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INTRODUCTION

People have lived in what is now California for thousands of years. There are signs that the first people came here more than 10,000 years ago. They may have come from the continent of Asia, crossing the Bering Strait into what is now Alaska and then moving south down the North American continent.

When the first European explorers sailed along the California coast in the 1500's and 1600's, there were probably more than 300,000 people living in California. Some lived along the ocean coast, others lived in mountain areas, in valleys, and in the desert. They enjoyed a great variety of food resources as they hunted, fished, and gathered the hundreds of edible plants that grew here.

What should we call the first Californians?

The people living in North America in 1492 were called Indians because Christopher Columbus, the Italian explorer who landed in the islands off the east coast of Central America, mistakenly thought he had reached India. The name American Indians has been used for 500 years, though we know it is based on a mistake. As a result, the first people in California are often called California Indians. Sometimes the name Native Californians is used. However, California Indians is the name now preferred by many.

The first Californians did not have one name by which they called themselves. They did not consider themselves to belong to one group or tribe. They spoke many different languages, perhaps as many as 90 languages with more than 300 dialects. The people lived in small groups. They seldom traveled far from their home area, and could only understand the languages of nearby groups.

Many groups in early California referred to their own group by the word in their language that meant *people*. To other groups, their neighbors, they gave

names that often referred to the place where the neighbor lived. Many times this resulted in several different names being given to a single group, as various neighbors called them by different names.

The names we use today for the various groups of California Indians have been chosen from terms used by neighboring groups, or by the Spanish settlers who came in the late 1700's. Even among these names, there are various ways of spelling them. Also, within each major group, smaller groups were given different names by their neighbors or by the Spanish.

It is difficult to determine exactly how many "groups" of early Californians there were. Researchers use the language spoken by the people as one key to show which small communities or villages were part of a larger group, or band. Languages that seemed to have the same basis are called *language families*. In some areas, it is uncertain as to whether a small group was actually part of a larger group, or was a totally separate group.

The lines dividing the territory where one group lived from that of another are not exactly known. Sometimes a certain river or the crest of a mountain range is thought to be the boundary between two groups. In other cases there is no distinct geographical feature. Therefore, the map showing the territory for each group can only be approximate.

The geographical division of groups and the names for these groups as used in the *California Indians Fact Cards* are, for the most part, those given in the *Handbook of North American Indians*, published by the Smithsonian Institution in 1978.

The state boundary lines that were drawn for California in the mid-1800's cut through tribal areas.

This meant that some of the Indian groups of the Great Basin area in Nevada, and of the southwestern desert of Arizona, had portions of their lands placed within the new California borders. From a cultural view, these groups (the Paiute, Shoshone, Mohave, Quechan) were quite different from the California Indians. They are included in *California Indians Fact Cards* because their traditional lands lie partly within the present state boundaries.

How do we know the early history of the California Indians?

Before 1770, the people in California were seldom disturbed by outsiders. It is difficult to know exactly how they lived then, because they did not create written records or descriptions of their life. There are just a few accounts by early explorers (Cabrillo, Drake, Portolá) of their meetings with the people of California.

The 1770 population figures quoted in the *California Indians Fact Cards* for various groups are from estimates made by a researcher, A. L. Kroeber, in 1925. They may be lower than the actual numbers. Nobody knows for sure just how many people lived in California then. Even the 1910 U.S. Census figures are not considered to be an accurate count of the California Indians, as many had been moved from their traditional homes and were probably miscounted.

There are two methods used by researchers to learn about early Californians. The first is through talking with the descendants of the early people. The California Indians passed on their history to their children and grandchildren by telling them stories about the past. Then the children told the stories to their children. In the early 1900's, several researchers talked with people who told them the stories they had been told, and the researchers wrote down the information.

A second method of learning about California life before 1770 is through archeological study of village sites. By looking at the bits and pieces left behind and buried through the years by dirt, leaves, and rubble, an archeologist can get clues to what life was like for the people in that village.

After 1770, the life of the early Californians began to change dramatically, and the manner of living described in the *California Indians Fact Cards* began to disappear. In 1769, the first Spanish mission was established in San Diego. Over the next 50 years, 21 missions were built from San Diego to Sonoma, north of San Francisco Bay. Indians who lived near any of the missions were affected first. Their way of life was disrupted. They were not allowed to continue eating the kind of food which they had eaten for hundreds of years. Many died of diseases brought by the padres and soldiers.

More European settlers followed the missions, taking land that had provided food and shelter for the Indians. Then came people looking for gold. By 1900, many of the California Indians had lost their land to the newcomers. The number of California Indians had been reduced to about 15,000. Some groups were gone, without any survivors. Others were isolated on reservations.

There are some things shared by most of the early Californians. For instance, they were "hunters and gatherers," getting their food from wild animals and plants, rather than from farming or cattle raising. They hunted deer; they gathered acorns. They made baskets, which they used in a great many ways.

There are also differences (depending on exactly where the people lived) in the type of clothes they wore, how they built their homes, and what tools they used. And there are unique things about each of the early California groups.

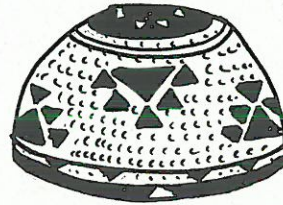
California Indians Fact Cards gives quick facts about the traditional way of life in about 1770 of more than 50 early California groups.

Source: Most of the information in the *California Indians Fact Cards* is taken from the *Handbook of North American Indians*, volumes 8, 10, and 11, published by the Smithsonian Institution in 1978. Other sources include *The Indians of California*, Time-Life Books, 1994; and Kroeber, A.L., *Handbook of the Indians of California*, originally published in 1925 as Bulletin 78 of the Bureau of American Ethnology of the Smithsonian Institution.



ACHUMAWI

(ä chōō' mā wē)



Woman's basket cap

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northeastern California [Modoc County, northern Shasta & Lassen Counties, southeastern Siskiyou County]	1770 estimate -- 3,000 (Achumawi & Atsugewi) 1910 Census -- 1,000	Hokan family

The language of the Achumawi was much like that of the Atsugewi, to the south of them. The two groups are sometimes linked together as the Palaihnihan branch of the Hokan language family. The Achumawi were friendly with the Atsugewi, but they often fought with the Modoc, to the north.

SETTLEMENTS

The Achumawi (also spelled Achomawi) lived along the Pit River and along some of the rivers and streams that flowed into it. Much of their land away from the rivers was high mountain country, some forested with fir and pine but other parts covered with lava from eruptions of Mt. Shasta and Mt. Lassen volcanoes, where nothing grew. There were also large swampy areas.

Small clusters of villages, called tribelets, were connected by their common language and by a single headman chosen by the people. There were nine of these tribelets in Achumawi territory. Within the tribelets, people referred to each other by their relationship (aunt, brother) rather than by personal names. It was considered rude to call someone by their real name.

The name *Achumawi*, meaning *river people*, probably came from the people's name for one of the groups of villages, located along the Fall River. They were also known as the Pit River Indians. The river got its name from the people's custom of digging pits several feet deep and covering them with branches, to trap the deer.

HOUSES

Winter houses for the Achumawi were dug out of the ground, usually in a 15-foot square. A center pole with other poles or logs used as cross beams made a frame over the dug out area. Grass, tule reeds, and bark were placed over the frame, and then covered with a layer of earth. The main entrance to the house was through the smoke hole in the roof. A ladder made from two poles with crossbars tied on with plant fibers was used to climb down into the house.

The larger houses had two or three families living in them. The chief's home was also large, as was the village dance house. Single families had simpler houses made from bark that formed a sloping roof over a shallow hole dug in the ground. The cold winters in this area, with deep snow, meant that a fire was important to keep the people warm. Sagebrush, juniper branches, and pine trees that had fallen were used as fuel for the fire.

FOOD

The basic foods of most early northern Californian people (acorns, deer meat, salmon) were not quite as plentiful in Achumawi territory, so the people here depended on a greater variety of foods. Acorns were eaten by all the people, but in the eastern sections they were gotten mostly through trade, as not many oak trees grew there.

The swampy areas in Achumawi territory were home to many kinds of waterfowl. Ducks, geese, and

swans were used as food, as were their eggs. Cranes, mud hens, and pelicans were also eaten, as were sage hens, crows, hawks, magpies, and eagles that lived in the woodlands. Salmon could be found in large numbers only on the lower Pit River. More common were the bass, catfish, lamprey, pike, trout, crawfish and mussels caught in the rivers, streams, and lakes.

Besides deer, some elk were found near Mt. Shasta. Antelope were valued both as food, and for their hides, hoofs (used to make rattles), and antlers. Other animals used as food were jack rabbits, badgers, bears, beaver, coyotes, marmots (who lived near the lava flows), and other small animals.

Grassland areas provided many roots and bulbs including camas bulbs and wild onions. Epos, a carrotlike root, was popular. Sunflower seeds and other seeds from wild grasses were gathered; mustard seed was used for seasoning. They did not have true salt, but used leaves and seeds from the saltbush plant instead. Clover and young thistle plants were eaten. Berries and nuts came from the forests. The food supplies included angleworms; the larva (newly hatched form) of wasps, ants, bees, and hornets; crickets, grasshoppers, and caterpillars.

CLOTHING

Achumawi men wore both a short apron-like skirt and a shirt made from a piece of animal skin with a hole cut in the middle and the sides sewn together below the armholes. Sometimes they wore leggings made from deerskin, and moccasins made either of deerskin or woven from tule reeds and stuffed with grass. Elk, antelope, badger, bear, beaver, and coyote skins were also used to make clothing. When skins were not available, cedar bark could be shredded and attached to a belt to make a skirt.

The women wore a shirt much like the men, and a separate skirt made by wrapping a piece of deerskin around them. Sometimes they wore a fringed apron-type skirt. On their heads they wore a cap made like a basket. The clothes were sometimes decorated with porcupine quills.

Tattooing was done on women's faces, with three thin lines on the chins and a few lines on the cheek. Men had their noses pierced so they could wear a shell or bone ornament through the nose.

TOOLS

Dip nets, gill nets, seine nets and basket traps were used by the Achumawi to catch fish. For the string to make the nets, they used fibers from the dogbane or milkweed plant, or from the tule reeds that grew in marshy areas. Tules were also used to make mats that served as sleeping pads or as summer shelters. Simple dugout canoes made from pine or cedar logs were sometimes used on the rivers and lakes. Bundles of tule reeds were tied together to make rafts to cross streams and lakes..

Bows used in hunting were made of yew wood, or of mahogany or juniper, backed with sinew (animal tendons). The arrows had tips formed from obsidian (volcanic glass from Lassen Peak), with rattlesnake venom used to make them poisonous. Spear points and knives were also shaped from obsidian, which was plentiful in Achumawi territory. Bows and arrows were often decorated with colors of black, blue, white, red, and yellow. The paints came from colored minerals found in the area.

The Achumawi made baskets by the method known as twining, as did other northern California groups. Young willow shoots and plant fibers were used to make the baskets, which were decorated with ferns, pieces of roots, and redbud bark. Baskets were used to carry and store food, as cradles for babies, and as hats for the women.

TRADE

The Achumawi probably used clamshell beads as money. These beads would have been acquired in trade from groups to the south, having been traded up from the central coast. The beads were small pieces of shell shaped into disks with a hole punched in the middle, and strung on cords. Wealth was not as important to the Achumawi as it was to some other groups. Their leaders were not the richest men, but ones who could best carry out the duties of the headman.

CEREMONIES

Not many Achumawi ceremonies are known. Simple rituals, including having their ears pierced, were held when a girl or a boy became an adult member of the group. A girl had to dance and sing for ten nights. A boy had to go out alone on the mountain for a night.

ATHAPASKANS, SOUTHERN

LASSIK, MATTOLE, NONGATL, SINKYONE, WAILAKI



Lassik basket
for carrying seeds

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northwestern California, on the coast and inland, midway between San Francisco Bay and the Oregon border [Humboldt & northern Mendocino Counties]	1770 estimate -- 3,500 1910 Census -- 300	Athapaskan family

These five groups together are called the **Southern Athapaskans**. Their languages were similar to each other, but differed from the northern California tribes whose languages were also part of the Athapaskan family. The way of life of the five Southern Athapaskan tribes was also very similar to each other. They were more like the people to the north of them than like those to the east or south. These five Southern Athapaskan groups mark the southern boundary of the northwestern California way of life. Records of these groups are scanty; there may have been as many as 13,000 people in the 1700's, rather than the 3,500 listed.

SETTLEMENTS

Mattole (mə'tōl), sometimes called the Bear River Indians, is the name given to the group that lived along the Bear River and the coast near its mouth and the Mattole River from the ocean to the Upper North Fork River. There were at least seven Bear River villages and at least 60 Mattole River villages. *Mattole* is the Wiyot name for the river.

The **Sinkyone** (sing'kyōnē), with about 70 villages, had the land along the Eel River and its south fork, and a portion of coastline from Spanish Flat south.

Nongatl (näng,gät əl) villages were located along the Van Duzen River and the Upper Mad River, and the creeks that drained into the rivers. There were at least 35 villages. The name *Nongatl* is a Hupa word meaning *Athapaskan to the south*.

