

## **The Boys Who turned to Geese**

Chumash

Long ago, when animals were people, there was a little boy whose mother and stepfather wouldn't give him anything to eat, though they had plenty for themselves. So the boy went off to find his own food and met another boy who was also abandoned. Raccoon came along, felt sorry for the two boys, and helped them dig roots to eat. In the next few days, five more hungry abandoned boys came by, and they all went to stay with Raccoon in the temescal (sweathouse). Finally they decided to go north and take Raccoon with them. So they sprinkled themselves with goose down and sang songs. For three days they went around the temescal, singing and rising higher and higher off the ground. But Raccoon couldn't fly even though he was covered with goose down. All the mothers came to see the boys and begged them to come down, but they refused. They all turned into geese and flew away to the north, to become the seven stars we call the Pleiades. And when geese cry, they sound just like a little boy.