

Brownie Space Science Adventurer Badge**The Hungry Skunk: A Retelling of a Folktale**

American Indians have told many stories about the constellations. One American Indian tribe, called the Coeur d'Alene, once lived throughout what is now the northwestern United States. They created this story about the constellations Auriga and Perseus.

There was once a village in the sky. The men who lived in this village did the hunting and fishing. The women gathered other things that could be eaten, like roots and berries, and did the cooking. One night, at dinner time, the women dug a cooking pit and filled it with rocks. They heated the rocks, then put roots from the camas plant on the hot rocks to cook them. Their dinner began to cook—and it smelled delicious. The smell caught the attention of a hungry skunk in the woods. He followed his nose to the cooking pit, thinking it would be easy to scare the women away and take their dinner. (Most people run away from skunks, of course!) When the women saw the skunk, they wanted to run away—but they had worked hard to dig the camas roots and make their cooking pit. And they were hungry, too. So they made a circle around the cooking pit to protect their food, and bravely stared at the skunk. He stared back at them. And they're all still there, refusing to back down.



You can see the women and their cooking pit in the constellation Auriga. Perseus is the skunk.