The **Lassik** (lǎ sĭk) had about 20 villages, occupying the land along the upper Eel River and the headwaters of the North Fork Eel and Mad rivers. The Lassik are thought to be named for a chief, perhaps of a nearby tribe.

The **Wailaki** (wī, lä kē) are divided into three groups: the Eel River Wailaki, the North Fork Wailaki, and the Pitch Indians (who also lived on the North Fork Eel River). There were almost 100 Wailaki villages. *Wailaki* means *north language* in the Wintu dialect.

Much of the land where the Southern Athapaskan groups lived was mountainous, with peaks up to 6,000 feet high in the North Coast Range. Redwoods, pine, and fir grew in the forests.

The Southern Athapaskan groups were divided into *tribelet*s, with each tribelet having a headman or chief. The headman was responsible for providing a large amount of food at feasts, and for settling arguments.

HOUSES

The houses of the Southern Athapaskan groups were cone-shaped. They started with a circle of poles. Pieces of bark were leaned against the poles, which slanted and met at the top. This type of house was more typical of the early central Californians. Of the Southern Athapaskans, only the Mattole made some of their houses more substantial with straight vertical walls and pitched roofs, like the

other northern people. The Mattole, Sinkyone, and Wailaki dug down about two feet inside the house, so the floor was below ground level. All the groups had a place for a fire in the middle of the house. Two or more families often shared a single house.

Each village had a sweathouse which was built on a circular plan, like the family houses. The Lassik and Wailaki added a layer of earth to the lower outside wall of the sweathouse.

During the summer, the Southern Athapaskan groups left their villages to camp in the hills, where they hunted and gathered food.

FOOD

The acorn was an important food for all five of the Southern Athapaskan groups. There were many oak trees in the territories of all except the Mattole. These groups also collected pine nuts, several kinds of berries, and many other plants to use as food.

For the Mattole and Sinkyone, fish were even more important than acorns. They caught salmon and steelhead trout as the fish swam upriver to spawn. Since they lived along the ocean, the Mattole and Sinkyone also gathered mollusks, did some ocean fishing, and ate the meat of sea lions. The river, however, was more important than the ocean as a source of food for them.

Another major food for the Southern Athapaskans was deer and elk meat. There were many black-tailed deer and elk in the mountain ranges. Reports tell of Lassik and Wailaki men running down deer by chasing them until the deer were so tired they dropped.

CLOTHING

The Southern Athapaskans used the hides of deer to make clothes for themselves. In warm weather, they did not wear much clothing. Men wrapped a piece of deerskin around their hips. Women wore apron-like skirts (one piece in front, one in back) that covered them from the waist to the knees.

Rabbit skins were used by the Southern Athapaskan people to make robes or blankets. It took many skins (as many as a hundred) to make a single blanket. These groups (except the Wailaki) wore deerskin moccasins in the summer to protect their

feet from rattlesnake bites.

Girls' faces were tattooed when they were teenagers. The Sinkyone women had horizontal lines tattooed on their cheeks, like the Yuki, as well as broad stripes on their chins, like the Hupa and other northern groups.

TOOLS

Baskets made in this region were done in the northern California style called twining. The Southern Athapaskans were the most southerly people to use this basketmaking method. Their baskets were not as finely done as those of the Yurok, to the north, and they had less decoration on them.

Large dugout canoes were used by the Sinkyone for travel on the Eel River. Other groups used smaller, less well-made canoes with a single paddle. Log rafts were also used for transportation, pushed with poles in shallow water or pulled by swimmers.

Fibers from the iris plant were used to make cord or string, which was then made into nets. Nets were attached to poles and used to catch fish. Pieces of elkhorn were used as tools to shape wood into bows and arrows. Bone awls (pointed tools for making holes) and bone needles were used for sewing.

TRADE

Dentalium shells strung on strings were used as money, but the shells that the Southern Athapaskans had were smaller, broken shells rather than the long ones used by tribes further north. The tooth-shaped dentalium shells came from far up the Pacific Coast, and the Southern Athapaskans were at the end of the line to receive them.

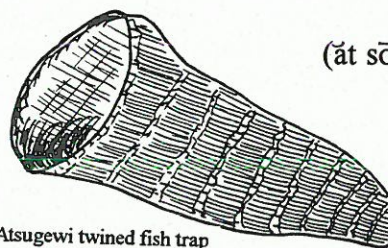
CEREMONIES

Ceremonies of the Southern Athapaskans were more simple than those of their northern neighbors. Some took place in the round sweathouses that served also as dance houses. There were dances to celebrate the salmon, dogs, coyotes, acorns, camas bulbs, and clover, but the most important ceremonies were for girls growing up. Dancers wore headbands made with yellowhammer (a type of woodpecker) quills. Some of the people used hide drums and flutes to make music.



ATSUGEWI

(āt sōō'gā wē)



Atsugewi twined fish trap

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northeastern California, south of the Pit River [Lassen County, eastern Shasta County]	1770 estimate -- 3,000 (Achumawi & Atsugewi) 1910 Census -- 250	Hokan family

The Atsugewi are connected by language with the Achumawi, to the north; their languages are known as the Palaihnihan branch of the Hokan language family. The Atsugewi were usually on friendly terms with all of their neighbors (the Achumawi, Yana, and Maidu). Danger came from the Modoc and Paiute tribes who came from further north and east on raiding parties, taking Atsugewi people as slaves.

SETTLEMENTS

Villages were located in the valleys along the creeks that flowed northward into the Pit River, especially Hat Creek, Horse Creek, and Burney Creek. Villages had from three to 25 houses. Village headmen led their people in hunting and gathering food, and settled arguments in the village.

Along with the Achumawi, the Atsugewi were known as the Pit River Indians. They were divided into two groups: the Atsuge or *pine-tree people* whose territory north of Mt. Lassen had a lot of lava from the volcano; and the Apwaruge or *juniper tree people*, who lived on the plains to the east of the Atsuge. The name *Atsugewi* comes from *Atsuke*, the name given by the people to a place on Hat Creek.

HOUSES

The winters were cold in Atsugewi territory, so winter homes were built to keep in the warmth of the fire. The houses were oval in shape, with a center pole. Other poles sloped down from the center to the sides, forming the frame for the house. The frame was covered with pieces of bark, and then with earth.

There was an entrance passage at one end, and a smoke hole in the center of the roof. Several families often lived in one house, which might be 20 or 30 feet in length.

In the summer, when the people traveled over their territory to gather food, they made temporary houses at camping places. For these houses, four poles were leaned together and tied at the top, forming a ground circle of 12 to 15 feet. The poles were covered with cedar bark slabs.

The headman usually had a larger house, which was also used as a village sweathouse by the men. Smaller sweathouses were made in summer camps.

FOOD

Because of their friendly relations with their neighbors, the Atsugewi could gather food outside their own territory. Salmon were caught in the Pit River, which was in Achumawi territory. In the smaller streams where the Atsugewi lived, they caught trout and other smaller fish.

Fish were more plentiful and easier to get than deer, but deer meat was prized as the food of a well-to-do family. Atsugewi men spent a lot of time hunting deer, sometimes in groups of hunters and sometimes alone. Any deer or antelope that was caught was divided by the chief among the people of the village.

Bows and arrows with poison on the tips were used to kill grizzly bears. Rabbits, ducks, mud hens, and other birds were caught with nets or shot with

arrows. Some small animals and birds, however, that were eaten by other early California groups were not considered good as food by the Atsugewi. They did not eat gray fox, coyote, eagle, buzzard, magpie, or crow.

At the end of the long winter, when spring allowed the people to go out once again to gather food, the first plant available was tree moss. Later the epos and camas roots were gathered, along with sunflower seeds. Oak trees for gathering acorns grew mainly in the western part of Atsugewi territory. The people who lived in the eastern part had to make long trips to get acorns from other Atsugewi areas or from the Yana or Achumawi.

The Atsugewi worked hard during the summer to gather enough food to store for the long, snowy winter months. Fish and deer meat was smoked and dried by hanging it on poles. It was then stored in pits dug in the ground, or in baskets hung in the trees. Acorns and other nuts, seeds, and roots were also dried for storage.

CLOTHING

Both deerskin and tule reeds were used to make clothing. Deerskin shirts and leggings were used for winter clothes, especially by wealthier people. At other times women wore skirts made of reeds bundled together and then sewn or woven into a mat. Men tied a tule mat around their hips.

Leggings and moccasins were also made from tule reeds, though in the winter the men sometimes had moccasins of deerskin, with the hair left on the inside to make them warmer. Pieces of rabbit fur were wound around the hand and wrist, to make a glove. Of all the early Californians, the Atsugewi lived in one of the coldest places, and so had to pay more attention to having warm clothes.

TOOLS

Baskets were important for carrying and storing food. They were made by the method called twining, in which upright pieces of willow or other shoots were interwoven with plant fibers. The baskets were decorated with pieces of fern. Large cone-shaped baskets, about five feet long, were used to catch fish. The Atsugewi also made fishing nets. Cord to make the nets came from twisting pieces of tule reeds.

Some wealthy men had canoes.

For hunting, the men used wooden bows and arrows, spears, and traps. They dug pits along the deer paths (which led to the name of the Pit River), and caught deer and other animals with rope snares. The rope was made from the tule reeds.

TRADE

Wealth was important to the Atsugewi, because it came as a result of hard work. A person who worked hard was admired, and a lazy person was shunned. Children were taught the value of work when they were young. A person born to a poor family could improve his or her position in the village by working hard.

A man chosen to be headman of a village was one who worked hard and had become rich. However, the headman then had to provide feasts and give gifts to visitors, which sometimes resulted in the headman no longer being the richest man in the village.

Clamshell beads were the form of money used in trade. The pieces of clamshell, shaped into disks and strung on cords, came from tribes to the south along the Pacific Coast. Furs and deerskins were also considered a sign of wealth, and were displayed in a rich man's lodge.

Things like canoes, baskets, and tools were a sign of wealth as well. The rich men who owned more of these things would loan them to less fortunate people, and receive in return a small gift of food. Rich men also had trading partners in other groups, with whom they exchanged goods and gifts.

CEREMONIES

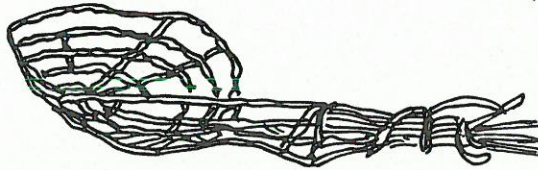
Perhaps because they put so much value on work, the Atsugewi had few ceremonies. About once a week, however, the headman would call for a day of rest when everyone stayed home rather than hunting or gathering food.

Although they sometimes visited the big dances and ceremonies of the neighboring Maidu and Wintun tribes, the Atsugewi didn't hold these dances themselves. They held small dances when boys or girls became adults, war dances before and after a battle, and singing sessions before a big hunt.



CAHTO

(kä,tō)



Cahto openwork twined seed beater

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northwestern California, midway between San Francisco Bay and the Oregon border [Mendocino County]	1770 estimate --500 1910 Census -- 51	Athapaskan family

Although their territory extended further south than that of the five groups known as the Southern Athapaskans, the Cahto (also spelled *Kato*) are not grouped with the other five. Their Athapaskan dialect was quite different from the other Southern Athapaskans, and their way of life was more like the Yuki and Pomo, to the east and south of them. Some Cahto people also spoke the Pomo language.

SETTLEMENTS

Cahto settlements were located in three small valleys along the upper part of the South Fork Eel River. These valleys were surrounded by redwood forests. There may have been as many as 50 Cahto villages. There was no tribal organization. Each village had one or two headmen, who gave advise to the others. Decisions, however, were generally made by the elders of the village. The position of village headman was usually passed on from father to son.

The name *Cahto* is a Pomo word meaning *lake*. The territory of the Cahto was bordered on three sides by that of Yukian-speaking people (the Yuki and Huchnom), and they had many things in common with the Yuki. However, they also shared much with the Pomo, so that for a time it was thought that the Cahto were part of the Pomo tribe.

HOUSES

To build their houses, the Cahto first dug a circular pit about two feet deep. Then they laid out a square around the pit by setting four forked posts into the ground. These posts supported the wall and roof

rafters, which were covered with pieces of pine or spruce wood, and then with bark or earth. The doorway was a narrow opening from the ground to the roof, which sloped towards the back of the house. The fireplace was centered in the pit area inside.

The Cahto houses were often large enough to have two or three families living in one house. A house was used for two winters, and then the families built new houses.

Some Cahto villages had a dance house, made in a style similar to the family houses, but with the circle being about 20 feet in diameter. The dance house was used for ceremonies; sometimes it was used as a sweathouse, but not like the northwestern tribes where the men slept in the sweathouse.

FOOD

The forests and streams supplied food for the Cahto people. Deer meat was eaten often. The men also caught bears (both black bears and cinnamon bears) in the woods, as well as smaller animals like squirrels, gophers, raccoons, moles, and skunks. They had dogs that they used to help in hunting game. Some birds were used as food, and some insects such as caterpillars, grasshoppers, bees, and hornets were eaten.

