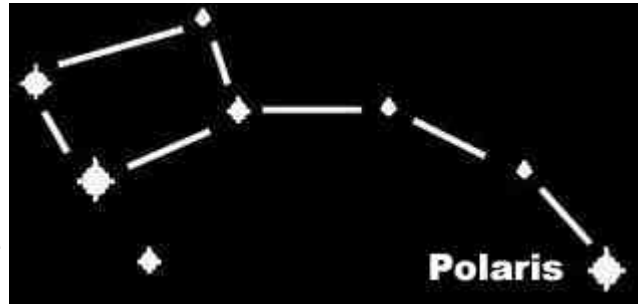


*Ursa Minor - The Little Bear - How Rattlesnake Had His Revenge (Luiseno Tribe)*

When all the First People lived at Temecula in southern California, Rattlesnake lived there, too. Everyone made fun of him because he was the only one with no arms or legs. North Star especially abused the poor fellow by throwing dirt at him and pulling him here and there by his hair. That made Rattlesnake very sad and angry.



One day Rattlesnake became particularly angry at North Star. He resolved to get even and took his case to Mother Earth.

Mother Earth considered the problem carefully before taking any action. Rattlesnake was angry and wanted revenge. That was not right, but he did have a right to protect himself. Mother Earth gave Rattlesnake two sharp-pointed sticks for protection. She also gave him the gift of poison. Rattlesnake was skeptical but decided to try his gift.

The next day North Star tormented Rattlesnake cruelly. Rattlesnake warned him but North Star just laughed. Then, using his now fangs, Rattlesnake bit off one of North Star's fingers.

Mother Earth decided to strengthen Rattlesnake's poison by providing three scorching days to hasten its action. When three very hot days come in a row, remember this story. Someone has just been bitten by Rattlesnake, and Mother Earth is making the bite more effective. If you doubt this story, look carefully at the hand of North Star on the next very clear night. You will see that one of his fingers is missing - bitten off by Rattlesnake.