

Vyàh (Teet'it Gwich'in)

Vàdzaih gyàq' (Gwichya Gwich'in)

Vadzaih vyàh (vuntut Gwitchin)

Caribou Snare

"They made rope, real strong rope, out of caribou skin ... They set a whole bunch of snares right around that [caribou] corral ... All the caribou ran into that big corral, and they got caught in that snare ..."

— Roddy Peters, Teet'it Gwich'in Elder, 1970s

"When ... the caribou migrate [August and September], that's the time they make those corrals. And in springtime, I think they mostly use snare[s] on their trail ... where they cross the rivers, creeks, that's where they have caribou-skin snares."

— Walter Alexie, Teet'it Gwich'in Elder, 1996



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Collected by Douglas Leechman from Old Crow, Yukon in the summer of 1946 for the Canadian Museum of Civilization

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An on-line exhibit of Gwich'in items from the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

A partnership between the CMC, GSCI and Vuntut Gwitchin.

"Caribou were often caught in snares twisted from six strands of caribou babiche. More would prevent its drawing tight. The snare is set with the bottom of the loop about two feet [60 cm] above the ground, and the opening in it is roughly two feet [60 cm] wide and three feet [90 cm] high. It is tied at the four corners to willows with wisps of grass that will break easily. Bull caribou insert their antlers carefully in the loop without realizing that it is a snare. Bulls fight much more than cows when snared. A quick stab in the heart with a caribou spear will finish any found alive. Some men will put out ten or more snares and run them as a trap line. They are used only in cold weather when the meat will keep well. A strong bull will sometimes break a snare."

— Douglas Leechman, 1954



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Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute

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