From the Eel River and the streams that ran down the valleys, the Cahto caught salmon and other fish. They preserved salmon to eat all year long by drying the extra fish when the salmon were plentiful.

The women added to the food supply by gathering acorns and other nuts, seeds, berries, and roots from the forest. The acorns were made into a thick soup called acorn mush, and sometimes into a bread. The acorn mush was cooked in baskets, to which hot stones were added. Constant stirring of the mush and stones kept the basket from burning.

CLOTHING

Deerhide clothes were worn by both men and women. In the summer, they used tanned hides that had the hair removed from them. For winter clothes, they used hides with the hair still on, so the clothes would be warmer. Both men and women wore an apron-type garment around their waist. Those worn by the women were longer, coming down to their knees.

Cahto men and women kept their hair long. They covered it with hairnets made of iris fibers. This is one custom that shows the Cahto lived more like the central California tribes than like the northwestern tribes. The Cahto women did not wear basket hats, as those in the northwestern tribes did. In addition to wearing shell or seed ornaments in their ears and nose, the Cahto wore bracelets made of strips of deerhide. Both men and women wore tattooed lines on their forehead, cheeks, chin, chest, wrist, or legs, though not everyone chose to have the tattoos.

TOOLS

In basketmaking, the Cahto used both the northern California method of twining and the southern California method of coiling. Their baskets were made much like those of the Yuki, their neighbors on the west, south, and east.

Pieces of bone and deer or elk antler were used by the Cahto to scrape and cut other materials like wood, roots, and hides. They could split large logs by hitting a wedge of elk antler with a stone maul (hammer). They made bows and arrows and spears from hazel wood. Pieces of bone were chipped off to make spear points for catching fish. Arrow points and knives were shaped from stone.

The men used bows and arrows for hunting and as weapons in battles with other tribes. They also used spears and deerhide slingshots. Traps and snares for catching small animals, as well as nets for catching

fish and birds, were made from the fibers of the iris plant or from slender willow branches.

The streams along which the Cahto lived were too shallow for canoes. Instead, the Cahto made rafts by lashing together five or six logs. They used a long pole to push the raft in the direction they wanted to go.

TRADE

Some of the food eaten by the Cahto came from the sea coast, and was gotten through trade with the Yuki, who lived along the ocean. The Yuki supplied them with salt, mussels, seaweed, abalone, and ocean fish.

As money, the Cahto used clamshells, flint, and magnesite. Clamshell beads were the most common form of money in early California, used by groups from the Mendocino coast southward. Although the Cahto lived on the edge of the northwestern California area, they did not use dentalium shells for money, as the northwestern groups did. Instead, pieces of clamshell were ground on stones until they were smooth and round. A little hole was drilled in each disk, and the disks were strung on strings. Older, more polished disks were considered of more value.

Magnesite is a stone found in northern California, in Pomo Indian territory. It was ground into small beads. When heated in a fire and polished, the beads turned pinkish or reddish in color. Magnesite beads were considered more valuable than shell money, and were traded as single pieces, or combined with shells on a string.

CEREMONIES

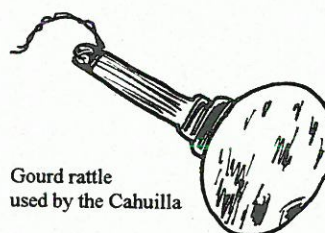
Ceremonies were held each winter and summer, with guests from nearby villages often invited. Dances might last for a week, with both men and women participating in the dancing. The Acorn Dance was held in the winter, in the hopes of having a good crop of acorns the next year.

Dances that were done just for fun included the Feather Dance, performed by six men, women, and children. The Necum Dance was done by six women on one side of a fire and six men on the other side. More serious were the War Dances done before each battle.



CAHUILLA

(kə'wē yu)



Gourd rattle
used by the Cahuilla

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
South central California , inland desert area [Riverside County]	1770 estimate --2,500 1910 Census -- 800	Uto-Aztecan family

The Cahuilla were far enough away from the coast to avoid early contact with the Spanish missions. A few were taken into the missions at San Gabriel, San Luis Rey, and San Diego, but not until 1819 were mission outstations established in Cahuilla territory.

SETTLEMENTS

The area where the Cahuilla lived was crossed by mountain ranges, canyons and valleys, and desert. The elevation ranged from 11,000 feet in the San Bernardino Mountains to 273 feet below sea level near the Salton Sea. This was a harsh land of extreme changes of temperature and high dry winds. Water supply was often a problem. Lakes formed when the high snows melted, and dried up in the summer. Springs and wells were the only year-round sources of water. Villages were placed near these water sources, usually in canyons.

The Cahuilla divided themselves into two groups based on their family heritage. The groups were known as the Wildcats and the Coyotes. Those animals were the totem figures (symbols) for the groups. Members of both groups might live in the same village. The village leader inherited the position from his father. He organized the food gathering and hunting, settled disputes, arranged ceremonies, and decided issues of trade and war.

It is not certain what the name *Cahuilla* means, nor whether it was used by the early people to refer to themselves. More likely, they called themselves by the name of their language.

HOUSES

The Cahuilla built several kinds of shelters. Some were open all across the front. They were made by setting several poles in a line in the ground and topping them with a ridge pole. More poles were slanted down from the ridge pole to form back and side walls, which were covered with brush. Other houses were dome-shaped with an entrance opening. These houses were also made on a framework of poles covered with brush. Sometimes earth was packed against the brush on the outside walls. The home of the village leader was usually the largest house in the village. Shade roofs were sometimes attached to the house, to provide working areas outside that were protected from the sun.

Some Cahuilla villages had sweathouses, built low to the ground, and ceremonial houses used for special rituals and social activities.

FOOD

Game animals were not as plentiful in much of the Cahuilla area as they were for many early Californians. Although the men hunted deer and rabbits, the people depended more on desert plants for their food supply.

Acorns were important to the Cahuilla, but because of the lack of water and the desert conditions, oak trees did not grow in much of Cahuilla territory. A more common food for the desert dwellers was the fruit of the mesquite tree, which has roots that can go deep down for water. In the spring, mesquite

blossoms were boiled and eaten. In the summer, the green bean pods from the tree were ground up and used to make a drink. After the pods dried on the mesquite trees in the fall, they were gathered and either eaten right from the tree, or ground into a meal and made into mesquite cakes, which could be stored for a long time.

The agave and yucca plants were also used for food. A variety of desert cacti produced edible fruit, as did the palm tree. Seeds from the juniper and pine trees were harvested by the Cahuilla. They also had chia seeds and the seeds of other plants. The seeds were dried or roasted with coals shaken in a basket, and then ground into a meal which could be eaten dry, boiled, or baked into cakes. In addition, several kinds of berries were dried and ground into meal.

CLOTHING

Unlike many early Californians, the Cahuilla often wore sandals on their feet. The sole of the sandal was made either of several layers of deerhide, or of mescal (a type of cactus) fibers woven together and bound with cord. The sole was held onto the foot by thongs of cord or deerhide. The cord was made by twisting together mescal or yucca plant fibers.

Cahuilla women wore skirts made from the bark of the mesquite tree, which was softened by pounding it. The skirt was a double apron type, with one piece covering the front and another piece in the back. Sometimes the skirt was made of tule reeds, and sometimes of deerskin. Cahuilla men usually wore a loincloth of deerskin. Blankets were made by sewing together strips of rabbit skin.

TOOLS

The Cahuilla were one of the few early California people to make pottery. The methods they used were like those used in the Colorado River area to the east, in Arizona. The clay was rolled into long ropes and then coiled in circles to form pots, bowls, or dishes. Crushed rock was sometimes mixed with the clay, to make it stronger. After the bowl or pot was formed, it was allowed to dry in the sun and then was baked in a fire. Sometimes the pots were decorated with designs in red dye. The pottery was light and thin, and broke easily.

Cahuilla baskets were made using several kinds of

grasses woven together, and decorated with yellow, red, brown, and green fibers of the juncus plant. Baskets made by the coiling method were either flat to be used as plates or trays, round to be used for storing things, or deep and cone-shaped for carrying things.

The Cahuilla men hunted with bows made of willow or mesquite wood and strung with mescal fiber or a strip of sinew (animal tendon). They used curved, flat throwing sticks when hunting small animals.

Stone mortars and pestles were used to grind seeds and nuts. The Cahuilla of the desert areas also used a wooden mortar sunk into the ground for grinding mesquite beans. For this grinding process, a slender stone pestle about two feet long was needed.

TRADE

Cahuilla territory was crossed by a major trade route, the Cocopa-Maricopa Trail, that brought people from the east to the Pacific Coast. The Santa Fe and Yuman trade routes also bordered Cahuilla land. Some Cahuilla people became known as expert traders, traveling west to the ocean and east to the Gila River carrying goods for trade. From the Gabrielino they got steatite (soapstone) and objects made from steatite. The shell beads that served as money also came to the Cahuilla by way of the Gabrielino. These were the olivella shells, shaped into disks and strung on strings.

From people living along the Colorado River, the Cahuilla traded for food (corn, melons, squash, and gourds), turquoise, and axes. With all of their neighbors, they traded their crafted items such as baskets, pottery, bows and arrows.

CEREMONIES

The village leader was responsible for keeping the bundle of ceremonial objects safe, and for assuring that the ceremonies were carried out properly. Singing was important to the Cahuilla. Both women and men sang as they worked and as they competed in games. At special ceremonies, a song leader who knew all the ceremonial songs led the singing. Some songs were very long, taking several days to sing through. The songs told the history of the people. Music for the singing was made with flutes, whistles, and rattles made of turtle shells, or gourds.



CHEMEHUEVI

(chě'mə hoy'və)

Agave plant, used for food and fiber

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
East central California, in the eastern part of the Mohave Desert [San Bernardino County]	1770 estimate --800 1910 Census --260	Uto-Aztecan family

The Chemehuevi were actually Southern Paiutes, connected with the Paiutes of Nevada and Arizona. Their speech and way of life was more like that of people in the Great Basin of Nevada than it was like other early Californians.

SETTLEMENTS

The lands of the Chemehuevi covered a large area in the southeastern part of the state. Most of the area was part of the Mohave Desert, and not many places were good for settlements. Though they had one of the largest areas of the early California people, they had few settlements and few people.

The Chemehuevi called themselves *nirwü*, meaning *people* in their language. The name *Chemehuevi* is what they were called by their neighbors to the south, the Mohave and other Yuman groups.

A settlement might consist of just one or two families, or as many as 10 or 20 families who searched for food together, traveling from place to place but coming back often to one fixed area. Most groups chose a leader who was expected to be wealthy as well as wise in advising the group as to when and where to hunt for food. The position of leader was usually inherited by the eldest son.

HOUSES

Protection from the sun and wind was the main need in the desert. Houses were often brush-roofed shelters made by placing poles in the ground in a rectangular pattern, joining the upright poles with

cross poles at the top, and covering the roof frame with branches. A brush side-wall on the side from which the wind usually came gave more protection. In colder weather, the people might build their houses with three side walls. Covering the brush with earth made the house warmer inside.

Caves were used by the Chemehuevi when they were available. A cave made a snug home when the weather was cold. Little caves or crevices in the rocks were used for storing food and supplies.

FOOD

The Chemehuevi had to work hard to find food in their desert home. They hunted small game like rabbits, wood rats, mice, gophers, squirrels, chipmunks, lizards and tortoises. Sometimes hunters joined together in a rabbit drive.

Large game such as deer, antelope, and mountain sheep were scarce. Some men owned the rights to hunt these larger animals in certain areas, and passed these rights on to their sons. The hunting areas were described in songs. The owner of the rights to the hunting area must know the proper song to show that it was indeed his area.

The Chemehuevi did not like to eat fish, but they caught birds, gathered bird eggs, and ate caterpillars and locusts.

The agave plant was a basic food which grew all year round. The leaves were cut off and part of the stalk was baked. The people also gathered seeds

and a type of cactus called mescal. The seeds were dried and then ground into flour to be used for mush or for bread. To gather pine nuts, the people had to go to the mountains.

The Chemehuevi were one of the few early Californians to do a little farming, having learned from their neighbors to the east how to grow beans, corn, wheat, and melons. Only in a few spots was there enough water to grow these crops.

CLOTHING

Chemehuevi women probably wore an apron-like skirt with one piece in the front and one in the back. The skirt was made of plant fibers attached to a waist band. The men wore a piece of animal skin wrapped around their hips or, in warm weather, went without clothes. For colder weather, a cape made of animal skins was worn over the shoulders by both men and women. The skins for clothing came from antelope or mountain sheep, or from a number of rabbit skins cut in strips and sewn together with cord.

Both men and women often wore caps on their heads. The women's cap was woven of plant fibers, like a basket, and served to protect the head when a large load was carried in a basket supported by a head strap. Caps worn by the men were made of animal skin. A leader or a skillful hunter might have a few quail feathers on his cap, to show his importance.

Though they went barefoot much of the time, there were occasions when sandals or moccasins were worn. Bark or plant fibers (particularly from the yucca plant) was used to make sandals. Some Chemehuevi made moccasins from pieces of deerhide, or from the whole skin of a squirrel or other small animal.

