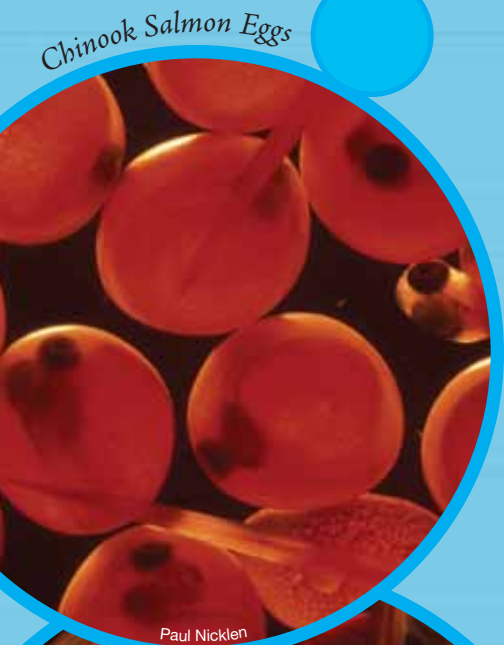


Wolf Creek Salmon Life Cycle

The Remarkable Story Begins

The remarkable story of the Wolf Creek salmon begins either in the creek itself or at the Whitehorse Rapids Fish Hatchery. In the case of the Hatchery, egg samples are collected from the returning salmon in early August as they pass through the world's longest wooden fish ladder here in Whitehorse. Similar to the eggs in the creek itself, the hatchery eggs develop into alevins over the winter and by spring emerge as fry. Every spring the Yukon Fish and Game Association sponsor the release of 50,000 salmon fry into Wolf Creek. This event is marked by

the jubilant sound of countless children releasing bags of young salmon. The Chinook fry start their journey downstream to the Bering Sea late the following spring. While in the ocean, if they can escape predators such as seals, whales, sea-lions and other fish for the next four or five years, they will grow into exceptionally powerful fish – the Chinook or “King” Salmon.



Chinook Salmon Eggs

Paul Nicklen



Chinook Salmon Alevin

Paul Nicklen

Many bags of Salmon Fry are released



Stewart Breithaupt



YFGA Annual Wolf Creek Salmon release

Stewart Breithaupt

Tank with thousands of Fry ready for release



Stewart Breithaupt





YG photo
Salmon Drying on a Rack

The Miraculous Return Home Łu Ghą: Fishing Place

For many hundreds of years the return of the Chinook salmon (Gyü) has provided a vital food source for many First Nations who live along the Yukon River and her notable tributaries. Today, the salmon continue to play a significant nutritional, cultural and recreational role for all Yukoners and visitors alike.

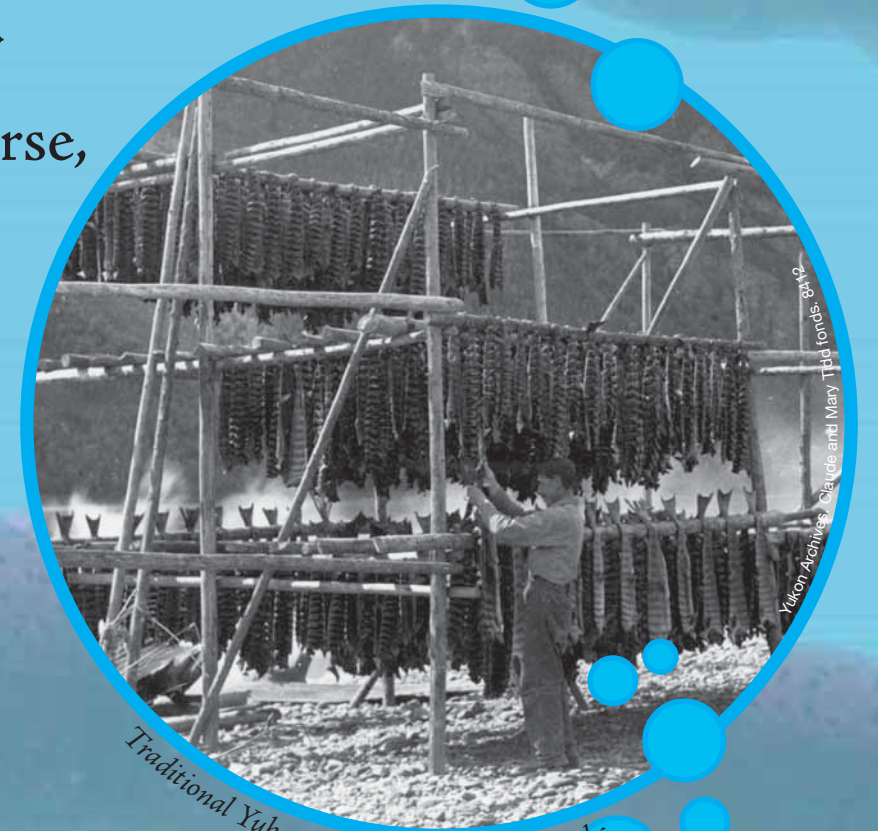
After living in the Bering Sea for several years, the adult Chinook salmon - responding to genetic and environmental triggers – enter the mouth of the Yukon River (Tágà Shāw: Great River) in early summer and begin, in the case of the Wolf



YG photo
Recreational / Food Harvesting Fishing

Creek salmon, the 3,200-kilometer journey back to the same stream or river where they were spawned. They do not feed during the two months it takes them to swim from the ocean to Whitehorse, relying instead on stored body fat for energy.

Once they reach Whitehorse, they rely on the Yukon Energy Corp wooden fish ladder operated by YFGA that allows the fish to move past the city's hydro dam to reach the exact spot where they were born.



Yukon Archives / Charles and Mary Todd Jones 8419
Traditional Yukon First Nation Drying Racks



Biologist and YFGA volunteer at annual fish sampling



Doug Phillips

Circle of Life Completed

Our story enters the final chapter as the Chinook find spawning areas, or redds, in the stream where they were born. Even the hatchery born salmon make their way back to the exact creek where they were released. Miracle? Mystery? Nobody knows how this is accomplished but the life cycle continues as thousands of eggs (łu gyű) are deposited and fertilized in the creeks by the returning salmon.

Exhausted, the fish will slowly succumb to death; yet even in death they continue to provide an important food source for animals and birds as well as important nutrients for the land and waters. We know, in the spring, the spawning efforts are rewarded as the entire story repeats itself and the precious salmon cycle continues.



Fritz Mueller

Yukon Salmon: a resource for the whole environment

