



ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

In association with the Anthropology Department of UVic

September 2019 Lecture and Annual AGM



Archaeological excavation of a Coast Salish root garden:

Preliminary findings from Tl'chés.

Isabelle Maurice-Hammond

Tuesday, Sept 17th, 7:30

Room B129 (new room) Cornett Building, UVic campus.

We will have our annual AGM for about 10-15 minutes prior to talk, all welcome. Members will be emailed ballot.

Bio: Isabelle Maurice-Hammond is a PhD candidate in the ethnoecological stream of the School of Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria. She works at the intersection of ethnoecology, ethnobotany, and coastal archaeology, focusing on the deep histories and resurgence of traditional First Nations methods of plant cultivation. Isabelle is currently working with the Songhees nation to better identify and understand an intertidal root garden on their territory. Isabelle holds an MA in Women and Gender Studies from the University of Toronto, where she studied the power of decolonial aesthetics in reclaiming urban centres as Indigenous spaces, and a BA in Anthropology from the UBC.

Summary: This talk dives into the topic of intertidal root gardens which are areas of (primarily) intertidal marshland where First Nations people traditionally cultivated, managed and harvested large amounts of Pacific silverweed and springbank clover. Though some archaeological work has been done on root gardens (primarily in Kwakwaka'wakw and Nuu-chah-nulth territories), these sites have been largely overlooked in the Coast Salish. Furthermore, conclusive identification of these sites continues to primarily rely on community knowledge, which is no longer present in all cases. On the islands of Tl'chés (Chatham and Discovery Islands), traditionally territory of the Songhees First Nation, a site that strongly resembles a root garden has been identified. However, conclusive identification is limited by a lack of surviving knowledge in Songhees about these site types and a lack of comparable in the Coast Salish area more generally. In this talk, I describe the methods I am deploying to better understand these under-studied sites, and the impacts this may have on our understanding of traditional Coast Salish cultivation practices.

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