

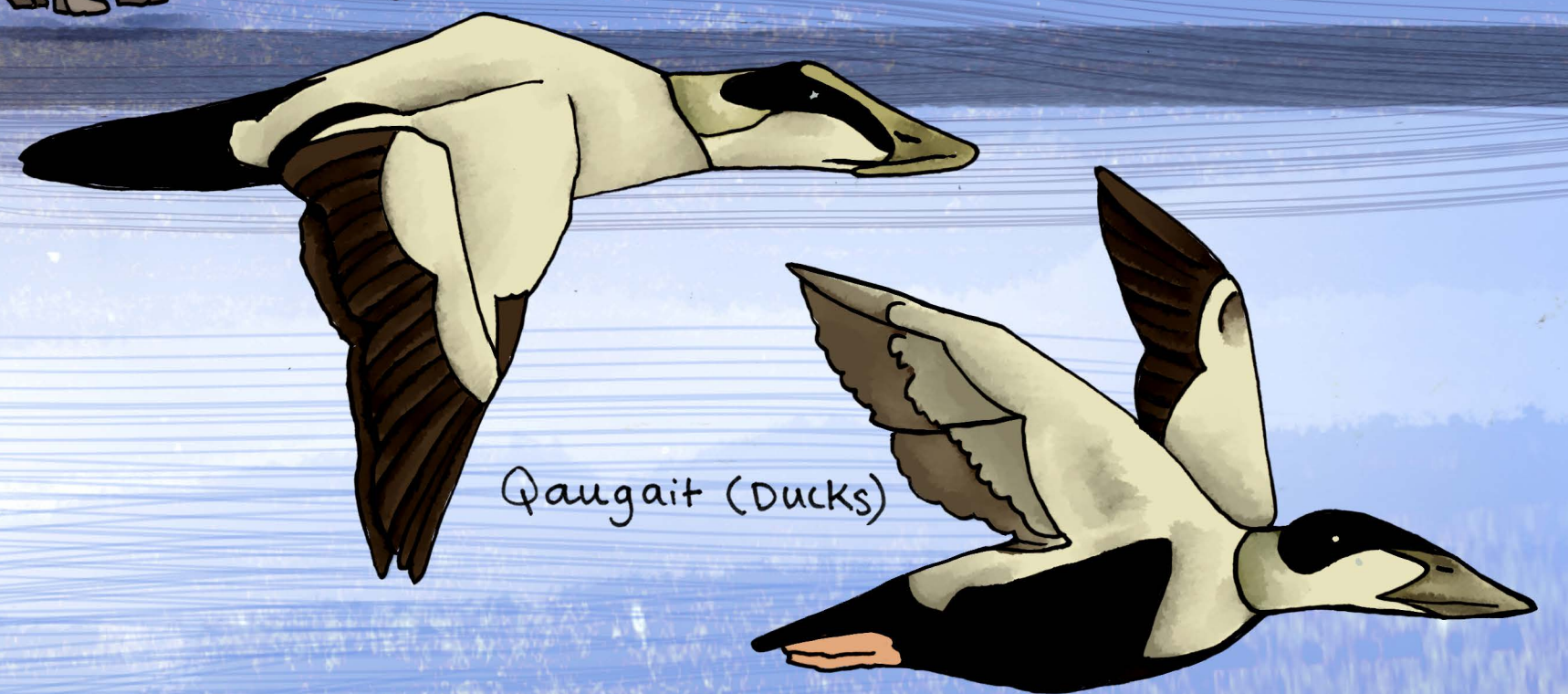
Birnirk



Uniaġaun (dog sled)

The Birnirk Period is a predecessor of modern Iñupiat culture in northern Alaska.

The Birnirk people in northern Alaska were members of a maritime culture also present on Russia's Chukchi Peninsula. The Birnirk culture dates to roughly 700-1400 years ago. The people lived along the coast, usually in a line of two or three homes facing the sea. Houses were built of driftwood and whalebone, covered with insulating sods, and heated by seal oil lamps. Birnirk artifacts tend to have flowing lines, harmoniously combining form and function. The people also developed new technologies like baleen toboggans. Ivory was used in sled runners, snow goggles, and in bola weights for hunting waterfowl.



