

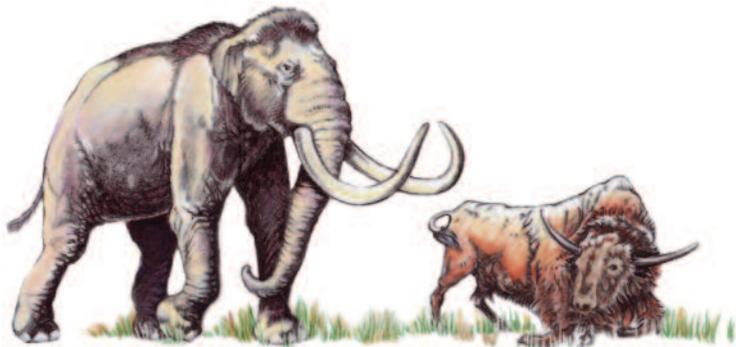
NATIVE PEOPLES AND NATIVE CULTURES IN WHAT IS NOW ARIZONA

Time Periods and Peoples

The First People: The Paleoindians

People have lived in Arizona for more than 12,000 years. *Archaeologists*, the scientists who study past peoples, named the first people, “*Paleoindians*.” The word Paleoindian has two parts. The first part, “Paleo” means very old. The second part, “Indian” was the name given to the first people in what is now North America. Together, Paleoindian means Indians who lived a long time ago. These early Indians were *hunters and gatherers*. They hunted or trapped wild *game* animals and collected wild plants. They used parts of animals and plants for food, shelter, clothing, and other basic needs.

Twelve thousand (12,000) years ago, it was cooler and wetter than it is today. Some different animals and plants lived at this time. Paleoindian people took advantage of everything around them. They were successful hunters of very big game animals. Imagine hunting animals the size of elephants with sticks and stones! Some of the largest animals hunted were *mammoths* and giant *bison*. All of the big game animals are now *extinct*. Hunters also trapped smaller animals like rabbits, birds, and lizards. Fruit, nuts, seeds, leafy greens, and roots were a of their diet.



Mammoths and giant bison lived here 12,000 years ago.

Plant foods ripen in different places from early spring to late autumn. Paleoindian families moved often. They traveled far to gather plants and hunt animals. They were *nomadic*. People did not have animals to carry their things. They had to carry everything! For this reason, families traveled light. They used local resources near each new camp for shelter, fires, and tools. Moving also allowed the families to follow animal *migrations*.

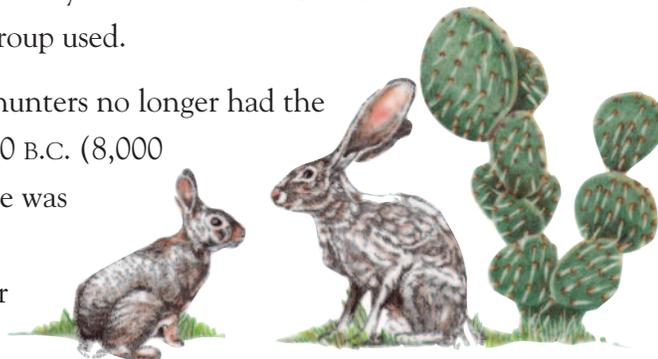
It has been thousands of years since the Paleoindian people lived in Arizona. Many of their things have rotted over the years. Because so much has rotted, archaeologists rarely find their campsites. Sometimes archaeologists do find the materials that do not rot.

Hunters made most of their tools from wood, bone, and stone. Since stone does not rot, archaeologists sometimes find the places where tools were made or animals were killed. The *kill sites* are identified by the stone spear points and the cutting tools that hunters left behind. When archaeologists find *artifacts* with animal bones they know the animal was killed by people. Paleoindian tools with big game animal bones tell us that site is more than 8,000 years old. The hunting and gathering way of life did not end with the Paleoindian people. It continued for many thousands of years.

