



# First Nations Treaty 2 Territory Earth Lodge

## Odoodeman

**The Anishinaabe Clan System** served as a system of government as well as a means of dividing labour. The clans, based mainly on animals, were instrumental in traditional occupations, intertribal relations, and government.

The Anishinaabe Peoples are divided into a number of *doodeman*, or clans, named mainly after animal representation. In Anishinaabemowin, "ode" means heart. "Doodem" or clan literally would translate as the expression of or having to do with one's heart; in other words, *doodem* refers to the extended family.

According to oral tradition, the Anishinaabe were living along the Atlantic Ocean coast and the great *Miigis* beings appeared out the sea and taught the Mide way of life to the Waabanakiing peoples, six of the seven great *Miigis* beings that remained to teach established the *odoodeman* for the peoples in the east.

The five original Anishinaabe *doodems* were *Wawaazisii* (bullhead), *Baswenaazhi* (echo-maker, i.e., crane), *Aan'aawenh* (pintail duck), *Nooke* (tender, i.e., bear) and *Moozwaanowe* ("little" moose-tail).

The *doodeman* established a framework of government to give them "strength and order" in which each *doodem* represents a core branch of knowledge and responsibility essential to a strong society.

Today, seven general *doodems* compose this framework in our Circles of the Government in Treaty 2 Territory.

The **Ah-ji-jawk** (Crane) are responsible for **External and Internal Relations**.

The **Maang** Loon are responsible for **Health and Wellbeing**.

The **Waawaashkeshi** Deer are responsible for **Child, Family, Nation**.

The **Makwa** (Bear) are responsible for **Peacemaking**.

The **Mikinaak** (Turtle) are responsible for **Nation and Economic Development**.

The **Bizhiw** (Lynx) are responsible for **Care and Protection Natural World**.

The **Migizi** (Eagle) are responsible for **Life Long Learning**.

Clans are both a means of acquiring and retaining knowledge for the Anishinaabe. Knowledge gained through experience and interactions with the natural world and other clan members. This knowledge is then passed down to future generations, contributing to the "flow of *Nebwakawin* (wisdom) that passes from generation to generation".

Today, the clan remains an important part of Anishinaabe identity.