

## Bidarki Story (Part 2b)

Quotes from Sugpiaq elders and tribal members in Nanwalek and Port Graham, Alaska

Time	Quote
1800s-1960s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When the Russians came they cleaned the sea otters out. When I was 18 yrs old [1953] there were no sea otters around Port Graham.</li> </ul>
1930s-1950s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We used to be able to get all the Dungeness [crab] we wanted. We used to collect clams and cockles, nobody ever missed a tide. I didn't have concept of poor or rich in a western world sense.</li> <li>We were so rich because there was so much out there. The sea back then was a dinner table set at low tides.</li> <li>There was not much kelp in front of Nanwalek when I was young.</li> </ul>
1960s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They [the bidarkis] came back in the early 60's. The population exploded in the late 70's early 80's. Boy, those things multiply!</li> <li>We used to see green sea urchins all over Nanwalek Reef in the early 1940s. By the late 60's sea urchins were mostly gone.</li> <li>I haven't had lady slippers [Cryptochiton stelleri] for years.</li> </ul>
1970s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the past we picked just enough to eat and snack on. But when electricity and then freezers became available people began to pick more because they could store them.</li> </ul>
1980s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dungeness [crabs] were whipped [wiped out] because of commercial crab fisheries and dragging. They came right into this bay. Now [the Dungeness] haven't been able to come back because of the sea otters.</li> </ul>
1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The oil spill impacted nature's cycles, the seasonal clock work of our culture, our life ways... It had lingering effects, not only in our water but in our lives.</li> <li>Clams and cockles and Dungeness crab were declining before the oil spill. The oil spill may have made it worse but they were already declining before the spill.</li> <li>People locally were hired to help clean up the spill. Then, there was more money that came to the village. More money let more people own more boats and bigger boats with better outboards. Many people could now go to places that they couldn't go to in the past.</li> </ul>
1990s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I started noticing Bidarki declines 10-15 years ago.</li> <li>It's harder to find the big ones now.</li> </ul>
1990s-2000s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are more little ones but they are not big enough to pick. I used to not see so many little ones.</li> <li>The urchins were the first to go then crab then the clams. Bidarkies, they're the most recent change.</li> </ul>