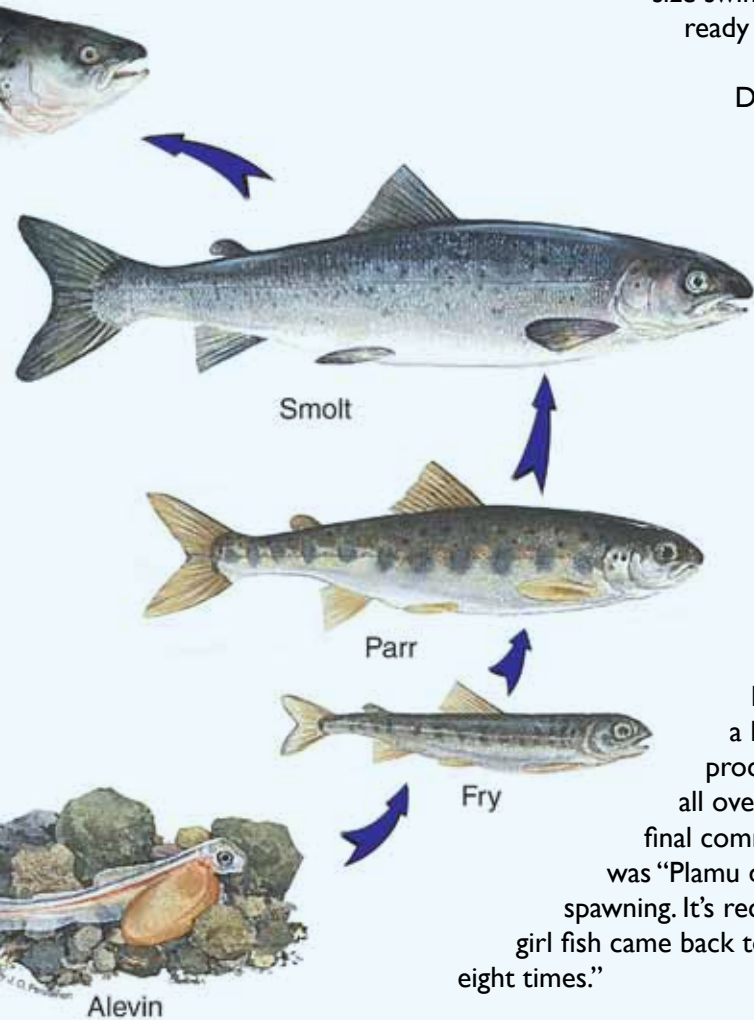
"Well anyway, these two plamu are swimming around the Lakes, a boy and a girl. Around the middle of October they have this urge to go up Qamsipuk. "Why?" she asked. "They just have to tu's" was my answer. I am talking to a nine year old after all!

When the conditions are right, when the river is deep after some rain, they start their journey. Avoiding fishermen, eagles and nets,



they slowly keep on swimming and resting in pools. They find ways to hide from predators, under big rocks or piles of fallen leaves.

The two plamu travel up the brook for two or three weeks. After avoiding all Mother Nature throws in their direction, they finally make it to their destination, five or six miles up Qamsipuk. There is a pool, nice and deep, not too deep like a giant swimming pool was my explanation. "Oh yes," was her response. After the long journey they rest, and when the cool frost starts chilling the water, the girl plamu lays her eggs and the boy makes sure they are well hidden in the rocky bottom. You can see thousands of red eggs laying very quietly in this giant size swimming pool and ready for cold, ice and other fish and birds trying to eat them.



During the winter they start to develop into a small fish. First they have a little eye and a little stomach. As the water warms up, they start looking more like little fish and as the summer moves along they look like little plamu. They spend about two years in Qamsipuk and that's the hardest time for them with all kinds of predators, from men and children with fishing rods to other fish, trout and birds.

While they are in the brook or river they are called fry or parr.

