

# UINR marten

Eskasoni • Membertou • Potlotek • Wagmatcook • We'koqma'q  
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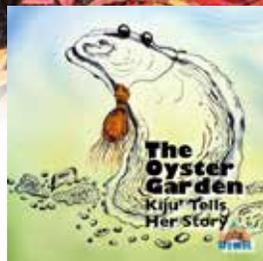
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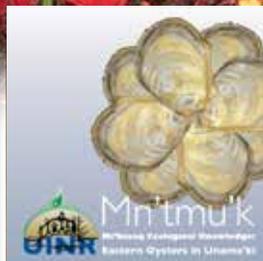
Bras d'Or Lakes' oysters have been harvested and enjoyed for thousands of years.

UINR just published two new books on oysters—one, an illustrated children's book in Mi'kmaq and English, and the other on Mi'kmaq ecological knowledge and scientific research. On hand were oyster expert and long-time friend of UINR, **Dr. René Lavoie** and artist **Dozay Christmas**.

The books were written by UINR's **Shelley Denny, Angela Denny, Emma Denny, and Tyson Paul**.

**The Oyster Garden, Kiju Tells Her Story** is illustrated by well-known artist **Dozay Christmas** and tells the story of the oyster through the eyes of Grandmother Oyster, Kiju'.

**Mn'tmu'k Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge: Eastern Oysters in Unama'ki** is a compilation of traditional Mi'kmaq knowledge and scientific research that provides an overview of oysters in the Bras d'Or Lakes.



## Oyster<sup>2</sup>



Dr. René Lavoie talks oysters.

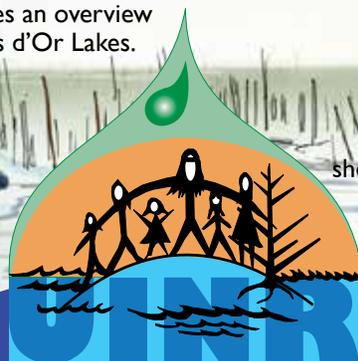


UINR's Lisa Young presents our guest with a framed Dozay original.



Book illustrator Dozay Christmas.

**Shelley Denny** explains, "The knowledge in the books is strongly connected to Mi'kmaq tradition, the practice of harvesting oysters in the Bras d'Or Lakes, and the transfer of knowledge between generations through stories and practice. Putting together these two new books is the next step in keeping that tradition alive."



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Dan Christmas, CEPI Chair introduces "People of the Lakes Speak" conference panel leaders: Waddie Long, CEPI Steering Committee member; Thereas MacNeil, Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Association; Dr. Michelle Adams, Dalhousie University; Bruce Hatcher, Bras d'Or Institute; Shelley Denny, UINR.

CEPI Coordinator, Stan Johnson and CEPI Chair, Dan Christmas welcome Dr. David Suzuki, conference keynote speaker, "People of the Lakes Speak."



UINR's Shelley Denny has her book signed by Dr. David Suzuki.



UINR's Emma Garden and Keith Christmas conducted a two-day workshop on the Canadian Aquatic Biomonitoring Network with Natural Resources Environmental Technology students at Nova Scotia Community College, Wagmatcook Learning Centre.



## We're Back!

Here's where we keep you up-to-date on new stuff online from UINR.

We're getting rave reviews on our new website. The simplified menus make it easy to find your way around. It has, videos, publications, educational materials and news with a modern, easy-to-use design.

New to our website (in addition to all the news and photos) is a printable copy of our 2017 calendar, **Welcome to Unamaki.**



You can also download copies of our two latest publications— **Mn'tmu'k Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge: Eastern Oysters in Unama'ki** and **The Oyster Garden, Kiju' Tells Her Story.**



If you are a Facebook user (and who isn't) be sure to LIKE our UINR page. It's growing fast and if you take a visit you'll see why! We often give away free books and other publications just for liking us! Check out our albums of photos and see how many people you recognize! This is the best place to stay tuned on employment and other opportunities that arise.



If you use Twitter, be sure to join our followers! It's the best way to stay informed on new additions to our website and all the latest updates.





*UINR's Finance Officer, Billy Taylor; Director of Administration, Annie Johnson; and CEPI Coordinator, Tom Johnson*

UINR staff were on hand to send off the first tree from Unama'ki to be presented to Boston as a gift from Nova Scotia for the city's help 99 years ago after the Halifax Explosion.

