Weasel in the Hen House

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When the European first started coming up our river, they first meet us and they asked us, “How many People in your tribe?” and we never knew how to answer that because to us the trees, the stones, and the deer are part of our tribe. We could not count the number of birds in the sky. And that misunderstanding has continued since the first contact of Europeans and our people, and they ask us “How is it that you people are superstitious — so superstitious that you talk to trees and you consider the deer a dumb animal your brother.” We said “Let’s ask you a question. Where do you go for water to drink?” And they said “We go to the river.” And we said “Where does the deer go when he is thirsty? He goes to the river. When you are hungry where do you go?” And the Europeans said “We go to the forest.” And we said “Where does the deer go for his food? He goes to the forest. Does not the deer have young like itself and it raises them to be deer.” And the Europeans said “Ok we will give you the deer, but the weasel is a blood thirsty animal. It kills wantonly. Do you consider the weasel to be your brother?” Our people said “In nature the weasel might come into a field and might come upon a covey of quail and if he is a good weasel he might catch one. The weasel is a drinker of blood, but when he goes into a hen house, where all these fowl are confined and can’t get away, he loses his mind and he kills wantonly. But that’s because he’s not in nature where Creator made him to be. He’s in an unnatural place.” And our people took that conversation and used that for years to explain to people how bad things happen when you don’t live in balance with the Creator. And so we say we are all weasels in the hen house today.

Nek shewanahkok enta lomewe paneyo nalahi, nkiskkunanak
the white men when long ago they come(sub) up river they meet us (excl)
ok notuxtukanak “Kexihit hech ahpuwak kithakeyemenanak?"
and they ask us how many ques. they exist your tribespeople
Ok tala noxkumawenanak. Nek hitkuk,
and cannot we answer them (excel) the trees
nel ahsena, nek ahtuhok, wemi nlankumkunanak.
the rocks the deer all they are related to us
Ta hech ntokimawenanak nek chulensak mushhakunk?
how do we count them (excl) the birds in the sky
Ok ne chansitamewoakan ninochi tetai nek Lenape
And that misunderstanding it has always been between the Lenape
ok nek shewanahkok iapchi netami nuwahawenanak.
and the white men since first we know them
Ok notuxtukananak,
and they ask us
“Keku wenchi kpemetunhalaok hitkuk ok aesesak?” Ntelawenanak, "Nlankumkunanak."
why you all talk to them trees and animals we tell them they are related to us
Nteluwehena “Ktuxtalhumena. Tani hech nathepiahemo?”
we said we question you all where ques. you people fetch water
Ok luweyok “Ntahena sipung.”
and they said we go to the river
Ok nteluwehena “Tani hech e na ahtu enta kahtusemit?”
and we said where ques. he goes the deer when he is thirsty-conj.
"E sipung." “Enta katupwiekw tani hech ktahem?"
he goes to the river when you all are hungry-conj. where ques. you all go
Ok nek shewanahkok luweyok “Ntahena tekenink.”
and the white men they said we go to the woods
Ok nteluwehena “Tani hech na ahtu moxkamen mehemichink?”
and we said where ques. the deer he finds it food
"E tekening,” "Na ahtu wulahalaok mamalisàk.
He goes to the woods the deer he has them fawns
Ok wetamamalisu.
and he takes care of/raises fawns and the white men they said
“Yuh, konaet na ahtu ahpu elankumank,
ok maybe the deer exists our relative
shek na sànkwe kahtatàm hmukw.
but the weasel he wants it blood
Wenihelaok ok takuu litche.
he kills them and not he thinks
Kulamhitameneyo hech nek sankweyok ahpuwak elankuntiank?
you all believe it ques. the weasels they are relatives
Ok nek Lenape luweyok, “na sànkwe pe xinkhòkìhakan ink
and the Lenape they said the weasel he comes into a big field
ok konaet maxkaok xeli pupukwshàk
and maybe he finds them (anim) many quails
ok welinakwsu ok tunao pupukwsh.
and he does good work and he catches him a quail
Na sànkwe mwenen hmukw.
The weasel he drinks it blood
Shek enta at tipasikaonink, tani wemi tipasak ahpuwak
but when he goes-conj into a chicken coop where all chickens they exist
mènaxkhasikink na sànkwe kpechehosu.
in fenced in place the weasel he acts crazy.
Ok nteluwehena kishkwik avenik ahpuwak sankweyok tat tipasikaonink.
and we say today people exist weasels like in the chicken coop