

## Lenape Fishing



**Shad Fishing in the Delaware River** — A fishweir consisting of wooden stakes arranged in a fence-like manner, and a weighted fish net, are being used to gather the shad so that they may be easily speared, or caught with bare hands. A previous catch of fish has already been gutted, split and placed near a fire-hearth and over racks to dry for storage. Anadromous shad swim up the major rivers by the millions in March and April to spawn in freshwater streams. Abundant fish enabled the Lenape to congregate in larger numbers than usual, and to remain at one site for a longer time.



**Fishing for Sturgeon** — While two men use large chipped stone knives to remove the scutes (the bony plates on the back of the sturgeon) and cut the meat, another worker thrusts a long copper or bone needle and line through prepared slices of fish. The skewered flesh will be hung up to dry. Other workers use large pottery vessels and heated stones to cook oil out of the fish heads and skeletal parts. Sturgeon weighing up to two hundred pounds and more, and measuring over six feet in length, were harpooned and caught in nets. These anadromous fish came from the ocean into the Delaware and Hudson rivers to spawn in freshwater streams.

*Illustrations courtesy of Herbert C. and John T. Kraft*