Both as decoration and to protect their skin from the sun and wind, men and women painted their faces and bodies with red, white, black, yellow, and blue.

TOOLS

It appears that the Chemehuevi sometimes made pots from the clay in their area. However, baskets were more common. Their coiled baskets were made from slender willow branches, with other fibers sewn through the coils. They also made

baskets by the twining method, used especially for caps, trays, and carrying baskets. Instead of working in designs with colored fibers, as other Californians, the Chemehuevi often painted designs on the basket after it was completed. It seems that the Chemehuevi did not use baskets for cooking, as many early Californians did.

Besides using pottery water jars and cooking pots, the Chemehuevi made a large pottery container which they used to carry children across the Colorado River. Adults sometimes used log rafts to cross the river, or they swam across, pushing the pot with the children in front of them.

The agave plant was the source of fibers which the Chemehuevi made into rope and cord. It was a man's job to make rope, and a woman's job to make the lighter cord or twine. The men used the cord to make nets, which were used in hunting small game and for carrying loads. Chemehuevi nets were made double; they could be opened up to carry a larger load.

TRADE

The Chemehuevi traveled a lot and had contacts with many other groups. They were especially influenced by the Mohave people, with whom they traded ideas as well as goods.

Since they moved often in the search for food, the people did not accumulate lots of belongings as wealth. One valuable possession was a spring of water, which was considered to be private property. Wealthy men would be those who owned a spring or the hunting rights for large game in a certain area.

CEREMONIES

The Chemehuevi had four groups of songs, called the Salt, Deer, Mountain Sheep, and Shamans' or Doctoring song cycles, which were used in their ceremonies. Each group of songs was connected with a story which was told during the ceremony. The Deer and Mountain Sheep songs were sung both for fun, and to insure success in the hunt.

One important ceremony was the Cry, held several months after the death of a relative. Many neighbors were invited to a big feast where presents were given. Objects belonging to the deceased were burned in a ceremonial fire.



CHILULA

(chǐ'loo lu)



Northwest plank house with pitched roof

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northwestern California [Humboldt County]	1770 estimate --500-600 1910 Census -- not known	Athapaskan family

The language spoken by the Chilula was very close to that of the Hupa, a larger group who lived just to the east of the Chilula. The Whilkut people, who lived south of the Chilula, also shared this language. By the late 1800's, the few remaining Chilula people had become integrated with the Hupa on the Hoopa Reservation.

SETTLEMENTS

Chilula villages were built along Redwood Creek, which ran southwest of the Klamath River and emptied into the ocean north of Humboldt Bay. The Chilula, however, occupied only a portion of the land along Redwood Creek. They were cut off from the ocean by the Yurok, whose lands extended across the mouth of Redwood Creek and who were not friendly with the Chilula. The upper reaches of Redwood Creek were occupied by the Whilkut.

There were high hills along both sides of Redwood Creek in Chilula territory. On the western side, thick forests of redwood and oak trees came down to the creek. On the eastern side of the creek, the hills were broken by valleys with little streams running down them. It was here that the Chilula built their homes. There were more than 20 villages, with an average size of about 30 people.

These people who lived along Redwood Creek did not call themselves *Chilula*. This name was given to them later, and comes from a Yurok term, *Tsulu-la*, meaning *people of Tsulu*. *Tsulu* refers to the Bald Hills, the name given the hills in this area because

there are no trees on the hill tops. The Chilula are also called the Bald Hills Indians.

HOUSES

The Chilula built their houses in the same style as the larger northwest California tribes. They cut planks from fallen trees. The planks were placed upright to form the walls of the house, which was rectangular in shape. The floor of the house was sunk into the ground by digging a pit several feet deep. A notched log served as a ladder for the people to climb down into the house. This is where the women and children slept and worked, and where the family ate.

The men and older boys slept together in the village sweathouse. The sweathouse was smaller than a family dwelling, but made in the same manner with wooden plank walls and a pit inside where the fire was built.

The Chilula left their villages in the summer and went to the grassy hills where they gathered plants for food. Individuals claimed ownership of certain seed-gathering or hunting spots, and camped near these spots during the summer. Their temporary houses were made of pieces of bark placed upright to form walls, with the floor at ground level.

FOOD

Because Redwood Creek was a small stream, it had fewer fish than the nearby rivers. However, it was still a major source of food for the Chilula. They

used spears or dip nets to catch salmon. Temporary dams made of brush were placed in the creek to catch steelhead (trout). To catch lamprey eels, the Chilula sometimes built two small platforms above a barrier placed across the creek. From the platforms, the men used dip nets to catch the eels.

Because the fish supply in Redwood Creek was limited, the Chilula depended more on plant food than did their neighbors who lived along the Klamath or Trinity Rivers. The Chilula gathered bulbs and seeds on the hillsides in the summer. In the autumn they gathered acorns. They gathered enough food to store for the rest of the year.

Many deer and elk were found in the Bald Hills and in the meadows among the redwood forests. The Chilula hunted these animals for food. The men were skillful hunters. They often worked together to drive the deer or elk into a place where they could use their stone-tipped arrows to bring an animal down. Sometimes they made a noose of iris-fiber rope and placed it along a deer or elk trail. When an animal caught its foot in the noose, the men would be waiting nearby to use their bow and arrows.

CLOTHING

The deer that were a source of food for the Chilula were also the main source of clothing. The women usually wore a skirt made from two pieces of deerskin, one covering the front and the other covering the back, and hanging from the waist to below the knees. The back section was fringed on the lower edge. The front section was sometimes made of many strips attached to a belt.

The men usually wore a piece of deerskin around the lower part of their body. When the weather was cold, both men and women used a robe or blanket of animal skins wrapped around their shoulders to keep them warm. The people went barefoot except when going on a long trip. Then they would make moccasins from a piece of deerhide. A single piece of hide became a shoe by making a seam up one side for the heel, and another seam on top of the foot.

TOOLS

Baskets were important to the Chilula, as they were to the other early Californians. The women were the basketmakers. They became skillful at weaving

branches, twigs, and roots into useful shapes. The basketmaking process used by the Chilula was called twining. The warp (upright) pieces of the basket were often made of hazel shoots (new slender branches). In between these branches the women wove strands cut from tree roots. Sometimes they wove the pieces very close together so that the baskets could be used to hold mush or water. Many baskets were needed for gathering, cooking, and storing food. Rocks heated in a fire were placed in the food inside the basket to cook it.

Other baskets were made to be used as hats. These basket hats protected the forehead when heavy loads carried on the person's back were held in place by a strap around the forehead. Special baskets were made to serve as baby cradles.

The Chilula men made spears, bows and arrows, and traps from wood. These things were necessary for them to use in getting their food. Pieces of elk or deer antlers were used as tools for scraping and shaping the wood. They may also have made low stools and wooden-block headrests from cedar logs. These would have been the only furniture in their houses.

Redwood Creek was too small for the Chilula to use canoes.

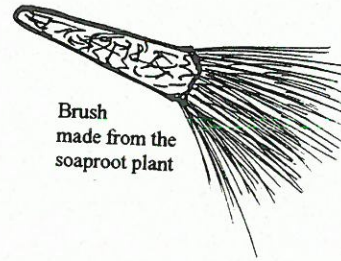
TRADE

Wealth was important to the Chilula. The richest men in the group had the most power. Like their neighbors, the Chilula placed great value on dentalium shells. These tooth-shaped mollusk shells, which were obtained in trade from tribes further north, were kept on strings. They were grouped by size, with the larger shells being the more valuable. Deerskins (especially ones of unusual color), scarlet woodpecker scalps, and black or red obsidian (volcanic glass) were also considered valuable.

CEREMONIES

Little is known of Chilula ceremonies. They may have held the Deerskin Dance, like their neighbors, or they may have joined the Hupa in their dances. Unlike the Hupa, the Chilula made headbands of yellowhammer quills, and used them in some ceremonies. The yellowhammer is a bird of the flicker or woodpecker family.

CHIMARIKO



LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northwest California [Trinity County]	1849 estimate --250 1910 Census -- 0	Hokan family

The Chimariko was one of the smallest native groups in what is now California. It is believed that the language used by the Chimariko was closer to the original form of the Hokan language than other tribes in this language group, whose languages became more diversified over time.

SETTLEMENTS

The entire territory of the Chimariko in historic times was a 20-mile stretch of the canyon of the Trinity River. This country was mountainous and covered with forests. There were just a few villages, the largest being called Tsudamdadji. Downstream from the Chimariko were the Hupa people, and upstream were the Wintun. It is possible that the Wintun had pushed the Chimariko down the river into the small canyon sometime in their past. Later, however, the Wintun were friends of the Chimariko, and the Hupa downstream were their enemies.

The name *Chimariko* comes from a word in their language, *chimar*, which means *people*. Each Chimariko village had a headman who settled disputes and led the village in hunting for food. The headman served in this position for life, and his son followed him as headman.

HOUSES

The houses in the Chimariko villages were poor in comparison to those of their neighbors, although they were made in a similar style. The houses were made of wood, with low walls and a pitched roof. But instead of using cut planks of wood, like the

more prosperous people, the Chimariko used pieces of fir or madrone bark for the walls. Inside, a shallow pit dug into the ground gave a place for the cooking fire, and for the women and girls to work and sleep. Overall, the houses in the Chimariko villages were smaller than those of nearby groups. Two or more families sometimes shared a house.

Each Chimariko village had a sweathouse where a group of men gathered each day. This is also where the men and older boys slept.

FOOD

Their location along the Trinity River meant that the Chimariko people had a steady supply of fish to eat. The men used nets and traps to catch the salmon and other fish. They also used harpoons, as well as bow and arrows, and clubs. Sometimes they caught fish with their bare hands. The river in Chimariko territory was too small and fast-flowing for canoes to be useful. Fishermen waded into the river.

In addition to fish, the Chimariko hunted deer, elk, and bear in the nearby forests, several kinds of birds such as quail, and small animals like rabbits and rodents. Men worked together in hunting the larger animals, sometimes driving and trailing them, or smoking them out of their dens.

Meat and fish were cooked either by boiling, roasting, or smoke-drying them. Smoke-dried food would last for many months.

Acorns were the mainstay of the Chimariko diet, as

they were for most early Californians. After a lengthy process of preparing the acorns to be ground into a coarse meal, the meal was mixed with water to make acorn bread. This bread was baked on hot stones, or in an earth-covered oven heated by hot stones.

Other foods that the Chimariko people gathered were pine nuts, berries, several kinds of wild seeds, and several kinds of roots. Fishing, hunting, and gathering places were owned in common by the entire community.

CLOTHING

Chimariko women wore fringed aprons made from deerskin, and decorated with nuts and seeds. On their heads, they wore basket caps woven from plant fibers. The caps could also be used to carry things. The men wore trousers made of deerskin. When the weather was cold, deerskin or rabbitskin blankets were worn across the shoulders.

Both men and women had long hair, coming down past their shoulders. Men tied their hair in one roll at the back of their neck. Women parted their hair and tied it in several rolls, using ribbons made from deerskin or mink. They used combs made from fish bones and brushes from the soaproot plant to comb and brush their hair, which they greased with animal fat. The soaproot plant also provided them with shampoo for washing their hair.

Chimariko girls had tattoos on their chin, cheeks, arms, or hands, and their ears were pierced when they were very young, so that they could wear ear ornaments.

TOOLS

Baskets were made by the Chimariko in a variety of styles, by the method known as twining. Thin branches formed the main supports of the basket, with vines and pieces of root twined or woven in and out of the main supports, to create the basket. Willow bark was often used as decoration on the finished basket.

The Chimariko used spoons, made simply and without decoration. The men ate with spoons made of deer or elk horn; the women's spoons were made from mussel shells. Other cooking tools such as paddles to stir acorn mush were carved from wood.

Food was served on wooden platters as well as in baskets. Wedges of deer or elk horn were used to chip the wood into the shapes needed. Some unbaked clay bowls were also made by the Chimariko, and used as water containers.

Bows and arrows were used both for hunting game and in warfare. The bows were made of yew wood, with bowstrings of deer sinew (animal tendons). Arrows to be used in war had stone tips on them, sometimes dipped in a poison that came from rattlesnake venom.

TRADE

The Chimariko used dentalium (tooth-shaped mollusk) shells for money, as did other northwestern coastal groups. The shells came from Vancouver Island, and were traded down the coast. They were strung on strings by size, the larger shells being worth more. The Chimariko were not wealthy people, and had little to trade with their neighbors. There are no records of the Chimariko having slaves, nor holding or selling fishing places as individual property.

Other things considered valuable by the Chimariko were woodpecker scalps, red obsidian blades, and silver fox-skin blankets. They got red and black obsidian (volcanic glass) from the Wintun, upstream from them.

