



The 13 Moons Life Cycle



What is 13 Moons?

In Anishinaabe culture, we are taught that a piece of mother earth was placed on the turtle's back after the great flood. Nanaboozhoo, our Anishinaabe trickster, saw that the back of turtle had thirteen sections. He compared these large sections of the turtle shell to the thirteen moon cycles of the year. Each year has 12 or 13 full moons. The Anishinaabe recognize a 13-moon calendar.

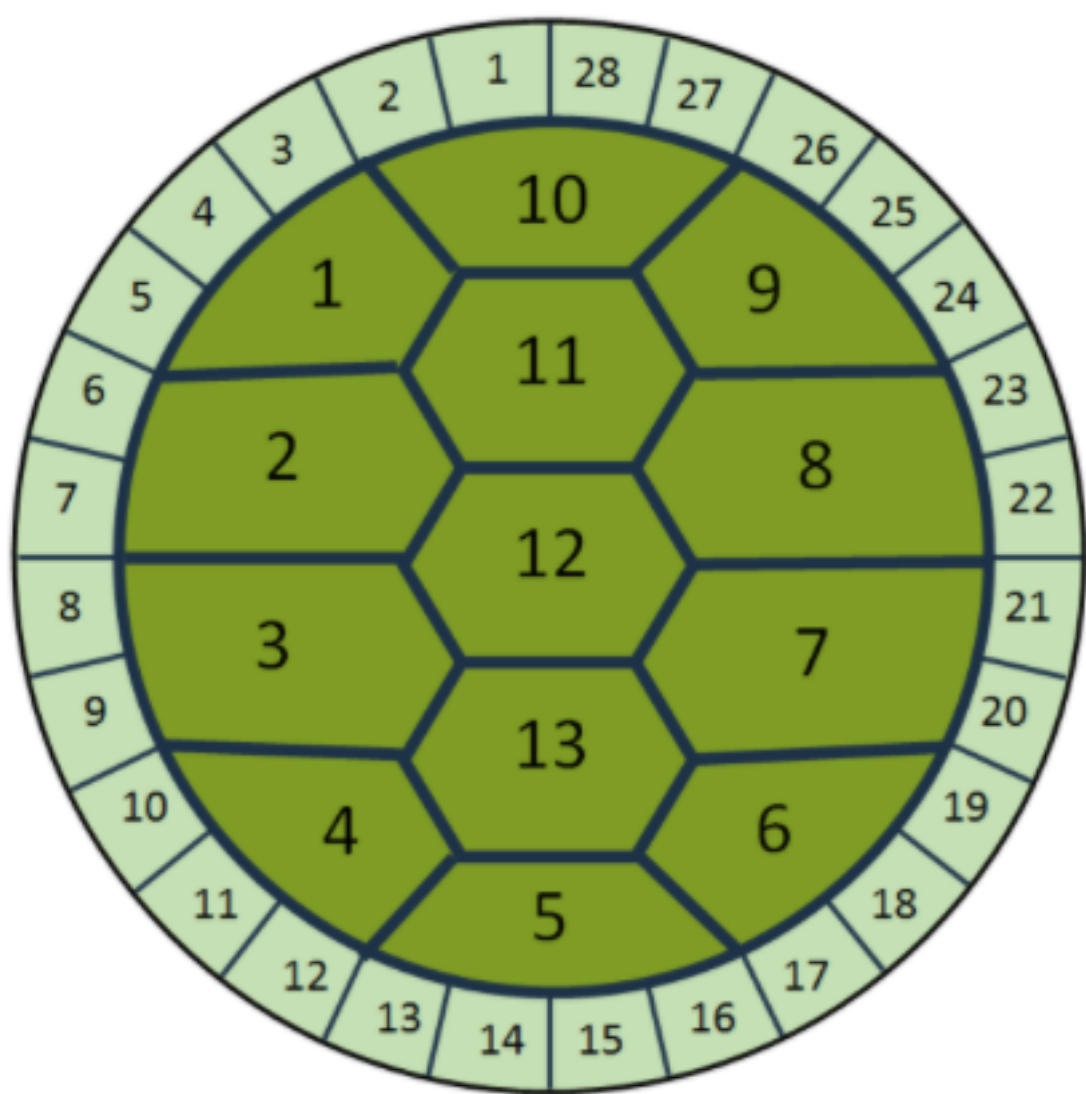


Turtle Shell Pattern

13 large scales represent the 13 **moons** of the year.

28 small scales represent the 28 **days** in each moon.

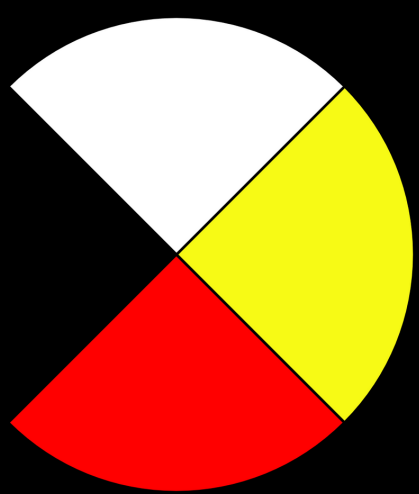
While the western calendar begins in January, the Anishinaabe new year starts in the spring when the snow begins to melt and the sap begins to run.



The 13 Moons and Nutrition

Each Anishinaabe moon honors a natural occurrence, sustenance or spiritual aspect that happens during that time.

Each moon gifts us with nourishment for our bodies.



Food is medicine that fuels our mind, body and spirit. Food comes from our land; eating food from our land reminds us who we are and where we come from. Knowing who we are and where we come from keeps our spirit strong. Our spirit is represented by the Eastern direction in the medicine wheel.