This 14-metre white spruce was cut in Ainslie Glen, near We'koqma'q and hundreds of people from the surrounding communities were on hand to see it off on its journey to the Boston Commons.



*UINR's Forestry Technician, Garrett MacVicar; Executive Director, Lisa Young; and Director of Forestry, Jason MacLean*



# UINR's Welcome

On Thanksgiving Day 2016, a dry stream that runs behind UINR offices in Eskasoni turned into a roaring torrent, overflowing the concrete wall that runs behind our building.

Our long, paved driveway became a waterfall, taking with it toulders, broken asphalt, and debris. To make matters worse, our building flooded.

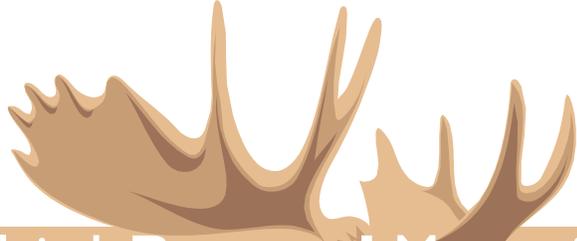
Our staff pulled together and rescued computers, files, furniture and supplies. Remarkably the dozens of boxes of our just-printed Oyster books were untouched and we were able to move them to dry quarters.

It was January before we were able to get back into our repaired offices.

This really brought to light the work UINR has been doing on climate change. Weather incidents such as the Thanksgiving Day flood can have a significant impact on our shorelines and environment. Some of our sacred sites such as Chapel Island were significantly affected by the flood, rapidly eroding the land and exposing burial grounds.

Along with research conducted by other groups such as the Pitu'paq partnership, UINR has been able to gather important data on many aspects of our Unama'ki communities that are vulnerable to climate change and propose work to reduce or eliminate some of the effects. This work continues to be a priority for UINR.

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# Blair J. Bernard Memorial ANNUAL Feast in the Highlands

On a beautiful, sunny day in October hundreds of people gathered in the Unama'ki Highlands for our annual Blair J. Bernard Memorial Feast in the Highlands.

We don't call it Feast in the Highlands for nothing! With a feast comes food...and there's always a lot of it. Fresh baked salmon, eel, and moose in every form—in stew, in meatballs, and on its own. There was baked beans, fishcakes, and luskinik, and enough tea to float a boat!

Bus loads of youth from schools across Unama'ki joined Elders, families, community leaders, harvesters, and hungry folk from miles around!

This year there was an impromptu moose calling competition, a lead-to-copper bullet exchange, and you could even try your hand at archery.

*Netukulimk I am a Respectful Harvester* was the theme of the day and made a strong statement with the many wearing hunters' orange shirts.

## Feast in the Highlands 2016



## Netukulimk I am a Respectful Harvester



A first-time guest at the Feast, **James Young** was inspired by the occasion, he wrote a poem.

### Harvest...

*A feast of nations to feed community  
A bounty of nature back to the land  
Upon a history eternal of years upon years*

*A sustenance of seasons  
For a long formed tradition  
A nation's builders present their gifts*

*As one with nature as it's always been  
Friends and not yet friends  
Gather among the trees  
Where cool winds blow  
and sun shines down*

*To warm the hearts of a nation's pride  
Where Elders valued are not cast aside  
Where children giggle in playful harmony  
Throughout the Feast*

*In the safe embrace of a watchful tribe  
All are welcome to celebrate  
A Feast of Nations come full circle*

*James Young, October 5, 2016*



NR

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# Commercial Fisheries in Unamaki: Marine Protected Areas

**John Couture** is UINR's Commercial Fisheries Liaison Coordinator and in this column he discusses some of the species and issues of importance to the Unama'ki commercial fishery. In this issue he focuses on the proposed Marine Protected Area off the coast of Unama'ki.

Think of a Marine Protected Area (MPA) as a park in the ocean. They are protected areas of oceans, seas, estuaries, or large lakes. MPAs restrict human activity for conservation purposes.

In 2011 St. Anns Bank was announced as an Area of Interest and is currently working its way through legislation as a MPA. St. Anns Bank is a unique habitat, high in biodiversity with over 100 species living there. The wide variety of habitat, from shallow banks to deep channels, supports this diversity.