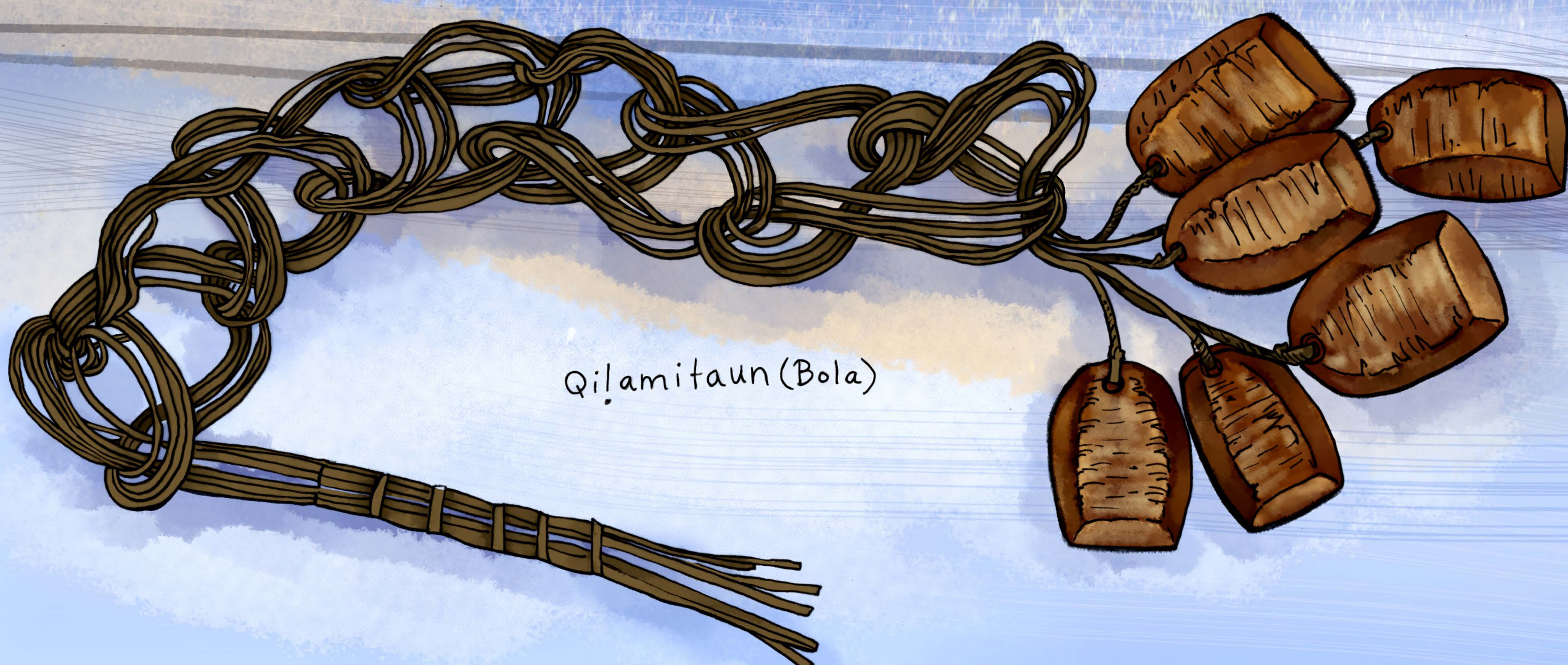
Qaugait (Ducks)



Many Birnirk archaeological sites have been lost due to coastal erosion and rising sea levels.

Ancient settlements like the Birnirk (Pigñiq) National Historic Landmark are increasingly vulnerable to the high winds, large waves, and tidal surges of severe storms. Warming ocean temperatures reduce the sea ice that protects Alaska's coastlines from erosion. Many of these sites have been erased over time, the artifacts lost.

What can we do to preserve the history of the Birnirk people?



Qilamitaun (Bola)