Archaic-Period Hunters and Gatherers

The *Archaic-period* people lived in Arizona from about 8,000 to 2,000 years ago. What is the difference between the earlier Paleoindian hunter-gatherers and the later Archaic-period hunter-gatherers? Both were nomadic peoples. Both lived most of the year in small groups. Both collected wild plant and animal foods. They used similar tools. There are two major differences between Paleoindians and Archaic peoples. The first is the types of animals they hunted. The second is the size of the *territory* each group used.

The Archaic-period hunters no longer had the big game animals. By 6000 B.C. (8,000 years ago) all the big game was extinct. Instead, Archaic hunters looked for smaller game that survived the



A cottontail and jackrabbit sit by a prickly pear cactus.



Clovis points were made and used by Paleoindians as the sharp tips on spears.



environmental changes. In Arizona, deer, elk, bighorn sheep, and pronghorn were the largest animals hunted. People still hunted the smaller rabbits, birds, and lizards as well.

During this time, the weather got warmer and drier than in the Paleoindian period. The warmer and drier climate caused many changes. It affected where water could be gotten and where plants grew. It also affected where wild animals would find their own food and shelter. Hunters and gatherers were forced to become more watchful of the places they used. They had to protect the natural resources that allowed them to survive. As a result of these changes, Archaic hunting and gathering family groups used smaller territories than their Paleoindian *ancestors*.

Archaic-period hunters seem to have stayed longer in each place. They returned year after year to the same seasonal camps. Archaeologists think this because they find many more campsites. The longer people use a place, the more they leave behind. Some camps have small houses that were used the same season every year. Fire pits and cooking areas were also used over and over. Very important, heavy, and hard-to-carry artifacts like *grinding stones* were left at camps. Some camps even had places where food was kept for future visits. There are other clues that make archaeologists think that people stayed in smaller territories. The people

A bighorn sheep, white-tail deer, pronghorn antelope, and an elk.

Seeds, grains, and grasses were ground on a grinding stone with a hand stone.



Native Peoples and Native Cultures in What is Now Arizona

in each territory had their own types of hunting tools. The tools of people in northern Arizona were different than the tools of people in southern Arizona. Also, the Archaic-period people made more stone tools out of local kinds of rocks than the people before them.

The Archaic-period people were very successful hunters and gatherers. Like all hunting and gathering people, they carried most of their things. Like past people, they created tools and weapons out of wood, bone, stone, and plant material. In Arizona, there are lots of types of stone hunting tools made by Archaic-period peoples. They also made baskets, sandals, nets, blankets, and bags. They built the frame of their shelters with sticks. The frame was covered with animal hides or woven mats. People made tools and jewelry out of bone, stone, shell, and wood. Except for stone, all of these materials usually rot. But some have been found by archaeologists in very dry places.



Sandals and a basket sit on a woven net and a piece of painted cotton cloth.

The nomadic life of the Archaic people stayed the same for at least 4,000 years (6000 to 2000 B.C.). About 4,000 years ago a new way of getting food became known by the hunters and gatherers of Arizona. They learned about growing corn in small gardens.

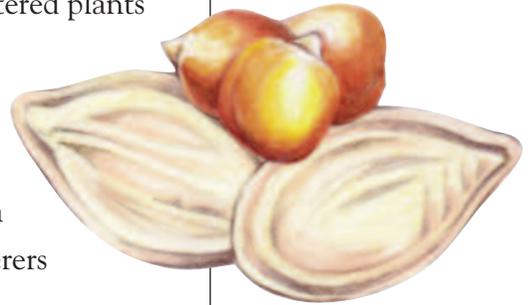
Forager-Farmers of the Late Archaic Period

Sometime between 4,000 years ago and 2,000 years ago, some hunter-gatherers started growing corn in small gardens. Up until then, people only *foraged* for their food. The idea of helping plants to grow was not new. Humans had always watched the effects of hot or cold. They saw how things changed with wet or dry weather. They watched what wind and forest fires did to plant growth. They may have even watered plants that they liked and tried to keep animals from eating them.

Corn kernels and pumpkin-type squash seeds were brought to the area from what is now Mexico. People learned how to plant, grow, cook, and store them. This was a new *subsistence pattern*. The change meant that hunter-gatherers had to make a decision.

