Ancient clam gardens in the Pacific Northwest: Teaching and learning at the confluence of archaeology, marine science, and traditional (Indigenous) knowledge

Nicole Smith and the Clam Garden Network

Clam gardens are rock-walled, intertidal terraces constructed by the coastal First Nations of British Columbia (Canada) and Native Americans of Washington State and Alaska (USA) to enhance the shellfish productivity of beaches and rocky shorelines. This presentation provides an overview of recent work by members of the “Clam Garden Network” (www.clamgarden.com), a collaborative team of First Nations knowledge holders, archaeologists, ecologists, geologists, geographers, and resource managers focused on the cultural and ecological importance of this traditional management practice. In this presentation we also highlight the ways in which Network members are embracing clam gardens as places of learning, and how we are sharing traditional and scientific knowledge with communities, schools, and the public at large.

Nicole Smith is an archaeologist based in Victoria, BC. She has been involved in archaeological research on the B.C. coast since 2000, working primarily with First Nations communities, the Hakai Institute, Parks Canada, the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre and colleagues at various universities. She is one of the founding members of the Clam Garden Network and has been fortunate to study clam gardens in Coast Salish, Haida, Heiltsuk, Laich-kwil-tach and Nuu-chah-nulth territories. She believes that archaeological stories can inspire people, empower indigenous youth, and facilitate cross-cultural education and understanding.

* Light refreshments will be served at noon.
* Lecture will commence at 12:30 p.m.