It is part of a migration corridor for fish and marine mammals, from small fish like herring and mackerel, to the blue whale. Atlantic cod overwinter there.

The area (about 40% the size of Unama'ki) is an important habitat for several commercial species such as redfish and halibut and non-commercial species like sponges and corals. It is also important to threatened, endangered species, such as Atlantic wolf fish, Atlantic cod, redfish, white hake, and American plaice.

St. Anns Bank is part of an important feeding area for the Leatherback Turtle, an endangered species.

Many activities are allowed in the MPA:

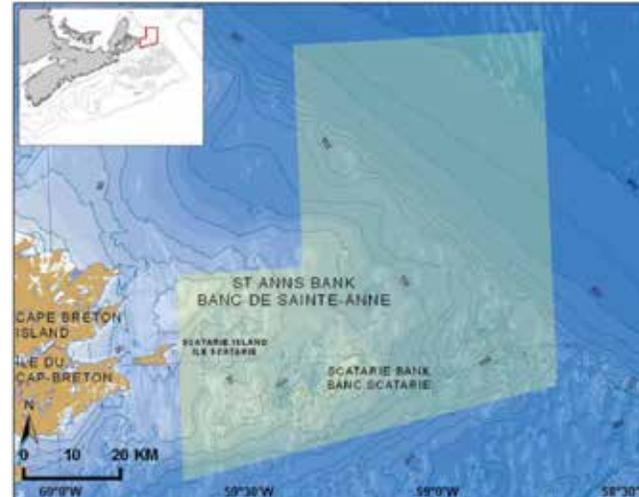
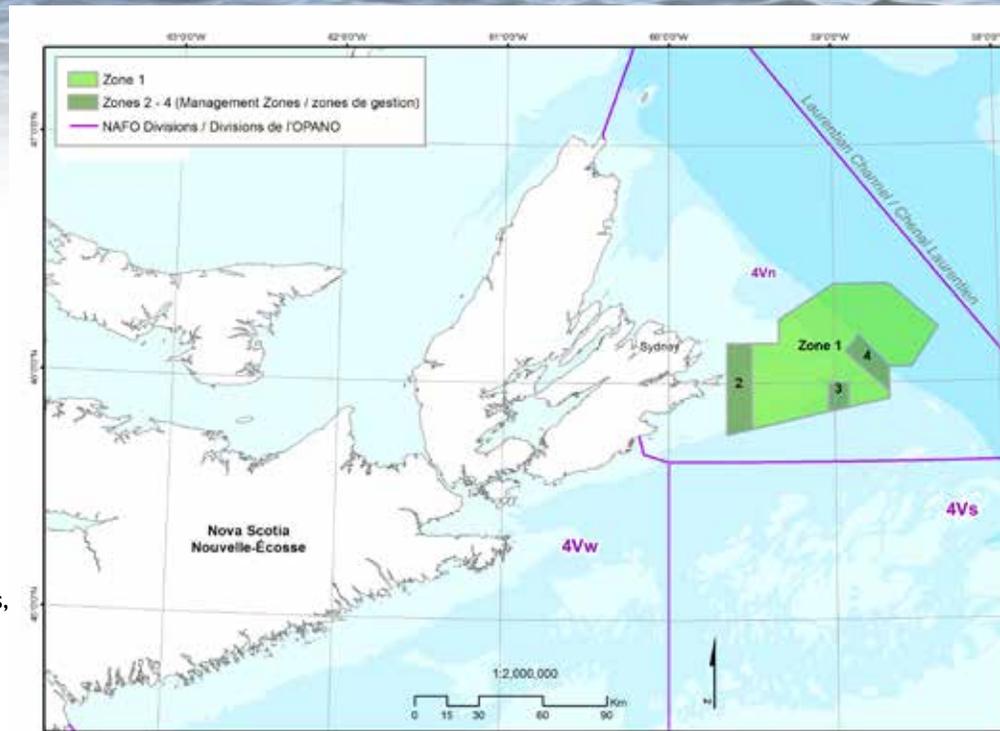
- Aboriginal food, social, and ceremonial fishing;
- Seal harvest;
- Commercial and recreational fishing in specific zones;
- All navigation activities;
- Any activity for the purpose of public safety, public health, national defence, national security, law enforcement or in response to an emergency;
- Scientific research, monitoring, commercial marine tourism, and approved educational activities.