People may have talked to their families and friends. They may have asked questions like, “Do we stay hunters and gatherers? Do we chance change and try something new?” It was a hard choice. It would be a big change to the life they knew. Only those families who had access to water and farmland could try farming.

Archaeologists now know that early on, farming took third place behind gathering wild plants and hunting wild game. Many hundreds of years would pass before *agriculture* would provide the main source of food. This acceptance of the farming way of life took place at different times in different places. In Arizona, it happened between 1,500 and 3,000 years ago.



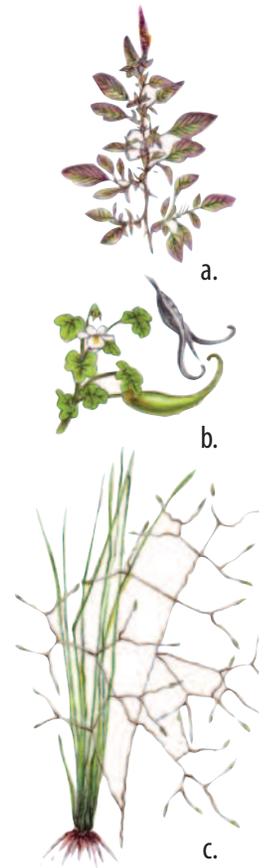
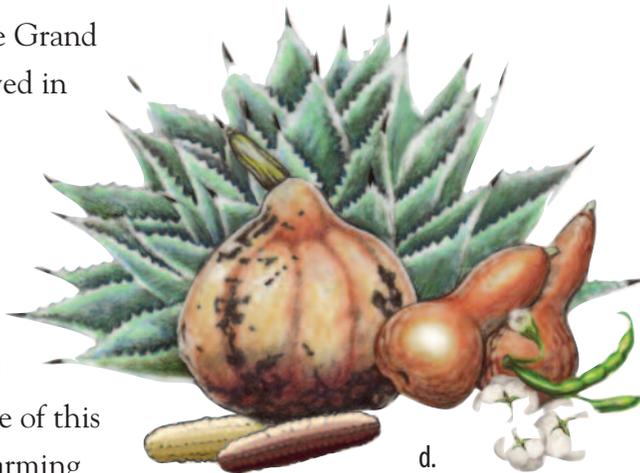
Corn kernels and squash seeds.

The Precontact Agricultural Peoples: the First Farmer-Foragers in Arizona

Sometime between 1000 B.C. and A.D. 500, or about 3,000 to 1,500 years ago, many of the native peoples chose to become farmers. These native people are Indians, the ancestors of today's *Native American* tribes. Indians continued to hunt and gather wild foods, but for the first time, farming came first. People started to get most of their food by raising *domesticated* plants. They *cultivated* plants meaning they selected the best seeds, planted them, watered them, kept animals from eating them, and picked them when ripe.

The first domesticated crops were corn and pumpkin-type squash. Later, different kinds of corn and squash, as well as *gourds*, beans, and cotton were added to the gardens and fields. Also, some types of wild plants were encouraged to grow. Some of the native plants that were encouraged were *amaranth*, *devil's claw*, *grasses*, and *agave*.

Archaeologists think there were five big groups of people from this time period. They believe they are ancestors to many Native Americans living in Arizona today. Each group lived in a different area of Arizona. Each group depended more or less on farming. The *Ancestral Pueblo* (Anasazi) lived in northeastern Arizona on the high deserts of the *Colorado Plateau*. The *Hohokam* lived in southern Arizona in the lower sections of the Sonoran Desert. The *Mogollon* lived in east-central Arizona in and near the mountains. The *Patayan* lived in western Arizona in the low deserts near the Colorado River and the uplands near the Grand Canyon. The *Sinagua* lived in central Arizona near Flagstaff and the Verde Valley. Within each big group, there were small groups of families and friends who claimed certain territories. People of this time either focused on farming



- a. Amaranth used for food and dye.
- b. Devils Claw used in making baskets.
- c. Grass with edible seeds.
- d. Corn, cotton, beans, and squash in front of an agave.

over foraging, or foraging over farming. Archaeologists tell the difference between each big group of people by where they lived, the types of homes they lived in, and the tools they made.