CEREMONIES

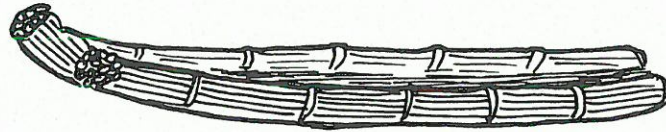
Perhaps because they were a poor people, the Chimariko did not have elaborate ceremonies like some of their neighbors. An annual summer dance lasted ten days, and both men and women took part in it, but it was not an important ceremony for the group. Visitors were welcomed, and the headman and his family provided food for everyone. The Chimariko did not often visit the lavish ceremonies of their neighbors. Though the Chimariko did not engage in the display of wealth at ceremonies, as other northern groups did, they did have special personal decorations for ceremonial times. Both men and women wore ear ornaments and necklaces made of dentalium shells and bear claws. On headbands of deerskin or fur, they placed woodpecker scalps. Men added the tail feathers of condors and eagles to their headbands for special occasions.



COSTANOAN

(Ohlone)

(kós'tə nō'ən)



Canoe made of tule reeds

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Central California coast [Alameda, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, San Benito Counties]	1770 estimate -- 7,000 1910 Census -- not known	Penutian family

The people included within the Costanoan (also known as Ohlone) group actually spoke at least eight different languages and lived in about 50 separate tribelets, or groups of villages. The Costanoan people left many shell mounds along the ocean and bays. Explorer Sebastián Vizcaíno met some of these people in 1602 along the Monterey coast. Seven Spanish missions were built in Costanoan territory between 1770 and 1797.

SETTLEMENTS

Costanoan territory extended along the Pacific coast from San Francisco Bay south to Point Sur, and inland to the coast range of mountains. Each of the many tribelets held a certain area. A tribelet was led by a headman (actually, either a man or woman) who inherited the position from the old headman, but only with the consent of the people. The headman directed ceremonies, hosted visitors, and planned the hunting and food gathering activities, together with a council of village elders. Costanoan headmen may have had assistants, known as speakers, to help them.

The name *Costanoan* comes from the Spanish *Costaños*, meaning *coast people*. The early people did not use the term, but rather called themselves *the people* in their own language, which differed from group to group.

HOUSES

Most Costanoans made their houses with a round

framework of poles covered with bunches of grass, tule reeds, or ferns. The thatch was tied on with flexible willow branches. A fireplace was in the middle of the house. Some Costanoans made their houses from slabs of redwood and redwood bark, leaned together in a cone shape. Even permanent houses did not last long. Every year or two the old houses were burned down and new ones built.

The largest village in each tribelet probably had an assembly house or dance house in the middle of the village. Some of these may have been simply round enclosures with fences made of brush. Others had domed roofs of thatch. Some were large enough to hold 200 people.

Small sweathouses were made by digging into the banks of a stream and covering the entrance with brush. Both men and women used the sweathouse.

FOOD

Because of their location near the ocean, the Costanoans depended on shellfish such as mussels and abalone for food. Sea lions were hunted along the beach, and if a whale was washed ashore, the meat was taken. Steelhead, salmon, sturgeon, and lamprey eels were caught in the rivers using dip and seine nets and fish traps. Another method was to build bonfires along the river at night, which attracted the fish to come close enough to be speared.

Waterfowl such as ducks and geese were caught

with nets; quail were taken in traps; other birds were brought down by throwing a bola (pieces of bone tied to a string). The list of animals eaten by the Costanoans includes deer, grizzly bear, elk, antelope, mountain lion, dog, skunk, raccoon, rabbit, squirrel, woodrat, mouse and mole. Reptiles and insects (grasshoppers, caterpillars, wasps) were also eaten.

Acorns were an important plant food for the Costanoans, though in the villages closest to the coast, seeds were more plentiful than acorns. Seeds from various plants were roasted on hot coals. Four kinds of oak trees (coast live oak, valley oak, tanbark oak, black oak) grew in this area. Other nuts that were eaten were from the buckeye, laurel, and hazel trees. Berries, wild grapes, roots (including wild onion and wild carrot), clover, and thistles added to the diet. A sweet drink was made from the berries of the manzanita bush.

CLOTHING

Costanoan women wore two-piece aprons. A small front apron was made of tule reed or grass, braided and fastened to a waist cord. A larger back apron was made of deer or sea otter skin. Men and boys usually did not wear any clothing. In cold weather, men and women both used robes made of animal skins or duck feathers. Sometime the men put a layer of mud on their body, which kept them warm. Costanoans did not wear anything on their feet nor on their heads. Both men and women wore their hair long, but women had their hair cut across their forehead in bangs. Men sometimes braided their hair or tied it up with a rawhide thong. Tattooing was done on the face, forehead, and arms. Earrings, nose rings, and necklaces were made of olivella and abalone shells, and of feathers.

TOOLS

To cross San Francisco Bay, the people used rafts made of tule reeds. Bundles of reeds were bound together to make a canoe-shaped raft. The men used paddles with blades at both ends to move the raft. Stone anchors may have been used with the rafts.

Baskets made by the Costanoans were mostly of the twined type, such as were made by northern California groups. Willow, rush, tule, and pieces of roots were twined to form the baskets, which were

decorated with shells, feathers, and woodpecker scalps. Baskets were important for gathering, storing, and cooking food. One type of basket was used to beat the seeds from plants. Others were used as traps to catch fish and small animals, as baby cradles, water jugs, and mush bowls.

Cord and string were made from the fibers of the milkweed, nettle, and hemp plants. From the cord, nets were made for use in fishing and hunting. Bows and arrows were also used in hunting. The bows were backed with sinew (animal tendon) and had bowstrings made of sinew. Arrows had three feathers and tips made of stone or bone. Hunters carried their arrows in quivers made of fox skin.

Stone was used to make tools for pounding and grinding. A type of rock called *chert* was found in Costanoan territory. Obsidian (volcanic glass) was gotten in trade from groups to the north. Both stone and wooden mortars and pestles were used to grind acorns and seeds.

TRADE

The Costanoans had clamshell beads which were used as money by many early California groups. These pieces of shell were shaped into disks, holes were punched, and the disks were strung on strings. They could be worn as necklaces as well as used in trade. The Costanoans traded mussels, abalone shells and dried abalone meat, and salt to the Yokuts who lived in the great valley east of the coast. From the Yokuts they got piñon nuts. The Costanoans may also have supplied some hunting bows and salt to the Plains and Sierra Miwok. The Miwok likely paid for these items with clamshell beads.

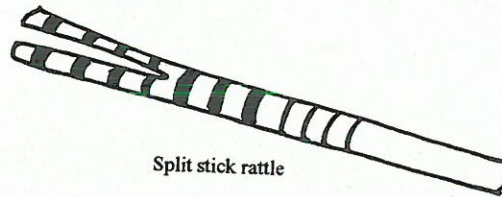
CEREMONIES

A Costanoan celebration of the sun included prayers and offerings of seeds and shells, along with the blowing of smoke toward the sky. Other offerings were made in the hope of having good hunting and fishing. Feathers on sticks were used as charms. Offerings of feathers, food, and strips of rabbitskin were attached to the tops of poles.

Many dances were done by the Costanoans, some by men only and some by women only. Feathered headdresses were worn by dancers, who painted their faces and bodies with white and red dye.

CUPENO

(kōō'pā nyō)



Split stick rattle

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Southern California [San Diego County]	1770 estimate -- 500 1910 Census -- 150	Uto-Aztecán family

The Cupeño were one of the smallest groups in early California, based both on the number of people and the size of their territory. Their land was like a tiny bite out of the southwest corner of the much larger Cahuilla territory. Their language was much like the Cahuilla, but with some influence from the Ipai, their neighbors to the south. In 1903, in spite of a valiant struggle to keep their land, the Cupeño were moved to Pala Reservation.

SETTLEMENTS

Cupeño territory covered an area about ten miles across, in the mountains at the headwaters of the San Luis Rey River. There were just two permanent villages. One was called Kúpa, and was located near a hot springs known as Agua Caliente on a creek of the same name. The second village, called Wilákal, was to the south on San Ysidro Creek. The Cupeño called themselves *Kúpa-ngakitom* or *Wiláka-ngakitom* meaning *people of Kúpa* or *people of Wilákal*.

Within each village there were several family groups or clans, each with its own clan leader. Each clan associated itself with one of two groups known by the totem (symbols) of the wildcat and the coyote. The clan leader, whose position was passed down from father to son, was responsible for keeping the bundle of sacred ceremonial objects. He also arranged trade with other groups, settled disputes, and decided when ceremonies should be held. Most affairs of the village were decided by a discussion among the clan leaders in the village.

HOUSES

Houses were made of poles set in a circle and bent inward to meet at the top. Other branches and poles were fastened across the first poles, and the entire framework was covered with brush. This made a rounded building, with a smokehole opening in the roof where the poles met. Each family had their own house, which they used mostly for sleeping and storing their belongings. They preferred to do the cooking and visiting outdoors, under the shade of a thatched roof.

Each group of related families had a ceremonial dance house. This was usually the house where the clan leader lived, and it was larger than the other houses.

FOOD

Like most early Californians, the Cupeño depended on acorns as one of their main food sources. Oak trees grew in the foothill areas, and each autumn the people would spend several days gathering the crop of acorns as they ripened. Men, women, and children all worked at this task, so that a good supply of acorns could be stored for the year.

Each clan owned certain food-gathering places, and had the rights to the nuts and other plants that grew there. There were also open areas that were owned by the village, where anyone could gather food.

It was the job of the men to do the hunting. Sometimes a hunter went out on his own, but often a group of men formed a hunting party, with one

taking the responsibility of leading the hunt. When hunting deer, they might have to track the deer for many miles, and then work together to drive the deer into a narrow canyon where they could get close enough to use their bows and arrows. The men also caught small animals such as rabbits, woodrats, and other rodents, and birds such as quail, geese, and doves. They used flat, curved throwing sticks to bring down small animals and birds. They also set traps for small animals, and used nets to capture them. Not only the meat but also the bones of the animals were used as food. Bones were ground into powder and mixed with other food.

Women did most of the gathering of plant foods. A few kinds of berries grew in the mountains, but the Cupeño depended more on a variety of small seeds. They knocked the seeds off the plants with seed beaters, made by bending a small branch into an oval shape and fastening other branches across the oval. The seeds were bounced up and down in a flat basket to get out the bits of stems and leaves, and then parched by tumbling them with hot coals.

Some plant foods such as nuts and seeds were preserved so that the people would have food to eat during the winter. Other plants such as watercress, clover, and the stalks and roots of the yucca, were eaten fresh. Several kinds of cacti such as the prickly pear, chollas, and barrel cactus had edible fruit.

CLOTHING

Like the other early Californians in the southern part of the state, the Cupeño did not need to wear much clothing. The women wore an apron around their waist, with separate pieces hanging down the front and the back. The apron was usually made of the inner bark of a tree, pounded to make it soft. Sometimes the apron was made of cord, which was made by twisting fibers from the mesquite or other plants. Men wore a belt from which they could hang tools or packets of food. Children did not wear anything.

For the times when the weather was cold, blankets were made from rabbit skins, cut into strips and sewn together. The blankets were used for sleeping and for wearing over the shoulders like a cape.

TOOLS

The Cupeño used agave, deer grass, and rushes to form the foundation for the baskets that they made by the coiling method. The coils were sewn together with fibers from sumac or tule reeds. The coiled baskets were decorated by weaving in reddish or blackened fibers in a geometric pattern. They also made twined baskets which were more open and not decorated. For the frame of the twined baskets they used willow shoots, sumac, or wormwood. Across the frame they twined fibers from rushes.

Baskets were the most often used containers in early California. Some were so finely made that they would hold water. They could be used for cooking food by dropping stones, heated in a fire, into the water in a basket. The Cupeño may have made some pottery containers from clay, as their neighbors the Cahuilla did. They also could get pots made of steatite (soapstone) in trade from the Luiseño.

TRADE

Since their territory was so small, the Cupeño did not have far to go to trade with other groups. Their language was related to that of the Luiseño, who lived to the west of them. From the Luiseño they could get shells and dried fish. The shell disks strung on strings that were used as money came to the Cupeño from the Luiseño. They also had trade contacts with the Ipai, to the south.

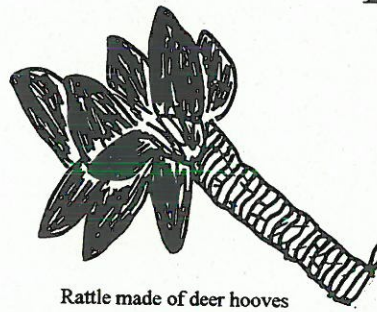
CEREMONIES

Ceremonies were an important part of the life of the community. Each clan held ceremonies to which their neighbors were invited. The clan leader had an assistant to help with the ceremonies, especially in distributing the gifts that were given to the guests. Important events in life such as births, deaths, marriage, and young people becoming adults were celebrated with feasting, singing, and dancing. Once a year a ceremony was held to remember those who had died. At this ceremony, which lasted eight days, an eagle was killed as part of the ritual.

For music to go with the dancing and singing, the Cupeño had rattles made by splitting the ends of a stick so that the two parts clacked together when the stick was shaken. Rattles were also made from turtle shells, deer hooves, and gourds.

DIEGUENO

(de'gā,nyō)



Rattle made of deer hooves

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Extreme southern California, crossing the border to Mexico [San Diego County & western part of Imperial County]	1770 estimate -- 3,000 1910 Census -- 800	Hokan family

The two dialects of the Diegueño separated them into northern and southern groups, the northern Ipai (e pi) and the southern Tipai (te pi). The Diegueño are also known as the Kumeyaay.

