

Fall, Autumn — Uksuaq

UKSUARTUQ AWA'I. – IT IS FALL NOW.



Photo: Fall in Santa Flavia Bay, 2020. AM972.

Fall along Alaska's gulf coast arrives with a palette of changing colors. The hills fade from green to gold, coastal meadows blaze with bright red fireweed and elderberry leaves, and the skies darken from blue to grey as the days shorten and winter storms reappear.

For Alutiiq people, fall was a time of preparation. Subsistence activities turned from the sea toward the land. Families harvested salmon from local streams, hunted ducks migrating through coastal marshes, and picked berries sweetened by the first frosts. Foods were processed and stored for winter use, filling sod houses with a wealth of resources. Subsistence activities were accompanied by preparations for cold weather. People gathered firewood, patched their sod houses, laid fresh grass on their floors, and began to create new clothes and tools from the abundance of the previous summer.