

just the facts **Mn'tmu'k**

Oyster *Crassostrea virginica*



Ekinu'tmasimk

- Mn'tmu'k waju'ejik welapetmumk koqoey.
- Mn'tmu'k milamuksultijik: maqtewe'kik, wisqunamuksultijik, watapsultijik, sulieweyewamuksultijik, tupkwanamuksultijik aqq wape'kik.
- Mn'tmu jinqamistog 225 l. sam'qwan te's na'kwek.
- Msit Mn'tmu'k na napme'wkw. Tuijw eykik skwe'wewita'jik ke'sk pemikuti'tij. Aqq elt skwe'wewita'taq awsameli'tij napme'wkw ta'n eymu'tij.
- Mn'tmu'k wejiaten salaweyima'q sam'qwan etek, ta'n pa'kwek aqq kuntewa'qmikek aqq etek pikwelk mijipjewe.
- Mn'tmu melke'k jike'saqnawm, aqq ewe'wk wjit likasuti kulaman wtinin ma' ajkne'ktnuk.
- Mn'tmu'k malqutmi'tijl sam'qwane'l saqliaqewe'ji'l aqq piluey mijipjewe'l sam'qwan-iktuk etekl. Wesualetmi'tij sam'qwan tuijw ewe'wmi'titl mtunqane'l jinqamistu'tit wilu'ew.
- Mn'tmu'k petawsultijik tapuiskekipunqekl kiswa piamiw.
- Mn'tmu'k kesi-we'tuo'tmi'ti'j telapua'q sam'qwan aqq ajkna'lukwi'tij winamkwa'tumk sam'qwan. Etekl ta'n i'pikwelkipnik toqo nike' pem-kaqiejik kiswa ketmaqsenejik.
- Tlikuti'tij Mn'tmu'k ta'n winamu'k sam'qwan, na i'ktitew winamu'k wtininuaq aqq ma' klu'si'k malqumuksinew.



Kikmanaq telua'tijik

“Waju'aql pu'taliewe'l Mn'tmu'k mekenujik Pitu'poq We'kwistoqnik, No'pa Sko'sia.”
–Mic Mac News, Kesikewiku's 1973

Ki's sa'q Mn'tmu'k keknu'e'kik mijipjewe wjit Mi'kmaq.

Amskwes pitniktuk ketanupnik Mn'tmu'k, na'sik nike' ewe'wmumkl meknawekemkewe'l. Sn'katikn aqq sasqale'se'k jike'saqnawil ewe'wasikl ta'n etlikwenuj Mn'tmu'k. Sn'katikn el-sewtaqa'tasikl paqtapa'ql aqq walne'kl tuijw sasqale'se'k jike'saqnawil naspilasikl aqq ekwija'tumkl sam'qwan-iktuk kulaman mn'tmu'jk nasikuitaq .

“Amskwes kisiku'k kuta'tu'tip pejuey mimey sam'qwan-iktuk telu'tmumk ewipuna'tekemk. Weja'tu'tip mimey npisun etlintui'skasik. Ewipuna'tekemk kulaman nmia'ten Mn'tmu'k lampo'q aqq ewipkitew sam'qwan aqq nqamasiatew teli-ktanuj Mn'tmu'k. Mu l'nim sa'q poqji-we'wmumkip pie'skmaney mimey. Kisiku'k i'aknutmu'tipnik wajua'aql walipotl tetujipikwelta'tipnik Mn'tmu'k. Waju'te'mi'tipnl 30 lisqeiknn newte'jk na'kwek. Kiskuk atikna'sin wju'te'mn 3 lisqeiknn. Mn'tmu'k eymu'tipnik msit tami Pitu'poq. Kiskuk aji-mtue'k weju'ksinew.”

–Charlie Dennis



Koqoey wjit weji-ksalu'kik

Kiskuk Mn'tmu'k keknu'e'kik wjit pekwaterkemk, ta'n tela'sik wsitqamu aqq ta'n telo'lti'k, katu pemi-tkle'jijik tela'tekek awsam-i-ktanujik, kaqiaql ta'n etl-qatmu'ti'tij aqq matnkwi'tijik weti'j aqq Malpecey ksnukwaqn.

Mi'kmaq wikpa'tiji Mn'tmu'k mita wikllik aqq welapemujik. Kaskimltnaqnipunqekl kikmanaq ali-ktuknultijik nipk aqq malquma'tiji Mn'tmu'k Pitu'poq. Ta'nik iloqapmi'tij sa'qewey koqoey weji'tu'tipnl Mn'tmue'l jike'saqnawil ta'n kniskamijinaqi'k i' wikultipni'k.