SETTLEMENTS

Diegueño settlements spread across southern California and northern Baja California (now Mexico). Diegueños lived on the coast, in the mountains, and in the desert. Some Diegueño bands moved around a lot as the seasons changed. There are signs that some groups had several campsites that they occupied at different times of the year. There may have been very few permanent villages.

Diegueño comes from the name of the first Spanish mission in California, San Diego. The more precise names of *Ipai* and *Tipai* are words from the native languages meaning *people*. The people themselves did not use any name to refer to the more than 30 clans that spoke the Ipai-Tipai dialects. They called themselves instead by the place where their clan lived.

Each small group or band had a clan leader who inherited his position from his father. The leader was supposed to know more about the customs and history of his people, and so be able to direct their ceremonies and advise them on clan matters.

HOUSES

How the houses were built depended on the location and how long they were going to be used. In the

summer village, only shade and a windbreak were needed. A row of trees or a cave would provide this, or a one-sided, roofed shelter made of poles and brush.

Where a more substantial house was needed, a dome-shaped building was constructed. Poles arranged in a circle were bent in to meet in the middle. The frame was covered with brush. This was sometimes covered with thatch made of tule reeds and with earth. Inside, the floor was dug out slightly below ground level. Attached to the house was a single wall used as a windbreak for an outside working area. Diegueños living in the desert might use palm branches as thatch on their shelters. In the mountains, slabs of bark could be used for the walls.

Each family was responsible for its own shelter, and for rebuilding it when the group moved. Everyone worked together to build a ceremonial structure, which was usually a brush fence enclosing a round dance area. Villages also had sweathouses, smaller than the dwellings, used by the men who gathered in the evening to cleanse themselves.

FOOD

For most of the Diegueño, acorns were the main food. Some of the southern Tipai groups depended more on pods from the mesquite bush, which they pounded into flour in much the same way that the others pounded acorns into flour. Seeds of the sage, flax, and buckwheat plants were also ground into flour, and used to make mush and flat cakes.

In the spring, the women and girls gathered fresh greens such as watercress, clover, yucca stalks and roots, and the blossoms and buds of roses and several kinds of cactus. In some areas they found berries on manzanita and elderberry bushes, wild plums and cherries. Wild onion was used as a seasoning. The agave plant, which provided fibers from which sandals were made, was also used as food.

The Tipai who lived in the Imperial Valley were one of the few early California groups to plant some crops. They learned from people living to the east of them how to grow corn, beans, and melons. Even those who did some farming, however, still got most of their food by gathering wild plants.

Deer were scarce in Diegueño territory. Men who knew how to hunt deer were respected. It was an honor for a boy to be chosen to learn to be a hunter of big game like deer. Most of the meat used by the Diegueño came from small animals like rabbits, woodrats, and lizards. They also ate some snakes and insects, as well as birds such as geese, quail, and doves. Only those groups who lived near the ocean had fish in their diet, for there were not many rivers in Diegueño areas. For people who lived near San Diego Bay, fish and mollusks were main foods.

CLOTHING

Very little clothing was necessary in the southern California climate. Children and men usually wore no clothes. Men used a belt around their waist on which they could fasten things they needed to carry. Women wore an apron-like skirt, sometimes with just one piece in front, sometimes with a second piece in the back. Since women carried things in a net bag that hung from a strap around the forehead, they often wore a round woven cap to protect their heads from the strap.

When they needed to walk through thorny areas, both men and women wore sandals made from agave fibers. When the weather was cold, they put blankets or robes over their shoulders. The robes were made of rabbitskin or deerskin, or of willow bark pounded until it was soft.

TOOLS

Both baskets and pottery were used by the Diegueño

for storing and cooking food. The pottery containers were made from a red clay mixed with crushed rock. The clay was rolled into long ropes, coiled into the desired shape, and fired in a hot oven.

Fibers of the milkweed and yucca plants were used to make string and cord. The cord was then knotted to make nets and carrying bags. Nets were used by the hunters to catch small animals and birds. They also used curved throwing sticks and bows and arrows to catch game.

Both nets and hooks were used by the coastal groups for catching fish. They had light rafts made from bundles of tule reeds bound together with cord, which allowed them to go out on the bay to fish.

TRADE

The many groups of Ipai and Tipai often traded with each other for items that were found in each other's territory. Those on the coast traded dried seafood, salt, and abalone shells to those who lived in the hills and desert regions. From them they got acorns, agave, mesquite beans, and gourds. Groups living in the Imperial Valley traded food to the mountain groups in exchange for granite, steatite (or soapstone), and red and black minerals used to make paint. Anyone who owned an eagle could trade its feathers, which were considered of great value.

Major trails crossed southern California, going from the Colorado River to the Pacific Ocean. Because of this, the Diegueño had contact with groups living further east, and with early explorers of the southwest. Trade with these groups, though not frequent, influenced the Diegueño culture.

CEREMONIES

A special area for dances was made by using brush to make a circular fence around a section of level ground. Eagles were often used in ceremonies. A village leader might own an eagle's nest and raise eaglets.

An important ceremony was the *keruk*, held in the fall to honor those who had died during the past year. The dancing lasted four to eight days. Dolls made to look as lifelike as possible were used to represent those who had died. When a leader died, a special Eagle Dance was held. Gourd or deer-hoof rattles were used to keep rhythm for the dancing.

ESSELEN

(ˈesələn)



Flint knife with wooden handle

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Central California coast, south of Monterey Bay [Monterey County]	1770 estimate --500 1910 Census -- 0	Hokan family

Very little is known for sure about the life of the Esselen people. By the early 1800's, there were no members of the group left. They were the first early Californians to vanish completely. What little is known was learned from Costanoan people who remembered bits about the Esselens. Since the Esselen lived in an area similar to that of the Costanoan, there were probably many things alike in the way they lived.

SETTLEMENTS

The territory of the Esselen included the upper part of the Carmel River, the Big Sur River, and the Little Sur River. They occupied a stretch of coast line about 25 miles long, from Point Sur to Point Lopez. The coast is rocky here, and the mountains rising up from near the coast are rugged. The Esselen were considered to be mountain people.

The explorer Sebastián Vizcaíno visited this coast in 1602 and reported seeing villages along the coast and inland. It is likely that the Esselen lived in small family groups in permanent villages, but went further into the mountains in the summer and fall to gather food. At least six groups of villages (or *tribelets*) have been identified.

One Esselen site that has been found is a rock shelter in the hills. The people who lived in this shelter left drawings on the rocks.

Mission San Carlos Borromeo de Carmelo was built in 1770 on a site called Eslenes by the Franciscan padres. This name probably referred to one village

of the Esselen people. Later it was used for the entire group of people. The people were taken into the mission. Many died of diseases; within about fifty years, there were no Esselen people left.

HOUSES

The houses made by the Esselen were probably round, made on a framework of poles bent toward the middle and bound together at the top, leaving enough opening for a smoke hole. This frame was covered with bunches of grass or reeds bound together and tied on to the frame poles with vines. They may also have used some bark slabs to cover the sides of the houses.

The sweathouse in the Esselen village was a round hole dug in the ground, covered over with brush and dirt. A narrow low entrance, just big enough to crawl through, was left. The fire built in the sweathouse made the room smoky and hot, but no water was used to make steam.

FOOD

Acorns were one of the main foods of the Esselen, as they were for most early California people. The acorns were gathered in the hills and valleys away from the coast in the fall, when they ripened and fell from the trees. The people tried to gather enough acorns to last an entire year, until the next autumn. The acorns were stored in acorn granaries, tall baskets attached to poles to keep them off the ground, and lined with grass to protect the acorns. When the acorns were to be used for food, they

were broken open with a stone, dried in the sun, and then pounded or ground into a fine meal. Acorn mush was made by putting the meal with water in a basket and adding stones that had been heated in the fire. The mush had to be stirred to keep the stones from burning the basket, and so all the mush would cook. Acorn meal was also made into small cakes about three inches across, and baked in an earth oven between layers of damp grass.

Both hunting and fishing supplied food for the Esselen, but they liked the game from the inland areas better than the fish and ocean food. They fished only when game was not available. Animals eaten by the Esselen included not only deer, antelope, and rabbits, but also skunks and dogs, which many other groups did not eat. Rabbits were roasted on sticks over the open fire. Lizards were caught with snares woven of grasses, and roasted.

The earth oven was used to roast meat as well as to bake acorn cakes. The earth oven was a hole dug in the ground and lined with stones. A fire was built on the stones. When the stones were hot, the fire was removed and damp grass was placed over the hot stones. The food was put on the stones and covered with more damp grass. It was often left there overnight to cook slowly through.

Both the ocean and the rivers provided fish to add to the food sources for the Esselen. From the ocean shores they collected shellfish, especially abalone and mussels, and seaweed. They probably did not go out on the ocean to catch fish or sea mammals, but when a sea lion, an otter, or a whale came ashore in their territory, they took the meat.

Other plant foods that grew in Esselen territory included dandelions, seeds of various kinds, roots (particularly the camas root), many kinds of berries, and buckeye nuts.

CLOTHING

It is likely that the Esselen wore no clothing when the weather was warm. Women may have worn an apron made of tule reeds, tied together with fiber cord and fastened to a waistband woven from tule reeds or other grasses. When the weather was colder, both men and women wore a cape or blanket over their shoulders. These blankets were made from deerskin or rabbit skins. Rabbitskin blankets

were made by cutting the small skins into strips and sewing together many strips of skin.

There is no record that the Esselen wore any kind of moccasins. For decoration, they likely used shells and pieces of bone to make earrings and necklaces. They may have painted their bodies with dyes. They could make red, white, blue, and yellow paint from plants and minerals found in their area.

TOOLS

The Esselen did not use boats on the ocean or the rivers, but they may have made rafts from bundles of tule reeds, bound together. These rafts would have allowed them to reach off-shore rocks along the coast.

Tule reeds and roots were also the basis for the baskets that they made. They used baskets for many purposes: to carry things, to cook and serve food, and as baby cradles. Some of the baskets were woven so tightly that they could hold water.

To grind acorns and other nuts and seeds, the women put the nuts or seeds on a rock that had a bowl-shaped dip in it, and then pounded the nuts with another piece of rock, called a *pestle*. Stone was also shaped into knives and points for arrows and spears. Bows and arrows were used in hunting. The Esselen may have been able to get obsidian (volcanic glass) in trade from their neighbors to the north or east. This was used to make arrowheads.

Cord to fasten things together was made from fibers of the hemp plant, and from strips of deerhide. Deerhide was also used to make headbands.

TRADE

The Esselen no doubt used the clamshell disk money like many of their neighbors. Pieces of clamshell were shaped into small beads, a hole punched in the middle, and the beads strung on a string. The Esselen also had strings of olivella (a small sea snail) shell beads. It is likely that the Esselen engaged in trade with the Costanoans, who may have served as middlemen in supplying the Esselen with items from the valley-dwelling Yokuts.

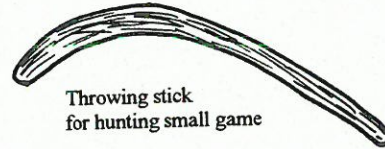
CEREMONIES

Little is known of Esselen ceremonies, though they surely had dances of celebration.



GABRIELINO

(gä brēal'ē nō)



LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Southern California coast and off-shore islands [Los Angeles and Orange Counties, parts of western Riverside & San Bernardino Counties]	1770 estimate -- 5,000 (includes Fernandefio) 1910 Census -- hardly any	Uto-Aztecan family

The Gabrielino may have been the richest and most powerful group of people in southern California at the time the Spanish came in 1769.

SETTLEMENTS

The Gabrielino lived along the coast and inland in what is known as the Los Angeles basin, and on the islands of Santa Catalina, San Nicolas, and San Clemente. This was an area with pleasant weather and many kinds of food, so life was somewhat easier for the Gabrielino than for those who lived in harsher climates.

The name *Gabrielino* comes from the San Gabriel Mission which was built in this area in 1771. The people called themselves *kumivit*. They were also known as the Tongva. The San Fernando Mission was built in 1797 in this area, and the native Californians who lived near that mission, called Fernandefios, are grouped with the Gabrielinos.

The Gabrielinos placed their villages in sheltered bays on the coast, and along rivers or streams in the inland areas. Those who lived on the coast often went to camping places in the foothills to gather food, and those who lived in the foothills had camping places along the exposed parts of the coast.

Each family in a village had its own leader. The leader of the richest or largest family was usually considered to be the village leader. This leader took care of the sacred objects belonging to the village. When several small villages were near a larger

village, they joined under the leadership of the larger village.

HOUSES

The homes of the Gabrielino were made by placing poles upright in a circle and bending them in to meet in the middle. The framework of poles was covered with bundles of tule reeds or ferns, or with mats woven from tules. Some houses were large enough to hold 50 or 60 people, with three or four families sharing living space.

The Gabrielino village also had a sweathouse where the men met to talk and sweat. The sweathouse was round, built low to the ground and covered with brush and earth.

