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Wed Jun 27, 2012

Leader: **Chris Carter**

Co-Leader:

Sometimes we get lucky ! Postponing the earlier date for this trip turned out in our favour as the Quadra Trail crew had started on Shelligan an hour or so ahead of us today. As a result we did nor have to scramble over or around all the trees that blew over in the March gale. The weather was almost perfect for hiking and we were able to sit out on the rocks and enjoy our lunch without being scorched by the sun. CDMC upheld it's reputation by cleaning up fish farm debris from the rocks around the lunch site. Ruth would approve or should we have packed it out as well. We wonder why abandoned Fish Farms don't have to be cleared up. A prize for the first person who comes up with the story of how Shellaligin Pass received it' name. I made an enquiry to Jeanette Taylor who wrote the book on Quadra. Here is her reply "Hi Chris, I gather you're looking for info on Shellallagan Pass. It's a Native name, adopted onto charts many years ago (not recently re-assigned, as with some other original Native names). The meaning has been lost. The pass refers to the fact that it's relatively deep water between the cluster of islands and the Quadra shore, so makes an alternative route from the more open waters of Hoskyn Inlet. And that's it -- nothing to exciting to say about such a pretty place." So I get to keep the prize ! Here is more information from Jeanette Taylor...

.Hi Chris --

I checked with anthropologist Joy Inglis, who lives here on Quadra, about the name Shellagan. She understands the name to be the Salish name for a double-headed serpent, a supernatural being that had great power among various coastal groups. The Salish people, when on the water, kept a certain root that had counteractive properties onboard to throw at it. The serpent had the power to turn your bones backwards, according to an elder at Cape Mudge, whose mother was left with trembling hands following an encounter with the serpent.

Joy says there are various place names along the coast, that are similar to Shellallagan, and are named for this serpent.

A shaman sought an exchange with the serpent because if he had the temerity to engage with it, and in particular to speak with the serpent, he would be endowed with great powers.

Joy's description corresponds with a creature the Salish people of the Comox Valley (who formerly lived in this area) was called ahos. In Homer Barnett's book on the Salish people he said there were two kinds of serpents: the double-headed and the single-headed lizardlike monster. The former was called sinalke in the south and aixos in the north. The lizard-like creature was called tcinakwa in the south and tcinko in the northern territories of the Salish (which was here). Both were whizzing, whining, flying beasts that lived in the water, but they sometimes appeared on land. They could split rocks in passing through them. If an unprepared person saw one or even crossed its trail on land, his arms, legs, and neck contorted awfully and he

died. Both serpents had scales. Some thought they had small feet; others said that they had wings; still others described them as having horns or a mane. One form was associated with lightning. There would have been various names for these greater and lesser forms.

The strongest of all the spirit beings was the mythical serpent, and an encounter with it caused the person to be knocked over unconscious and to bleed from all the apertures of his body. There was a gradation from this monster to the weaker common spirits.

Cheers, Jeanette Taylor



*Trail Map*



*Along the coast*



*Berry picking*



*Our leader describing the route  
we will take*  
[Carol Hunter photo]



*stopping to watch some  
kayakers and a coast guard  
vessel*  
[Carol Hunter photo]



*great views*  
[Carol Hunter photo]



*Ice cream!*  
[Bev Kulak photo]

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