

# NATIVE AMERICAN POWER ANIMALS



*Pawnee Shaman*

## **Power Animals**

Definition of Power Animals: What are Power Animals? Power Animals are strongly associated with the Native American Indian belief in Animism that is a belief based on the spiritual idea that the universe, and all natural objects within the universe, have souls or spirits. Power Animals are believed to be a supernatural power that embodies, attaches or conveys influence empowering a person with the powerful traits and characteristics of the animal. The doctrine of this belief is that everything is alive, and possesses an inherent virtue, power and wisdom. Power animals represent a person's connection to all life, their qualities of character, and their power. Power Animals are regarded as guides who appear in dreams or Vision Quests in the form of an animal. Power Animals, or spirit guides, walk through different stages of life with a person, teaching and guiding them, and in some instances protecting them.

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## **Power Animals – Tutelary Spirits**

Power Animals are sometimes referred to as tutelary spirits (or tutelary spirits) meaning a deity or spirit who is a guardian, patron or protector of a particular culture, place, person, lineage or nation. Over your lifetime you may unknowingly or knowingly have the help of several different Power Animals. Power Animals can come and go unexpectedly, especially after a few years. According to the beliefs of Shamanism all people have power animals, or tutelary spirits, that empower and protect them from harm, like guardian spirits or angels.

## **Tribal Power Animals**

Each Native American tribe has a group of Power Animals that are most prevalent among its people refer to Tribe Totems. The Power Animals of a tribe usually live in the area inhabited by the tribe and have great medicine power. These tribal Power Animals are important in the life of the tribe, as guides to sources of food and other essential items or as guides to the changing seasons.

## **Power Animals – Spiritual Energy**

Power Animals are the spiritual energy of the animal on earth. Power Animals are greater than the actual animals because they embody the spirit and essence of the animal. For instance with a bear power animal, it is the voice of all the bears that have ever lived. It is the Medicine Bear. It is the bear that can see itself and speak. The spirit of Power Animals also lends you the wisdom of its kind. An owl spirit will give you owl wisdom, and lend you some of the attributes of owl. Power Animals will often appear to the Medicine Man, or Shaman, as a vision during a Vision Quest and these Power Animals are adopted as a guardian spirit and teacher. Power Animals form part of the belief in Shamanism but also appear in the dreams of individuals.

## **Identifying Power Animals – Vision Quests**

Power Animals often reveal themselves to us through our subconscious during sleep but are most strongly associated and identified through Vision Quests which are accompanied by a Smudging Ritual. Power animals are identified in dreams and vision quests if a particular animal is seen four times during a Vision Quest. A person can possess up to two of the more powerful animal Guardian Spirits or Power Animals, but many of the less powerful plant Spirit Helpers. Power Animals that appears in Vision quests and dreams all have various meanings.

*Source: warpaths2peacepipes*

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## **ANIMAL SYMBOLS**

### **Meaning of the Animal Symbols**

Native American Indians were a deeply spiritual people and they communicated their history, thoughts, ideas and dreams from generation to generation through Symbols and Signs such as the Animal Symbols. Native American symbols are geometric portrayals of celestial bodies, natural and supernatural phenomena and animal designs. Native American Animal symbols and totems are believed to represent the physical form of a spirit helper and guide. Animal symbols are very special to the Native Americans. The many animals and reptiles native to North America are featured as reptile and animal symbols, many having different meanings to different tribes.

## **Native American Indians – Animal Symbols Chart**

**Bear**– The bear symbolizes courage, physical strength and leadership

**Beaver**– The beaver symbolizes determination and strong – will

**Buffalo**– The buffalo symbolizes the sacred, life, great strength, abundance and gratitude

**Butterfly**– The butterfly symbolizes transformation

**Coyote**– The coyote symbolizes a cunning trickster

**Deer**– The deer symbolizes gentleness, grace and survival

**Dog**– The dog symbolizes loyalty

**Dragonfly**– The dragonfly symbolizes happiness, speed and purity

**Eagle**– The eagle symbolizes the divine spirit, creation and freedom

**Frog**– The frog symbolizes cleansing, sensitivity adaptability and transformation

**Fox**– The fox symbolizes anticipation, observation and stealth

**Gila Monster**– The gila monster symbolizes preservation and survival

**Horse**– The horse symbolizes mobility, stamina, strength and power

**Lizard**– The lizard symbolizes conservation and self – protection

**Opossum**– The opossum symbolizes diversion, strategy and deception

**Raccoon**– The raccoon symbolizes curiosity, adaptability and resourcefulness.

**Porcupine**– The porcupine symbolizes innocence, companionship, and trust

**Prairie Dog**– The prairie dog symbolizes swiftness and preparedness

**Scorpion**– The scorpion symbolizes transformation, strength and chaos

**Serpent**– The serpent symbolizes chaos, corruption and darkness.

**Squirrel**– The squirrel symbolizes planning and the home

**Snake**– The snake symbolizes healing and re – birth

**Spider**– The spider symbolizes creativity and is the weaver of the fabric of life

**Turtle**– The turtle symbolizes good health and long life

**Wolf**– The wolf symbolizes direction and leadership and embodies both protection and destruction

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