



## Cultural Connections

The beaver carries great cultural and spiritual significance for local Indigenous Peoples such as the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai Nations), the Tsuut'ina, Stoney Nakoda (Bears paw, Chiniki, and Wesley Nations), and Métis Peoples.

In many First Peoples' traditions, animals are seen as equal to humans, with all beings carrying their own significance and meaning in the natural world. In the Blackfoot tradition, the beaver represents wisdom, survival, and the importance of using one's gifts to build community.

The beaver holds great significance for the Tsuut'ina, also known as the Beaver People, who carry on the tradition of the Beaver Bundle Ceremony. The beaver is sacred to the Stoney Nakoda, who, out of respect for animal spirits, use all parts of the animal in making medicines, drums, and food. For the Métis, the beaver symbolizes equality, productivity, and teamwork. Beaver and the lodge are featured in many Indigenous creation stories, as well as in stories explaining the origins of tobacco, medicine, and the seasons.

Many thanks to Indigenous Elders, Artists and community members who shared their insights into the beaver's significance.

### Try It!

Say "beaver" in local Indigenous languages:

- Blackfoot: ksisskstaki (*kishk-STAH-kee*)
- Tsuut'ina: michadikodi (*MEE-cha-dih-GOH-dee*)
- Nakoda: chaba (*CHAH-bah*)
- Michif: kastor (*kass-tohr*)

*Image courtesy of Madison Tailfeathers*



**Provincial Park Society**