

Myth and legend

With their large eyes, eerie sounds and ability to survive both in and out of water, amphibians — especially frogs — have always intrigued humans. They inhabit a secret world we can only imagine. In many parts of the world these creatures are seen as messengers of spring and good news and a source of wisdom, knowledge and healing.

For several Yukon First Nations, frogs are animal shamans, capable of healing when their “hands” are placed on the ailing part of a person’s body. Frogs can also be guardian spirits, like the frog helper that appeared to Skookum Jim (*Keish*) after he rescued a frog trapped in a deep hole. Skookum Jim later dreamed of a frog, which showed him a gold-tipped walking stick and told him he would find his fortune downriver. In 1896, after travelling down the Yukon River to Dawson, Skookum Jim was one of the first people to discover gold in the Klondike.

Frogs are important to First Nations in southern Yukon and northern B.C. A frog is the crest emblem for three Inland Tlingit clans in this region: the Ishkaahittan of Carcross and the Ishketaan of Teslin and Atlin.