Those groups who were farmers first and foragers second lived for most of the year in one place. They had stronger, more permanent homes and villages, and had more tools and objects. They made and kept heavy breakable objects like pottery jars. They also lived close to places where they could raise crops. The Ancestral Pueblo, Hohokam, and Sinagua were farmers. They added some wild foods to their diet. Some small groups within the larger group of Mogollon and Patayan people were farmers, but most had to be foragers first to survive.

The forager-farmers lived more like their Archaic-Indian ancestors. They moved frequently to take advantage of seasonal resources. They moved to survive harsh winters or very hot summers. Their houses were built from local materials and not made to last long. They carried less with them. They kept fewer objects in each place. In time, most of the foraging Mogollon people changed their pattern and became more like their Ancestral Pueblo farming neighbors.

The new pattern meant that the Mogollon people also farmed and lived most of the year in one place. They built strong homes and had many more tools and objects. Only the Patayan remained mostly foragers throughout their history.



Ceramic pots made by the Ancestral Puebloan (left), Hohokam (right), and Sinagua (center) peoples.

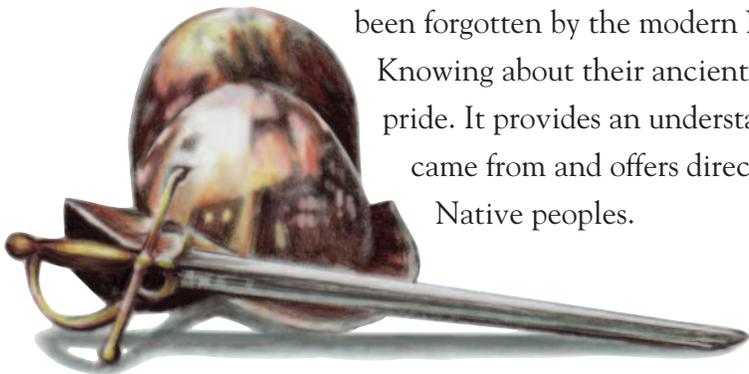
Many traditional ways of life ended shortly after the first Spanish colonists arrived in Arizona in the A.D. 1500s and early 1600s. The time period is called the Contact Period because it was when the Native people and the first Spanish and Euroamericans met each other.

The Spanish quickly learned that the Native peoples did not all share the same language or way of life. By the time Arizona became a state (A.D. 1912), at least 16 distinct Native American groups or tribes were living in Arizona. Each of these groups had their own language, traditional territories, and way of life.

Today, many, but not all, Native Americans in Arizona live on reservations. The reservations are on parts of their original territories. The reservations of the Hopi and Navajo are in northeastern Arizona; the Southern Paiute, Walapai, and Havasupai reservations are in northwestern Arizona; the Western Apache reservation is in east-central Arizona; the Yavapai reservations are in central Arizona; the Mohave, Maricopa, Chemehuevi, Quechan, and Cocopa reservations are along the Colorado River in western Arizona; and the Pima, Tohono O'odham, and Yaqui reservations are in southern Arizona.

Almost all of Arizona's Native peoples believe they come from one or more of the first farming and foraging peoples of the U.S. Southwest. For example, the Hopi understand that they have ancestors among the Ancestral Pueblo, Mogollon, and Hohokam. The Pima and Tohono O'odham understand their ancestors were Hohokam. The modern Yavapai understand that among their ancestors were Patayan and Sinagua people. Archaeologists, too, think there are *relationships* between past peoples and present peoples. The *knowledge* and important traditions of ancestral hunters-gatherers and farmer-foragers have not been forgotten by the modern Native people.

Knowing about their ancient relatives gives people pride. It provides an understanding of where they came from and offers direction for the modern Native peoples.



A helmet and sword like the ones carried by Spanish soldiers.