



Waabooz (Snowshoe Hare)

*Maajii-Ojibwemowag (They Begin to Speak Ojibwe) – ANA Language Project
Teacher/Caregiver Supplemental Document*

**WAABANONG SET:
WAABOOZ BOOK
OJIBWE LANGUAGE
WORD LIST**

- **Biboon** – It is winter
- **Waabooz** – Rabbit, hare
- **Waaboozoog** – Rabbits (plural)
- **Waaboozoons** – Young/ tiny rabbit
- **Mewinzha** – A long time ago
- **Ozaawizi** – S/he is yellow, brown
- **Waabishkizi** – S/he is white
- **Ozow** – His/her tail
- **Otawagan** – His/her ears
- **Ozidan** – His/her feet
- **Oninjiin** – His/her hands
- **Goon** – Snow
- **Migizi** – Bald Eagle
- **Babiinziikawaagan** – Jacket
- **Oshkibabiinziikawaagane** – S/he has a new coat
- **Nozhis** – My grandchild
- **Nookomis** – My Grandmother
- **Gaawiin** – No
- **Eya'** – Yes

Waabooz and the Ojibwe

Waabooz, the snowshoe hare, is an important animal to the Ojibwe people. The snowshoe hare was a staple to surviving the winter when the Ojibwe lived in waaginogaanan (lodges, wigwams).

When a rabbit is killed, all parts of the rabbit are used. The meat, heart, and liver is eaten, and the stomach is saved and used for medicine.

The hide and fur are used in a number of ways. The rabbit skins are sometimes tanned with the fur on to line moccasins. The fur hide can also be used to

make caps, mittens, scarves, and ankle coverings.

Rabbit skins were also tanned in the winter time after turning white, to make waaboozwaanag (rabbit skin blankets), which could be as big as six feet.

Tanned fur hides were also cut into strips to make fur blankets. The strips would then be curled and weaved together to make a double-sided rabbit fur blanket. Other fur scraps were used to fill in any holes in the waaginogaanan.



Snowshoe Hare



Waabooz Snare



Waabooz in snare

Harvesting Waabooz

Hunting waabooz is important and is one of the milestone markers in an Ojibwe child's life. This is one of the first animals to harvest. After a boy or girl snares their first rabbit, in traditional Ojibwe custom, a feast is held. The rabbit is boiled or roasted and is fed to the family. This is often a

mark of transition into becoming a young man/ woman.

The Ojibwe use a snare when harvesting waabooz. A snare is made out of rope or wire. It is fashioned into a noose, and the hole should be about the size of a fist. Waabooz tracks are easy

to see in the snow and the snare is hung along one of the rabbit's trails. When the rabbit comes down the trail, its head goes into the noose and the rabbit is snared.

For harvest regulations for waabooz, visit: <https://data.glifwc.org/regulations/small.game.php>

Vulnerable Waabooz

GLIFWC Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

GLIFWC Climate Change staff worked with tribal elders to determine concerns for specific beings/species affected by climate change, supported by Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and Scientific Ecological Knowledge (SEK).

Amongst these species, waabooz (snowshoe hare - *Lepus americanus*) was determined to be Moderately to Extremely Vulnerable to climate change, due to a number of factors, however, their dependence on snow cover or ice placed them in the 94th percentile on the vulnerability assessment.

While discussing waabooz, nearly all of the tribal elders expressed concern over the decline in the population, noting the lack of waabooz tracks in the backyard in the winter. The tribal elders detailed the lower snowfalls during this decline, which they feel plays a key part in fewer waaboozoog.

With the decline in waabooz, the tribal elders fear there will be a loss of rabbit traditions and stories, and traditional hunting practices will be lost.

Vulnerability Assessment: [https://www.glifwc.org/ClimateChange/GLIFWC Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment Version1 April2018.pdf](https://www.glifwc.org/ClimateChange/GLIFWC%20Climate%20Change%20Vulnerability%20Assessment%20Version1%20April2018.pdf)

Extra Resources

Waabooz activity for kids on Page 17: <http://www.glifwc.org/Mazinaigan/Winter2018/inc/pdf/flipbook.pdf>

Informational resource on Ojibwe harvesting/hunting lifeways, specifically for snaring rabbits, by Anton Treuer. https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/mcvmagazine/young_naturalists/young-naturalists-article/ojibwe/ojibwe.pdf

Additional resource for seasonal

lifestyles of the Ojibwe people. <https://www.nps.gov/grpo/planyourvisit/upload/Winterlifeways.pdf>

A collection of Ojibwe, handmade moccasins and mukluks.

<https://www.whetung.com/collections/moccasins>

Story about Waabooz. <https://www.duluthnewstribune.com/opinion/4189865-rabbits-wintertime>

Waaboozwaaboo Recipe:

Ingredients:

- The bones of 1 or more Rabbit
- 1 to 2 quarts water
- Sliced carrots
- Chopped onions
- Pre-soaked lentils or fresh split peas
- Canned tomatoes
- Salt and pepper
- A little butter

Note: There are no specific amounts of ingredients to allow for variance and preference, and what is available on hand.

Preparation:

1. Boil the bones and water in a good-sized stock pot. Then remove the bones from the stock and scrape all the meat from them.
2. Return the chunks of rabbit to the broth and add the carrots, onions, lentils or split peas, and tomatoes plus any other vegetables you may wish to include in your soup.
3. Season, add butter, and simmer until the vegetables are tender.

Recipe: <https://www.motherearthnews.com/real-food/rabbit-soup-recipe-zmaz78mjzgoe>



Credit: painting by Ron Klinger from Kays and Wilson's Mammals of North America, © Princeton University Press (2002)



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