

Mountains, Salmon, and Moon

One story tells that two sisters were camping on the prairie and imagined they were married to stars. When they woke up, they were in Star land with their new husbands. Eventually, one of the sisters had a baby, a Star Child.

One day, the sisters went digging for roots in Star land. One of their digging sticks poked through the sky. They could see their old home down below. They made a rope out of twisted cedar and climbed down to their old home taking the Star Child with them. Their families were glad to see them. The sisters taught the people how to swing on the cedar rope from Rattlesnake Mountain to Mount Si. The people dragged their feet while they were swinging and made deep grooves in Rattlesnake Mountain. Sometimes you can still see these grooves late on summer afternoons.

One day, while the people were busy swinging from mountain to mountain, the Salmon sisters grabbed the Star Child and took him into the sea. There the Star Child grew up and married Chum Salmon Woman. He promised her people that they would go to the rivers every year to offer his human families their robes of flesh. This is why every year the salmon swim from the sea, up the rivers, lay their eggs, and die.

Later, Star Child climbed up the rope to the sky and became the moon. After he was in the sky, he dropped the rope and it fell to the ground where it turned into a rock.

Blackberry

Blackberry was once a tree that grew straight and tall. He was popular with the animals and lived in peace for a long time. As time went on, Blackberry became less and less friendly. He became mean. He would grab any animal that walked by and squeeze the animal with his prickly arms. He killed many animals. The ground around him became rich with all of the bones of the animals he trapped. Blackberry grew taller and stronger with such good soil.

The animals got very upset. They told the wolf, Spelyi, what Blackberry was doing. Spelyi thought about the problem and came up with a solution. He saw a tall fir tree growing near Blackberry. Spelyi took a club, climbed to the top of the fir tree and pounded Blackberry's branches until they all fell to the ground. Even to this day, Blackberry grows down on the ground where he cannot hurt the animals of the forest.

*There are three types of blackberries now found in the Puget Sound area. Two were introduced and are invasive. The third is the native species, which has purplish/blue stems and always grows low to the ground. A sample of this species is laminated and attached to this activity.

North Wind

Long ago, North Wind lived on an island at the top of the world. He blew and he blew. He blew away all of the plants. He blew away all of the animals. Eventually, the island that he lived on was nothing but rock. North Wind became lonely. He missed the plants and animals. Being lonely upset him, so he started to blow cold wind. He made it cold in the spring and summer. He froze everything. No plants could grow and the animals could not find food.

The animals called a council meeting to discuss the North Wind and all of the problems he was causing. They decided to go to North Wind's home. Each animal had a different job for the journey. Eagle was to fly ahead and find the best route. Swan was to carry the small animals over the rivers and lakes. Squirrel was to gather nuts, and Badger was to dig roots to eat. Beaver was to chew off

ferns for their beds. Mole could not keep up with the other animals so he was left behind.

The farther they traveled to the north the colder it got. The days grew shorter and the nights grew longer. Eventually, it was night all the time. Some of the animals became frightened. They wanted to turn around. Bear did not care because he spent every winter curled up sleeping. One morning he did not come to breakfast. Raven found him asleep and could not wake him up, so the animals left him there.

After a long trip, the animals finally reached the island where the North Wind lived. Whale lived in the waters near the island. Whale told North Wind that the animals were coming, and they were going to cause trouble. When North Wind saw the animals, he blew as hard as he could at them. The animals used the rocks and wood on the beach to make a shelter. Eagle tried to fly to the North Wind but could not fly hard enough against the storm. Beaver tried to swim in the water to North Wind but the waves pushed him back to the beach. Porcupine tried to get to North Wind by moving slowly and staying close to the ground but he too was forced back to the beach.

The little bird, Wren offered to try. The other animals laughed at her because she was so small and helpless, but told her she could try if she wanted to. Because Wren was so small she could dart from rock to rock, protected from the wind. North Wind didn't even notice when she reached his house. Wren saw North Wind blowing out of a window. She saw a string holding the window open. She pecked at the string. It took a long time, but she didn't give up. Finally the string broke and the window slammed shut trapping North Wind in his own house.

When the wind stopped, the other animals were able to join Wren. The animals tied North Wind to two big logs that were frozen in the ground. The animals could not decide what to do with North Wind. Finally, they agreed to let Wren decide. Wren made North Wind make three promises. First, he could not blow cold winds during the spring and summer. Second, he could never blow too cold in the Pacific Northwest, so the animals could always walk on the beach. Third, he had to blow gentle, cool winds in the summer evenings just before the sun sets so everyone could get a good night's sleep.