Mi'kmaq ketana'tipnik Mntmu'k Wikumkewiku's mi'soqo Keptekewiku's, tuijw netui'ske'tijik ketantu'tij mimajuaqnmuew kiswa suliewey wjit Nipialasutmamk.

Potlotek alsutmi'tij Mn'tmu'k etlikwenuj Pitu'poq. Na'tamiaw nesiskeksijik Potlotekewaql ala'tu'titl asite'lsuti'l ktananew Mn'tmu'k. 1970'sek We'kwistoqnik Mn'tmu'k etlikwenuj wejaqip pikwelk lukwaqn. Piamiw naniskeksijik wskwijinu'k elukutipnik newtipunqek nastaqo'latijik sasqale'se'k sike'saqnuq qasawo'qapi-iktuk. Kiskuk We'kwistoqnik etek ta'n etl-ketaqa'luj Mn'tmu'k kulaman kisi-kina'masiten ta'n tli-apoqnuwatan apaji-pikwelnew Mn'tmu'k. We'koqma'q wetnu'kwatmi'tij tli-kwenanew wulaqn-iktuk, ajipjutmi'tij Mn'tmu'k aji-naqsikutitaq aqq ma matnkwi'tikik weti'jk kiswa stoqnamuksultijik nmjinikwejk.

Ktu' kinu'tmasin me' lie:

Mn'tmu'k

Oyster *Crassostrea virginica*



ALL The Facts

- Mn'tmu'k are high in calcium, iron, and protein.
- Oyster shells come in different colours: black, tan, yellow, silver, brown, and white.
- One Oyster can filter 225 litres of water per day through its shell.
- All Mn'tmu'k start life as males. Some change to females as they grow. They may also change to females if there are too many males nearby.
- Oysters are found in brackish waters, usually in shallow, rocky areas rich in nutrients.
- The hard shells of Mn'tmu'k are made from calcium and protects their bodies inside from danger.
- Their favourite food is phytoplankton and other nutrients in water. They feed by taking algae and other particles from water drawn over their gills.
- Oysters live to 20 years or more.
- Mn'tmu'k are very sensitive to water quality and susceptible to pollution. Populations have dwindled or disappeared in many areas where they were once plentiful.
- If they are in polluted waters, Oysters may store toxins in their flesh which can make them unhealthy to eat.



What Our People SAY

"Oysters are being scooped out of the Bras d'Or Lakes by the basketful at Eskasoni, Nova Scotia."

–**Mic Mac News, December 1973**

For years and years Oysters have been, and still are, an important food for the Mi'kmaq people.

Traditionally Mn'tmu'k were collected by hand, but today rakes are used. Rafts and scallop shells are used in Oyster farms. Rafts are towed to bays and coves where strings of scallop shells are lowered, collecting baby Oysters that attach to the scallop shells.

"At one time Elders sprinkled cod liver oil on the surface of the water to make it clear. They got the oil from the local pharmacy. This would allow them to see the bottom and reduce the wave action, making it easier to collect Mntmu. Later on they started using corn oil. Elders used to talk about getting boatloads of Oysters. They could get 30 boxes a day. Nowadays you are lucky to get three boxes. Mn'tmu'k could be found everywhere on the Bras d'Or Lakes. Today they are harder to find."

– **Charlie Dennis**



WHY We Love Them

Today, Mn'tmu'k are an economically, ecologically, and culturally important species in Unama'ki, but populations have declined due to over-fishing, degradation of habitats, and the appearance of the MSX parasite and Malepec disease.

Mi'kmaq people love Oysters because they are delicious and a very good source of nutrition. For hundreds of years our people camped out during the summer and feasted on the abundance of wild Mntmu in the Bras d'Or Lakes. Archaeologists have found piles of Mn'tmu'k shells at these encampments that are hundreds of years old.

Mi'kmaq used to harvest Oysters from September to the end of November, selling them to make a living and a little extra money for Christmas.

Potlotek owns and operates an Oyster facility by the Bras d'Or Lakes. There are approximately 30 Oyster lease operators in the community. An Oyster farm in Eskasoni created many job opportunities in the 1970s. More than 50 people from Eskasoni worked year-round punching holes in scallop shells and stringing the shells on wire. Today there is a hatchery in Eskasoni where they are researching ways to help the Oyster population. We'koqma'q has been experimenting with growing them on trays, hoping they will grow faster while protecting them from the MSX parasite and green crab.

Learn MORE Here:

UNAMA'KI'S

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