FOOD

In the villages near the coast, the main food came from the sea. They ate many kinds of fish (tuna, swordfish, sharks), shellfish, sea mammals, and sea birds. Those who lived on the islands depended almost entirely on the sea, as the islands had very little vegetation, and few land animals. Sea lions, harbor seals, sea otters, and elephant seals were plentiful. Rock scallops, mussels, limpets, and sea urchins were gathered along the rocky shores.

Away from the coast in the foothills, the people gathered acorns, piñon nuts, sage, berries, and other plants. In some areas, edible cacti grew. Some deer were to be found in the foothills, and many small animals were hunted. The Gabrielino ate many kinds

of birds and some snakes, as well as rabbits and other small rodents.

CLOTHING

Gabrielino women wore aprons made of deerskin, or of bark from the willow or cottonwood tree. The men and children usually did not wear any clothing. When the weather was cold or rainy, they wore robes or capes made of deerskin, rabbit fur, or feathers. Those living on the islands used otter skins to make their robes and blankets.

Tattooing was popular with the women in this area. Young girls had tattoos on their foreheads and chins. Older women often had tattoos going from their eyes down to their chests. Men tattooed lines on their foreheads. Girls and women also used red ocher paint on their faces to protect them from the sun and wind.

TOOLS

Perhaps because living was easy for them, the Gabrielino had time to become skilled in crafts. They decorated the articles that they made with shell inlays, and with carving and painting. On Santa Catalina Island, the Gabrielino had a good supply of steatite, a stone also known as *soapstone*. From steatite they carved pots, bowls, and other cooking utensils, as well as small figures of animals, particularly whales.

Though they are best known for the objects made from steatite, the Gabrielinos also made cooking utensils from shell, wood, and stone. Wooden bowls and paddles were often decorated with shells. Spoons were made from shells. Pieces of shell or bone were used to make needles, fishhooks, and sharp-pointed awls for drilling holes. For hunting, they used wood to make bows and arrows, clubs, sabers, and slings. One hunting weapon was a curved, flat stick which was thrown at small game like rabbits and birds.

The Gabrielino women made baskets using the reeds and grasses that grew in their area. They used both the coiling and the twining methods of making baskets. Flat baskets were used as plates and trays. Larger round baskets were used for carrying and storing food. Some baskets were used in special ceremonies.

The Gabrielino used canoes to travel from island to mainland, and for fishing and hunting sea mammals. Their canoes were sometimes made of planks, lashed together and sealed with asphaltum (a type of pitch), similar to those made by the Chumash. Sometimes they dug out a log to make a canoe. They also used rafts made from tule reeds. From their boats, they fished with hooks and lines, and with nets made from cord. The cord was made from the fibers of sea grass. Fish hooks were made of shell, bone, or wood.

TRADE

The Gabrielino had many contacts with other groups in which they traded goods. Those who lived inland traded with those on the coast. They also traded a great deal with other people. Shells and steatite from the Gabrielino made their way across the southwest as far as the Pueblo in New Mexico.

Steatite, both in its natural form and made into articles of use or decoration, was the primary trade item for the Gabrielino. They also supplied shell beads, dried fish, and sea otter skins to people living away from the ocean. In exchange they got acorns, seeds, obsidian (volcanic glass), and deerskins.

Much of the trading was of the barter type, where one item is traded for another. When money was needed, strings of beads made from olivella or clam shells were used.

CEREMONIES

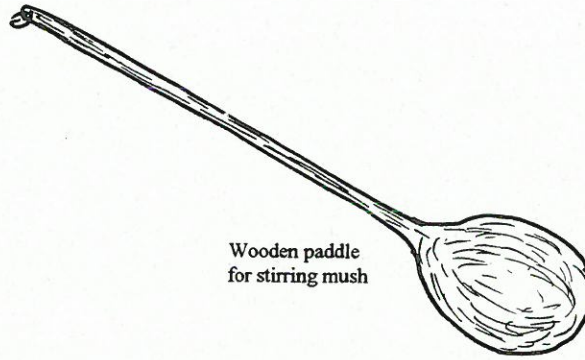
As a place to hold their ceremonies, the Gabrielino marked off an oval area and built a fence of willow poles around it. The fence was decorated with feathers, skins, and flowers. This ceremonial enclosure was called the *yuvar*. Inside the *yuvar* was a special area where only the most powerful men could go. This area was decorated with sand paintings of the sun and moon.

The biggest ceremony was held in the fall to remember those who had died during the year. For seven days, the people danced, sang, visited, and feasted. Dancers wore outfits made with hawk and eagle feathers. During the ceremony, all of the children who had been born during the past year were given their names.



HUPA

('hōo pu)



Wooden paddle
for stirring mush

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northwestern California [Humboldt County]	1770 estimate -- 1,000 1910 Census -- 500	Athapaskan family

The Hupa shared close language ties with the Chilula and Whilkut, their neighbors to the west. These three groups differed in dialect from other California Athapaskans.

SETTLEMENTS

The Hupa name came from the Yurok word for the valley, *Hupo*. The Hupa people called themselves *Natinnoh-hoi*, after *Natinnoh*, the Trinity River.

The larger Hupa villages were located in the Hupa (or Hoopa) valley, an eight-mile stretch along the Trinity River that has more level land than other sections of the river valley. The valley, one or two miles wide, is surrounded by mountains. Twelve Hupa villages were strung out less than a mile apart on the eastern side of the river, so that they received the warm afternoon sun. Each village was near a spring or small stream that supplied drinking water.

Villages varied in size from about 50 to 200 people living in from six to 28 houses. Each village had a name taken from a landmark (such as *deep-water place*) or an incident that occurred there (*place where he was dug up*). Each village had a headman who was the richest man. He had certain hunting and fishing rights, and others in the village obeyed him because he gave them food when they needed it. If the headman's son inherited his wealth, he also inherited the position of headman. When girls married, they usually went to live in the villages of their husbands.

HOUSES

The Hupa built their houses from cedar or fir planks which they cut from logs. The planks were set upright in a rectangular shape surrounding a pit which had been dug to form the inside of the house. A lower spot in the middle of the pit was lined with stones so a fire could be built there. A dirt shelf around the pit was used for storage. The pitched roof of the house was also made from cedar planks placed in an overlapping pattern. People entered the house through a small round hole cut at one corner, and climbed down a notched plank to the dug-out area of the house.

Each family had its own house where they ate their meals. The women and children slept in the house. The men and older boys slept in the sweathouses. There were several in each village, built in much the same way as the larger houses but with lower walls. The door was an opening cut into the roof.

FOOD

Acorns and salmon were the two main foods of the Hupa. The salmon were caught in the Trinity River in the spring and in the fall as they swam upriver. Enough fish were preserved by smoke-drying them to last all year. Other fish such as trout and sturgeon were also eaten. Acorns were gathered each fall. After being ground into flour, the acorns were cooked into a thin mush. Heated stones were put into a cooking basket with water and meal, and it was stirred with a long wooden paddle.

Adding to the food supply for the Hupa were nuts, berries, roots, and greens that they gathered in the woods. Deer and elk were hunted in the forests, sometimes with the help of trained dogs. Traps made of iris-fiber rope nooses were placed along deer trails. The hunters used short bows with stone-tipped arrows to kill the deer and elk. Rabbits, squirrels, and birds were captured in traps or shot with the bow and arrow.

CLOTHING

The area where the Hupa lived had a mild climate, and heavy clothing was seldom necessary. Men wore a piece of deerskin or several smaller animal skins sewn together, around their hips. Women wore a double apron, with a larger section in back and a narrower section in front. The aprons, which reached from the waist to below the knees, were usually fringed. When more warmth was needed, robes made of animal skins were worn over the shoulders by both men and women. Moccasins made of deerskin were used only when going on a long trip. The women wore basket hats on their heads, to protect their foreheads from the straps of carrying baskets and baby cradles.

Hupa women had tattoos of three broad stripes on their chins. Both women and men had their ears pierced so they could wear shell ornaments in them. Men and women wore their hair long, tied back in rolls with thongs.

TOOLS

Many articles were made from wood by Hupa men. They used tools made from stone and shell to shape storage chests, platters and bowls out of cedar. Low stools and headrests were also made from cedar logs. For their bows and arrow shafts, they used hardwoods. The men also made utensils from elk horn. Elkhorn spoons were used just by the men. Women used mussel shells as spoons.

The Hupa women did basket weaving. The technique was called twining. Hazel branches were used as the basis for most baskets. Pieces cut from tree roots were woven in between the hazel branches to form firm baskets that were used to carry and store all types of food. The women also wove cradles for the babies, caps for the women to wear, and special ceremonial items. The baskets were

decorated with patterns made with grasses and ferns.

Canoes were used by the Hupa for transportation on the Trinity River, but they did not make the canoes themselves. They traded for them with the Yurok, who lived near the redwood trees along the coast.

In addition to bows and arrows, the Hupa used short spears and stone knives as weapons. To protect themselves in battle, men wore heavy shirts made of elkhide, or armor made from wooden rods held together with thongs.

TRADE

The Hupa carried on trade with the Yurok who lived along the coast near the mouth of the Klamath River. From the Yurok they got canoes, salt (made from dried seaweed), and salt-water fish. They traded acorns and other inland foods for these things. Some things were purchased with dentalium shells, which served as the money for the people of northwestern California. The tube-like dentalium shells could be strung on a string, matched for size. Only the shells that were more than an inch and one-half in length were considered to be money.

Wealth was important to the Hupa. Besides the dentalium money, they valued deerskins that were especially light or of unusual colors, red woodpecker scalps, and black or red obsidian (volcanic glass). These prized objects were displayed at ceremonies to show how important a person was.

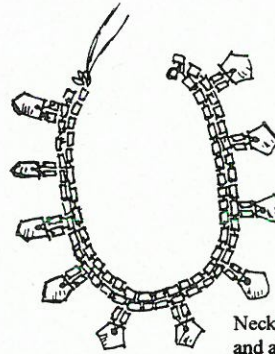
CEREMONIES

The Hupa held two ceremonies to celebrate the new year or harvest. One was in the spring when the salmon began their run upriver, and the second was in the autumn when the acorns began to fall from the trees. Feasting on the salmon in the spring and on the acorns in the fall was a part of the ceremonies.

The most elaborate ceremonies held each year were the White Deerskin Dance and the Jumping Dance. Each of these dances lasted 10 days, and was performed by the men only. In the White Deerskin Dance, the dancers held white deerskins up on long poles as they danced. When doing the Jumping Dance, the men wore headbands decorated with woodpecker scalps. Before each dance, there was a long recital of sacred words that told how the ceremony came to be.

HUCHNOM

('hōoch,nom)



Necklace made of clamshell beads and abalone shells

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
North-central California [Mendocino County]	1770 estimate -- 500 1910 Census -- 15	Yukian family

The Huchnom shared a similar language and a territory border with the Yuki to the north. They were a more peaceful people than the Yuki, however, and got along well with their neighbors to the south, the Pomo. When the Yuki and the Pomo were fighting, the Huchnom sided with the Pomo. They served as go-betweens for trade between the Yuki and Pomo. Their location between the Yuki and Pomo lands resulted in them adopting some customs from each of these larger groups.

SETTLEMENTS

More than 30 Huchnom villages were located along the South Eel River and several smaller streams that joined it. The mountains that surrounded this area were rugged. Some Huchnom villages were very close to Pomo villages. It is likely that Huchnom and Pomo both hunted and fished in areas occupied by the other.

The name *Huchnom* was used for these people by the Yuki. The name means *tribe outside the valley*, or *mountain people*. Later, the Huchnom were also called Redwoods.

Huchnom villages each had a headman who gave speeches at ceremonies, and handed out food and gifts to the guests. He was responsible for building the dance house in the village. When there were decisions to be made, the headman consulted with the village elders. A son of a headman would follow him as the new headman, but if there were no son, then some other relative would be made headman.

HOUSES

Huchnom houses were usually cone-shaped. The poles that framed the house were placed in a circle, and covered with bark and earth. A typical family house was about ten feet in diameter. A dug-out floor made the inside of the house bigger than it looked from the outside. A fire pit was located in the center of the house, with a smoke hole above it.

Women and children spent time in the family house during the winter, working and sleeping here. In the summer, however, all the people of the village went on trips to gather food. Although the food-gathering places were just a few miles away, the people camped out through much of the warm weather in temporary shelters of poles and brush.

The larger Huchnom villages had dance houses, built in the same manner as the family houses but on a larger scale. Sometimes a dance house would be built for a special ceremony, if the village holding the ceremony did not already have a dance house. The dance house was owned by the headman.

FOOD

Living in the hilly country meant that the Huchnom, like other mountain people, had a more difficult time getting a variety of food. However, the river and streams provided fish, which the men caught using nets or spears. When the fishing was good, the best fish were dried over a smoky fire and stored for use when food was scarce. Deer meat, too, was smoke dried and stored.

The Huchnom had some food customs which may have been unique to them. Although the men caught small animals like rabbits, squirrels, and quail, the meat of these animals was eaten only by women and children. As soon as a boy was initiated into manhood, he ate only the meat of deer, elk, and salmon. This continued throughout a man's life. Even other fish like trout were considered to be women's food. At certain times of their lives, women were not allowed to eat deer meat.