After two years in the Qamsipuk, they started developing into a bigger stage and they look like their parents. They have travelled the same places as their parents travelled, usually Iceland and the Atlantic Ocean.

"So you see Kristina with a K, the whole process starts all over again." My final comment to her was "Plamu don't die after spawning. It's recorded that one girl fish came back to one brook eight times."

"Like their parents, hopefully they will come back but," I said, "it worries me. Qamsipuk and other brooks depend on Mother Nature and mostly me and you and other people will decide the future of plamu."

"I'm tired Grandpa, I think it's time for me to go home and sleep."

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ATV Ban is On in the Pollett's Cove Aspy Fault Wilderness Area

On the northern tip of Unama'ki, the adventurous will find an incredible landscape. From steep-sloped canyons to pristine barrens, the Pollett's Cove Aspy Fault Wilderness Area is Cape Breton's most northeastern representation of Canada's boreal forest.

Situated just north of the Cape Breton Highlands National Park, this provincial park offers rugged terrain, winding hiking trails, and beautiful hidden beaches. It is certainly worthy of protection now, and for future generations.

"Protection from what?" you may ask. Protection from the use of all-terrain vehicles that threaten the delicate ecosystems that exist in the Wilderness Area. Since 2010, the use of motorized vehicles, including all-terrain vehicles, has been completely phased out and banned through legislation.

"The Wilderness Area hosts Unama'ki's highest concentration of moose," Moose Management Initiative Coordinator Clifford Paul noted. "This area has historically been accessed to the point of environmental destruction and something needed to be done to protect this thriving ecosystem."

Members of the Mi'kmaq community, Mi'kmaq leadership, local guides, and government are beginning the process of working towards greater management of moose habitat for the benefit of future generations. "This process is expected to lead to greater opportunities in the future, for the Mi'kmaq to provide guided hunts and eco-tourism activities in this pristine environment," Paul noted. "I am optimistic about this process and I know that much work needs to be done on all sides."



In the last two hunting seasons in this Zone, the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and the Department of the Environment offered non-motorized hunting opportunities with the annual moose draw for licences to hunt in the Wilderness Area.

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it's all about the people Tyson Paul

While other kids in high school had posters of rock stars and hockey players on their bedroom walls, Tyson Paul, self-professed science geek, fell asleep under a poster of the periodic table!

Always interested in the environment, Tyson knew from the start that he was headed for a career in science and it was after his first year at Cape Breton University's Bachelor of Science Community Studies program that he landed his first summer job at Eskasoni Fish and Wildlife, a job that he held for five summers.

Tyson now works full-time at UINR as a Research Assistant where his tasks range from counting salmon smolt in Middle River to consulting with Elders and fishers to gather information on traditional Mi'kmaq knowledge on eels, cod, salmon and striped bass.

While working at UINR, Tyson has received additional training to add to what he learned at university. From CABIN and M. E. D. training to pleasure craft training, one of the benefits of working at UINR has been the ongoing learning of new skills.

"One of the most satisfying projects that I worked on at UINR was collecting information for our publication *"Kataq Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge: Bras d'Or Lakes Eels."* We did a lot of research, and condensing all of that information into a booklet was demanding but very rewarding. It helped me develop new work strategies and taught me how to approach information with a broad view that I will be able to use in the future."

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Ten questions

Chose an animal native to Unama'ki.

Eagle.

Favourite season?

Winter and Summer.

What is the best part of your work?

Working outdoors.

Choose a quality you admire in others.

Humour.

Favourite beach?

Ingonish Beach.

Last thing you read?

How to properly Dissect Smolts to Put in Transmitters.

What's for supper tonight?

Subway.

What is your favourite website?

TSN.ca

What did you do in the last week to help the environment?

Cleaned up the litter around the smolt wheel in Middle River.

Chocolate or chips?

Chips for sure!