In principle our Unama'ki leaders support the concept of MPAs. Biodiversity, sustainability, protection for the future are all concepts that align with our practice of netukulimk. The Mi'kmaw right to our food, social, and ceremonial fisheries is included in the legislation.

Membertou made a significant investment to secure and get authorization to fish for tuna in the area. Approvals were given from local, regional staff, and National Headquarters to purchase and fish there. A few months after the tuna license was purchased, Membertou was informed they could not fish in the MPA in St. Anns Bank.



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Canada plans to designate 10% of Canadian waters as MPAs by 2020. Another area being considered is Cape Breton Trough, off northern Cape Breton. There have been discussions on designating the Bras d'Or Lakes as a MPA but fears of the restrictions on mining, oil, and gas development have made it difficult to proceed. While the designation would protect our traditional fisheries in the Bras d'Or Lakes from harm and expand tourism opportunities, it does impose restrictions that landowners around the Lakes would need to support.

# Our Unama'ki forests

Our forests are more than just the trees that we harvest to make the hundreds of products we use every day. Forests are the homes for animals, medicines, plants, birds, insects, and some say, spirits.

Our forests provide us clean air and water and, in return, healthy salmon, trout, and eels. It's all connected!

Traditional Mi'kmaw lives were deeply rooted in the forests of Unama'ki and continue to be today. Understanding the forest, its diversity, its history starts with one plant.

**Wisawtaqji'j**  
Goldthread *Coptis trifolia*

Wisawtaqji'j has been an important traditional medicine for many years. Wisawtaqji'j is abundant in Unama'ki and has always helped the Mi'kmaw.

Goldthread is used to treat sore eyes, diabetes, sore mouths, and ulcers. It is most often picked around the month of August. It is cleaned and the roots are steeped and drunk as tea. Sore eyes are bathed in lukewarm tea.

Wisawtaqji'j can also be used to treat external sores, such as chapped lips, and minor cuts and scrapes. **Caroline Gould** of We'koqma'q uses the medicine to treat external wounds that have a hard time healing. She uses the plants in combination with sheep fat, boiling the roots with the fat until the fat turns a brownish colour. Once this cools it produces a salve. She says that rubbing the salve on the wound has very strong medicinal properties.



# Wisawtaqji'j

*"You can take as much Wisawtaqji'j as you need. But always remember to pray and give thanks for this healing source. One time we were picking Goldthread and it was never-ending, I didn't know where it was coming from, it just kept going and going and finally we were able to roll it into a ball." – Susie Marshall*

*"There are ways Wisawtaqji'j is used; spiritual ceremonies and practical. Both are very valuable and important. When people would go visiting and mention that they had the urge to drink, Goldthread root tea was brewed and offered to the person to stop the urge. Also, it was used for people who had a cold or flu." – Tuma Young*

*"Wisawtaqji'j was used years and years ago and is still used today to help heal a cold, flu, and sores." – Flo Young*

*Wisawtaqji'j should be taken only under proper supervision. Always consult a person who knows about the plant before using.*

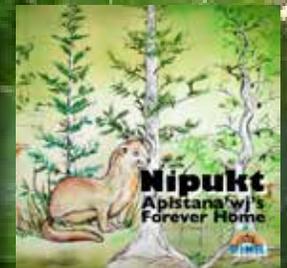


Check out [uinr.ca](http://uinr.ca) for video, books, reports, and other information on forestry in Unama'ki.



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<p><b>We are finally 'back'! at UINR</b></p> <p><i>Thanks to the flood on Thanksgiving Day 2016, UINR's staff had to move out of our offices while repairs were happening..</i></p>	<p><i>That's why last issue's cartoon was a little more... basic</i></p>	<p><i>Granted, the first week or so was kind of fun! We took materials and PC's home...</i></p>
<p><i>But that got old fast... and we missed talking to each other through the walls, it's just not the same on speakerphone!</i></p>	<p><i>We planned to come back to the office right before Christmas break and for us all to get together and have a party to celebrate – enter worst blizzard of 2016!</i></p>	<p><i>The silver lining for us was that our little building got some much needed interior updates as a result! Stop by for a visit if you haven't lately!</i></p>



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