In 2004, SSHRC awarded research funding to Cheryl Bartlett for a project entitled “Pattern recognition: enriching the ‘common ground’ of bringing Aboriginal and Western scientific knowledges together”. Some of the research funded by this grant enabled Mi’kmaw Elders to work with researchers to envision how best to convey that understanding that the Mikmaw language identifies nature’s calendar by naming the different moon cycles over the course of one full year according to significant, natural events in the local ecosystem.

We decided to create a poster in which a large circle would be divided into twelve pie-shaped pieces, each representing one complete moon cycle. Elders then guided the researchers as to what kind of image could be used to represent the key event in the ecosystem that gave a particular moon cycle its name. For example, the time of Sqoljuiku’s recognizes that the frogs are croaking, which roughly corresponds to the month of May in Unama’ki – Cape Breton ... and we used the image of a frog to indicate this.

In this way, the poster promotes and shares Mi’kmaw living knowledge wherein there is a strong linkage of language with nature. Other examples of how the different moon cycles are portrayed include berries for ‘berries are ripe time’, the sun for ‘bright white snow time’ and chubby animals for ‘animals are getting fat time’. Research assistant Sana Kavanagh drew original images for each moon cycle and graphic designer Kristy Read rendered them into icons. We made two versions of the poster; in the first (completed in 2005), the direction of change is clockwise and spring (‘maple sugar time’) is positioned on the right hand side. In the second (2008), the direction of change is counter-clockwise (= Muin / Bear-wise) and spring is positioned on the left-hand side; the 2008 version is congruent with our large, detailed eco-calendar, Pemi Punqek Mi’km’a’ki (see separate description).

In the pages that follow, you can see larger images of the Mi’kmaw calendar (both the 2008 and 2005 versions), along with the Mi’kmaw names for the moon cycles and English translations, plus a visual explanation of why Muin-wise is the preferred direction for depicting seasonal change in the calendar.
Mi’kmawe’k Tepknusetk

MI’KMAWE’K TEPKNUSETK

MI’KMAW CALENDAR

poster depicting one full year with 12 moon cycles
clock-wise or sun-wise (2005 version)
MI'KMAWE'K TEPKNUSETK

MI’KMAW CALENDAR

poster depicting one full year with 12 moon cycles counter clock-wise or Muin/Bear-wise (2008 version)
Names of Moons (over one full year)

- Si’ko’ku’s: maple sugar time
- Pnatmuiku’s: birds laying eggs time
- Sqoljuiku’s: frogs croaking time
- Nipniku’s: trees fully leafed time
- Pe’skewiku’s: birds shedding feathers time
- Kisikewiku’s: berry ripening time
- Wikumkewiku’s: mate calling time
- Wikewiku’s: animals fattening time
- Keptewiku’s: rivers starting to freeze time
- Kesikewiku’s: chief moon time
- Punamuiku’s: tom cod spawning time
- Apiknajit: bright sun time
**Muin/Bear-wise**

= apparent direction of movement of the stars around Tatapn/North Star/Polaris each night in the northern hemisphere and thus also the apparent direction of movement of the meta-pattern, over one full year, of "Muin and the Seven Bird Hunters"

**sun-wise**

= apparent direction of movement of the sun across the southern sky each day in the northern hemisphere
Muin and the Seven Bird Hunters
a Mi’kmaw Night Sky Story
... of the meta-pattern of apparent change in the stars as seen by humans two hours before dawn

Muin/Bear-wise

when viewed, through the seasons, in Mi’kma’ki, the Traditional Territory of the Mi’kmaw People
meta-pattern, by season and over one full year, of “Muin and the Seven Bird Hunters”
meta-pattern, by season and over one full year, of “Muin and the Seven Bird Hunters”
meta-pattern, by season and over one full year, of “Muin and the Seven Bird Hunters”
Muin and the Seven Bird Hunters: a Mi’kmaw Night Sky Story

... interconnectiveness of space-time-life-knowledge-spirit

Tatapn (North Star)
view video at:
http://www.integrativescience.com/Media/Video/