MYTHS

Cyclone Woman
Nakia Powell



Cyclone Woman is a powerful storm spirit. She has the capability to destroy, but is still considered a kindred spirit – she never intentionally harms the Lenape people.

Hummingbird
Debra Beal



The spirit animal Hummingbird is an energetic little bird that helps shamans keep nature and spirit in balance.

Sister Bird
Joyce DeGroat Gamble



Sister Bird is about sisterhood, rising above loss and finding the inner strength to be a warrior. Joyce chose to put the red hand symbol on her face in solidarity with her indigenous sisters and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women movement. The red hand over the mouth stands for an epidemic of violence against women from the Native American and First Nations communities and the voices of the missing sisters who will not be heard.

Rainbow Crow
Autumn Lorraine



In a time long ago, snow covered all the land. Rainbow Crow traveled to the Heavens to ask the Creator for help. She returned to Earth with the gift of fire. However, by bringing fire back to her fellow animals, she lost her wondrous voice and vibrant colors.

Thunder Beings
Marci Copeland



Thunder Beings are powerful storm spirits that live in the sky and cause thunder and lighting. Their enemies are the horned serpents that live in the rivers and streams. The Thunder Beings sometimes rescue the Lenape people from these dreaded monsters.

Three Sisters
Lisa Tyner, Tiffany Tyner and Natalie Tyner



According to Native American legend, winter squash, corn, and climbing beans are inseparable sisters who can only grow and thrive together. Known as a companion planting technique, the Three Sisters are: CORN, which provides a strong structure for beans, BEANS, which provide nitrogen to the soil, and SQUASH, whose leaves provide shade to the soil, and their rough edges deter pests.

Underwater Panther: Winter Waters
Keisha Powell



In Lenape and other Eastern Woodlands mythology, the Underwater Panther is a powerful water spirit. She is associated with deep waters, powerful currents and the Underworld. Her presence as a spirit reminds communities of the duality of natural forces, which are both beautiful and dangerous.

Hawk Woman
Grandmother Clara Soaking Hawk



The Hawk is considered a guardian of the Earth. Ever vigilant and flying continuously, the Hawk is admired for its speed, endurance and sharp eyesight.

Dragonfly
Clara Alexander



The dragonfly is a symbol of transformation, patient observation, and a connection to the elemental spirit world.

Kukna
Pointsetta



Kuhna is the Earth, our Mother. All life arises from her and is nourished by her. She carries all life upon her. The rocks are her bones, the winds her breathe, and the waters her blood. We see her as a great, living breathing being.

Grandmother South
Cheyann Kumar



Grandmother South is one of the four Keepers of Creation. She controlled the power of fire and gave the Lenape people summer, warmth and a fierce inner spirit. She also bestowed fire to the sun.

Corn Woman
Ashlynn Kumar



Corn Woman provides her people with the gift of a good harvest. She once became discouraged when a group of young men took the harvest and her gift for granted. She left the natural world. When the men realized their error, they honored her with a gift of oyster shell earrings and she returned and brought the corn back to her people.

Grandmother Moon
Quasia Powell



By night, our Mother, the first mother, nurtures her children. When her purpose is complete, she returns to the spirit world, where she watches over her children as the Moon.

PLANTS

Black Cohosh Rhizome (Black Snakeroot)



Black cohosh was used to ease arthritis, muscle aches, and joint stiffness, including rheumatism. The root was also used for fever and respiratory conditions, such as cough and pneumonia. Women used the root to regulate periods and reduce premenstrual discomfort. During childbirth, it could be used to stimulate contractions. The root could also be used as a tonic to support reproductive health.

Bloodroot (Pukon)



Bloodroot was valued for both its medicinal and ceremonial properties. Lenape people used various parts of the plant including root, leaves, and root bark in herbal remedies. These were prepared with care, following cultural protocols that included offering thanks to the plant's spirit before harvesting. The plant was considered sacred, much like a family member, and was never wasted.

Maple



The maple species was used for tonics, inflammation remedies, cough treatments, and blood purification. Bark decoctions were applied for rheumatism, sap was used for sore eyes or as a diuretic, and leaves were made into poultices for swollen joints, irritated skin, or fever relief.

Sassafras



A tea made from the sassafras tree was used in traditional medicine. This tea was likely prepared from the leaves, bark, or roots, and was valued for its aromatic, warming properties. Historically, sassafras was also used as a warming spring tonic and a digestive stimulant, helping to relieve digestive discomfort, feverish states, and aches.

Tulip Tree



A tea made from the bark of the tulip tree was used to reduce fever and reduce joint pain. Externally, bark teas were applied as washes or poultices for wounds.