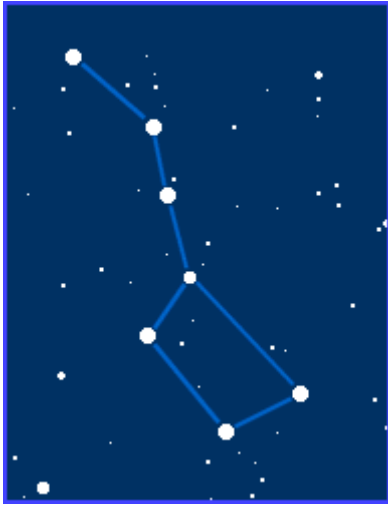


Ursa Major- The Great Bear (Anishinabe Tribe)



Fisher was a small animal but a great hunter. Hunting was difficult in those days because it was always winter. "Come with me," he told his friends, "We will go where the Earth is closest to Skyland. The Skyland is always warm and we will bring some of the warmth down to Earth." The Otter, Lynx and Wolverine traveled with Fisher up the mountains, closer and closer to Skyland.

When they were very close Fisher said, "We must jump up and break through to the land above the sky." The Otter jumped up and bumped his head on the sky. He fell on his back and slid all the way down the mountain. Lynx jumped up and bumped so hard it knocked him unconscious. Wolverine jumped up and bumped hard against the sky. He jumped again and again until the sky cracked a little. He jumped again and broke through. Fisher jumped through after him. They found Skyland to be a beautiful place, full of warmth and plants and flowers. They found cages full of birds which they released. The birds flew through the crack in the sky to the world below. The warmth of Skyland began to flow to the Earth and melt the snow. The Sky-People came out of the lodges and said "Thieves! They are taking our warm weather!" Wolverine escaped back through the crack but Fisher started working to make the crack bigger. He knew that if it were too small the Sky-People might be able to patch it. The Sky-People began chasing him and shooting arrows. Although he was powerful, they eventually hit a fatal spot. The great Gitchee Manitou took pity on poor Fisher because he had tried to help his friends. He healed him and placed him in the sky (Big Dipper). Each autumn as Fisher is falling towards Earth the Sky-People try to patch the crack and Winter comes. Then in spring Fisher climbs back high in the sky and reopens the crack and Summer comes.