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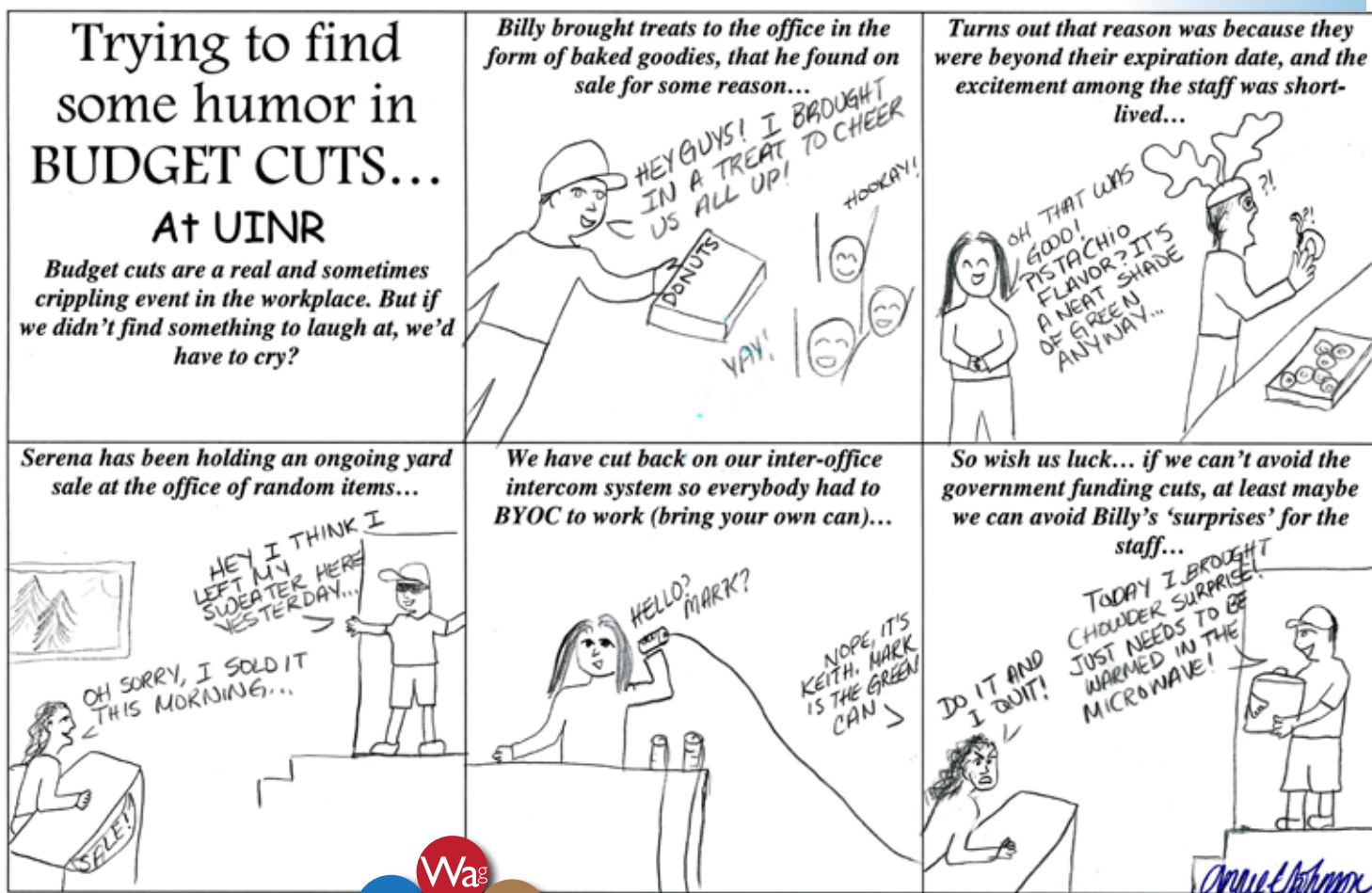
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