

## Camps Share Hands-on Science



Children from Tseshaht and Huu-ay-aht First Nations visited the Ucluelet Aquarium as part of their week long science camp.

Summer is here, and more than thirty children attended the first Nuu-chah-nulth science camp of the season last week. Organized by Uu-a-thluk in partnership with the University of Victoria's Science Venture program, the camps have been a mainstay of Uu-a-thluk summer programming since 2006.

Last week, children ages 6-12 took part in a variety of activities ranging from salmon dissections to marine creature scavenger

hunts. The goal of the camps is to share hands-on science with Nuu-chah-nulth children and present subjects like chemistry, biology, and engineering in a non-threatening way. The camps have a particular focus on aquatic sciences. Integrating elder teachings around resource harvest and management is also a priority.

New this year was an activity that saw children taking pictures of the natural world to illustrate lessons about stewardship. Guest instructors Keith Hunter and Anne Robinson from the First Nations Wildcrafters shared traditional teachings around the concepts of *hishuk ish tsawalk* (everything is one) and *uu-a-thluk* (taking care of). They also talked about the connection that Nuu-chah-nulth families have to our lands and waters. Children illustrated these teachings with photographs and key words, which Michelle Colyn later packaged into a slide show for parents.

"We invited the parents to come for čamus and watch the slide show," Colyn says. "It was a good start to the week."

Colyn works as Capacity Building Coordinator for Uu-a-thluk and is responsible for organizing the science camps in six Nuu-chah-nulth communities each summer. She partners with communities, elders, and instructors to ensure the content is both relevant and fun.

This year, Colyn partnered with Tseshaht's Parks and Recreation Youth Coordinator, Tyrone Marshall, to take campers from Tseshaht and Huu-ay-aht First Nations to the Ucluelet Aquarium. She also partnered with the Tseshaht fisheries department and biologist Andy Olson for the salmon dissection.

"It was great for the youth to see their community biologist in action," Colyn says. "Andy works with many of their parents, but the children don't usually get an opportunity to see him. He did a fabulous job of connecting with each of them, talking about different fisheries opportunities, and sharing the importance of resource management."

Following the dissection, children were eager to share their own stories—fishing stories. They also received a chart with the anatomical parts of the salmon written in Nuu-chah-nulth. "The children practised say-

ing the words for things like 'adipose fin,'" Colyn says. "Most of the words were very specific, so I don't know if they would have learned them yet anywhere else. But they learned them here."

Next, Colyn and Science Venture instructors Jessica Steele and India Wiebe will travel to Tsaxana to deliver a camp for Mowachaht/Muchalaht children. After that they will be off to Zeballos. "I'm looking forward to meeting the people who will help us in communities this year," Colyn says of the summer ahead.

For more information on the camps or to sponsor a child to attend, visit [www.uuathluk.ca](http://www.uuathluk.ca). Special thanks to the individuals, businesses, and organizations that have supported the camps to date.

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—Michelle Colyn,  
Uu-a-thluk Capacity Building Coordinator

### 2014 NUU-CHAH-NULTH SCIENCE CAMPS

DATE	NATION(S)	LOCATION
July 7-11	Tseshaht/Huu-ay-aht	Tseshaht Youth Centre – Port Alberni
July 14-18	Mowachaht/Muchalaht	House of Unity – Tsaxana
July 21-25	Ehattesaht	Ehattesaht Youth Centre – Ehat
July 28-August 1	Hupacasath/Uchucklesaht	House of Gathering – Port Alberni
August 11-15	Ditidaht	Ditidaht Community School – Ditidaht
August 18-22	Ahousaht	Thunderbird Bird Hall – Ahousaht

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Tseshaht Fisheries Biologist, Andy Olson, leads a salmon dissection for campers.