

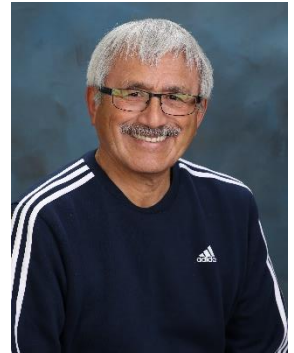
NI'NOXSOLA

Elders in Residence Program
Indigenous Education Comox Valley Schools



Bryce Mercredi

'Fish Egg Pancakes'



Hi everyone:

I am sorry that I couldn't be there for the preparation and smoking of the salmon. I am sure that it was a success.

I saw a picture of Jeannie filleting the fish and someone handling the roe (fish eggs).

Do you know that when I was young, living up North, we never had fresh eggs? Chickens were not raised locally so the eggs we had were powdered and needed water to hydrate them. Once hydrated they were used like regular eggs when baking.

My parents lived in a small remote community in Northern Alberta called Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca. The Slave River drained Lake Athabasca down to Great Slave lake. There were many little sloughs and lakes which resulted in a lot of waterfowl nesting there. In the spring when the birds migrated North, my parents would go out to these nesting sites for fresh eggs. They would only take a few from each nest so that the adult birds would still have little ones to raise. The egg harvest would last only a few weeks every spring.

When you lived besides a lake you also ate fish. When the fish spawn they lay their eggs on the lake bottom.

When the fish was harvested, usually by setting nets, they were cleaned. If the fish had roe, it was saved and either boiled up or fried in lard with a bit of salt. Butter was scarce.

The roe was also used to make pancakes in the place of duck eggs.

The fresh roe was beaten with a hand mixer and mixed in with the batter and fried up. The pancakes had a slight fishy taste but was delicious with syrup.

Another thing that was eaten was the stomach and intestines of the fish. The stomach and intestines were slit with a sharp knife, lightly scraped with a knife and either boiled up, fried or cooked on the open fire wrapped on a stick. Delicious.

The only thing that was thrown away was the gills and fins. The head and carcass were then boiled up until the meat fell off the bones. The bones were then separated and thrown away

and potatoes, onions and other veggies were added to the stew. This was eaten out of bowls and it was considered good luck if you got a fish eye in your bowl.

The fish was filleted and the lateral bones pulled out, and carefully cut down to the skin in 1/2 inch slices. The fish was then laid on racks and a smoky fire was built underneath. The fish was allowed to dry in the sun and wind. When the fish was completely dry it was stored in a safe place.

When we were young there was no such thing as Corn flakes, Cheerios or any of the boxed cereals that are available today. We had a lot of porridge for breakfast with sugar and reconstituted milk powder. The only liquid milk we had was Carnation which was condensed and canned. Quite often we had porridge that was quite soupy with chunks of white fish in it. Instead of milk and sugar, we used salt and pepper. It was quite nutritious and filling.

Mooshum Bryce