SITE SIX - KATKWWUWIS
Cut people's heads off (in warfare)
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The first point after Whitesands Cove Beach is katkwuuwis -- cut people's heads off (in warfare). It is a significant site relating to the Ahousaht and Otsoaht war which lasted for 14 years in the early 1800s. This is where war captives' heads were cut off.

The Otsoaht attacked the Ahousahts who were gathering gooseneck barnacles on an island off Ahous Bay on Vargus Island. At first the people on shore at Ahous thought the gunshots were from hunters seeking seals. When they finally realized that their gatherers were being attacked by Otsoahts, they rushed to launch a war canoe. But the canoe got off to a slow start.

The Ahousaht Chief of Ahous was married to an Otsoaht. Putting her allegiance to her birth tribe first, she wanted to sabotage the efforts to catch the raiding party. She said to her sons "why don't you do something about it!" So, on the launch, they purposely tipped the canoe, getting all the muskets wet (At that time the Europeans had already arrived and had traded muskets with the Nuu-chah-nulth.) They delayed the start of the chase. The Ahousahts chased the Otsoaht all the way to katkwuuwis.

The Otsoahts had their difficulties, too. Two Ahousaht ladies were captured during the raid and were put in the Otsoaht canoe. The Otsoaht warriors, paddling as hard as they could, told the captives to bail the canoe. Instead, they pulled out the caulking and the canoe slowed because it took on water.
When the Ahousahts got to shore they built a big bonfire to dry their muskets out. They waited for daybreak to attack the Otsoahts raiders who were now on the other side of katkwuusis.

This is how the Ahousahts came to own Flores Island. It was a time of great wars. Ahousaht lost a lot of men. The war cost a lot of blood for our people.

This place is a reserve for our people. They stayed here all summer long, fishing for seals and halibut. It was also important for whaling. When they were successful in the hunt and killed a whale they would tow it ashore and would cut it up at this place. It is known that there has been a village here for many hundreds of years.