The Huchnom made use of many plants growing along their streams and in the mountains. Acorns were the most used of the plant foods. The acorn crop was gathered in the fall, when the nuts began to fall from the trees. Gathering the acorns was a job for both men and women as well as children. The men climbed the trees to shake the branches, so more nuts would fall. Nuts to be stored for use throughout the year were gathered in large baskets and taken back to the village. The women ground up some of the acorns right where they gathered them, as the acorn meal was easier to carry back home than the nuts.

CLOTHING

Deerhide served as the material from which the Huchnom made their clothing. Women wore an apron-like skirt made from two pieces of deerskin, one covering the front and the other the back. Men wore a piece of deerskin around their hips. A robe of deerskin with the hair left on served to keep a person warm in winter weather.

Huchnom men wore a net over their hair, made from plant fibers. On special occasions, small feathers were drawn through the holes of the net, making a soft, fluffy cap.

Huchnom women often had lines tattooed on their faces. The tattoo was made by cutting the skin with a sharp stone or thorn. Then soot or charcoal was rubbed into the cut. This was a painful process, and the cut took a long time to heal.

TOOLS

Because they served as traders between the Yuki and the Pomo, the Huchnom had tools and implements used by both of these larger groups. They used stone, wood, elkhorn, and shells to make

the things that would help them gather food and make clothing. Bone awls (sharp pointed tools) were used to make holes in animal skins, shells, and wood. Bone or elkhorn was used to make knives, because it could be ground to a sharp edge. These knives were used to cut and scrape the wood for making bows and arrows, which were tipped with flint or bone. Mussel shells were used as spoons.

Huchnom baskets were like the Pomo baskets in some respects, though not as finely done nor as much decorated. The Huchnom used both the twining method and the coiling method for making baskets. The coiled baskets were decorated more than the twined ones.

TRADE

From the Pomo, whose lands reached to the sea coast, the Huchnom got clamshells. Pieces of clamshell were shaped into small disks and a hole was drilled in the center. The disks were polished and strung on strings. This clamshell money was then used in trade. The more the clamshells were handled, the more polished they became, and this increased their value.

A type of stone called magnesite was even more valued than clamshells. Beads were made of small pieces of magnesite. When the stone was heated in a fire and then polished, it took on colors of red, pink, and gold. A single magnesite bead was placed on a string of clamshell disks, to make it worth more.

CEREMONIES

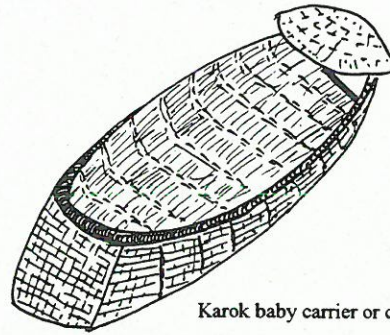
Ceremonies that were important to the Huchnom were much like those of the Yuki, held to honor Taikomol, the creator, and the spirits of people who had died. The Huchnom had several important customs related to boys and girls growing into adulthood. Some of these rituals lasted for several months or as long as a year.

Some men had certain tasks during the ceremonies. The *huno'ik* was the caretaker of the dance house. The man who kept the fire going was called *yehim k'awesk*. Each January the Huchnom held an Acorn Sing, in the hopes of having a good crop the next fall. They also had ceremonies to welcome the first acorns and the first salmon.



KAROK

('kä,räk)



Karok baby carrier or cradle

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northwestern California [western part of Siskiyou County]	1770 estimate -- 1,500 1910 Census -- 800	Hokan family

The word *Karok* (also spelled *Karuk*) meant *upstream*, a name the people used to distinguish themselves from their neighbors downstream, the Yurok. Except for their language, the customs of the Karok were very much like the Yurok, resembling the people of the northern Pacific Coast (Oregon, Washington, Vancouver Island) more than those of the rest of California.

SETTLEMENTS

There were three main clusters of towns in Karok territory, all located along the Klamath River at the mouths of Camp Creek, Salmon River, and Clear Creek. A steep peak on the east bank of the Klamath River divided Karok land from Yurok land. Just above the mouth of the Salmon River, on a bluff overlooking a roaring rapids, was the most sacred spot of the Karok, the center of their world, called Katimin. The land back from the rivers was used for hunting and food gathering.

The Karok people had no chiefs or government system in their villages. The rights of individuals were most important to them. A village was considered just a collection of individuals. The men who had the most wealth were the most powerful people in the town.

Children were named when they were several years old. The real names, however, were seldom used. It was considered bad manners to speak a person's name. Instead, people were called by nicknames such as *coyote*, or *old man*, or *shoots swiftly*.

HOUSES

The Karok built their houses from rough planks cut from cedar or fir trees, and roofed them with two rows of thinner planks. The side walls were low, as were the doors. Inside, a plank ladder was used so people could climb down into the underground part that had been dug out. The fire pit was in the middle, and the women and girls spent much of their time here. Each family had its own house. Men came to the house only for meals.

Men and boys over the age of three slept in a smaller but similar building called the sweathouse, where there was sleeping space for the men of several families. The smoke in the sweathouse was from a fire of fir branches.

FOOD

Fish was a main food for the Karok, since all of their villages were near rivers. Special fishing spots were claimed by individuals, who sometimes leased them to others for a share of the catch. The men built platforms over the stream and caught the salmon with a "lifting net" lowered on a frame. These nets, as well as smaller nets used to scoop fish out of the rapids, were made of fibers from the wild iris leaves. Harpoons were also used to spear fish and eels. After the main run of salmon occurred in the spring, the fish would be dried to provide a supply of food for the year.

Deer, elk, and bear were hunted for food by setting noose snares and then using dogs to run the animals

into the snares. Small rodents and birds were also caught in traps made of twigs and netting. Sometimes the meat was cooked over an open fire, or sometimes with edible plant bulbs in an oven made of earth and stones.

Acorns were the primary plant food of the Karok, who cracked and dried them to remove the tannic acid, then made a dough by mixing the ground flour with water. This dough could be made into bread, or boiled in a basket to make a mush. The Karok gathered other nuts, seeds, and roots for their meals. They got salt from the coastal Yurok people, who obtained it from seaweed.

CLOTHING

There were many deer in the mountains through which the Klamath River ran, and their skins were used by the Karok for clothing. Women wore a fringed deerskin apron around the waist, decorated with shells and pine nuts. In cold weather, women wore a cape of deerskin or fur over the shoulders. Men used deerskin to make a simple loincloth. When traveling in the mountains, they wore moccasins made of deerskin, and also buckskin leggings. They used branches and vines to make snowshoes for use in the winter.

When girls grew up, they had three stripes tattooed on their chins. The tattoo was done with soot and grease, using a sharp stone.

TOOLS

The Karok used wood and elk horn to make the tools they needed, using stone adze (ax-like tools) to shape the wood and horn. They made wooden spoons and paddles for use in cooking, and wooden seats and headrests used by the men. Elk horn and mussel shells were also used for making spoons. Obsidian (black volcanic glass) was used to make knife blades, which were attached to wooden handles.

Bows and arrows were used by the Karok. The bow was made of yew wood, and the arrows of syringa wood with obsidian arrowheads. When men were engaged in a conflict with another group, they protected themselves with vests of elkhide or wooden rods bound together with vines.

Baskets were used for storing, cooking, and

transporting food. Hazel twigs and pine roots were the primary materials used for the baskets, which were tightly woven and decorated with ferns.

The boats that the Karok used to travel along the rivers and streams near their villages were purchased from the Yurok people who lived closer to the ocean, and who made the boats from redwood logs. The boats had square prows and round bottoms which worked well for travel in rushing rivers that had many rocks. The swift water lifted the boat so that the square end met no resistance, and rocks could be easily avoided by a stroke of the steersman's paddle. A second paddle, made from a pole 6 to 8 feet long with a narrow heavy blade at one end, was used by a boatman who stood in the boat.

TRADE

The Karok used dentalium shells, which they called *ishpuk*, as money, trading strings of shells for a boat or for a wife. Dentalium shells are shaped like teeth, with hollow middles so they can be strung on a string, end to end. The longer the shell, the more valuable it was. The Karok said that a man's life was worth about 15 strings, and a wife was worth 5 to 10 strings, depending on the wealth of her family.

Deerskins were also a sign of wealth for the Karok. A man who had many fine deerskins, especially very light-colored ones, would display them proudly at dances. Red woodpecker scalps were highly prized. They were used for decorating headdresses, and as a valuable item in a trade.

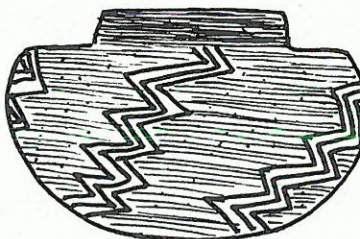
CEREMONIES

The Karok called their main ceremonies *world making*, like a new year's rite that renewed their world. The ceremonies were most often held in the early autumn in connection with the acorn crop, or with the run of summer salmon. The Deerskin Dance and the Jumping Dance were a part of these ceremonies. In the Jumping Dance, the Karok used eight long poles painted red and black, which the dancers tried to take from each other and break. Some Karok ceremonies used a fire that no one was to look at. Anyone who disobeyed and looked at the sacred fire during the ceremony could expect to be bitten by a snake during the year.



KAWAIISU

(ka' wäyí, sōō)



Kawaiisu coiled basket

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Eastern California, in the Tehachapi Mountains [San Bernardino County & parts of southern Inyo & eastern Kern Counties]	1770 estimate -- 500 1910 Census -- 150	Uto-Aztecan family

Because their lands lay on both the east and west sides of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, the culture of the Kawaiisu was related both to the California groups to the west, and the Great Basin groups to the east in Nevada. In earlier times, the Kawaiisu may have been part of the Chemehuevi, their neighbors to the east.

SETTLEMENTS

The Kawaiisu were mountain people. Their territory ranged from 1,000 to 7,500 feet above sea level.

People lived in family groups. Families who lived close to each other were usually related to each other. One or two men in each village were considered to be the leaders. They were responsible for organizing celebrations, and had to provide food and dancing for the guests. A leader did not inherit his position from his father, but was chosen by the people because of his leadership skills or his wealth.

The Kawaiisu called themselves *niwi* (meaning *person*) or *niwiwi* (meaning *people*). They have also been known as the Tehachapi or Caliente Indians.

HOUSES

During the winter, the people lived in circular houses made from poles and brush. A number of forked poles were bound together at the top, leaving an opening for a smoke hole. Other poles were tied across the standing poles, and all the spaces in between the poles were filled in with brush. Mats made from bark or tule reeds were placed on top of

the brush, to keep out the rain. A tule mat was used to cover the door opening.

In summer, shade was more important than warmth. The women did their work under a flat shade roof, open at the sides. At certain times of year, the entire group would move to a new location where food was plentiful. They put up brush fences around the area to serve as windbreaks, but did not build houses except in places where they would spend the winter.

The Kawaiisu men used sweathouses to cleanse themselves. The sweathouse was smaller than the homes, and the pole framework was covered with earth. If possible, the sweathouse was located near the water source, so the men could jump into the cold water after being in the hot sweathouse.

FOOD

Acorns were the main food for the Kawaiisu. There were seven kinds of oak trees that grew in their territory. Since the acorns could be gathered only in the fall, the people always hoped for a harvest large enough to last them through the winter. They stored the acorns, as well as other nuts and seeds, in special little buildings set on poles several feet off the ground, to keep animals from getting their food.

Other edible plants that grew in the Tehachapi Mountains were wild celery, wild parsley, rice grass, fiddleneck ferns, box thorn, chia, and other grasses. A few varieties of berries could be found. In addition to acorns, buckeye nuts were gathered and ground into flour and then used to make mush or flat

cakes. The Kawaiisu could get other plants, such as mesquite, from the nearby desert, but desert plants were a small part of their diet.

The favorite meat of the people was deer. There may have been times when the Kawaiisu joined with the neighboring Chumash and Yokuts in an antelope hunt. They also ate many smaller animals, rodents, birds, and some insects. A certain type of caterpillar was a common food. The Kawaiisu knew how to catch fish with bone hooks, but seldom had fish to eat because there were not many rivers in their area.

CLOTHING

Kawaiisu women and older girls wore a two-piece skirt, one part hanging in front and the other behind, fastened around the waist. The skirt was usually made of deerskin. Men wore a piece of deerskin around their hips. Children wore no clothing except when it was very cold. Then babies were wrapped in wildcat skins or in blankets made of rabbitskin. Rabbitskin blankets were also used as cloaks or robes by both men and women in cold weather.

On their feet the people wore shoes made of deerskin, the bottoms covered with pitch and ashes to make them sturdier. Before using deerskin to make shoes or clothing, they had to treat the skins by soaking them and then scraping them to remove the hair. They made the skins soft by working them between their hands.

It was common for women to have their ears and noses pierced. They decorated themselves with strings of beads in their ears, and small bone nose plugs. Both men and women often had tattoos on their hands, arms, and face. Women also used face and body paint, when it was available. Men usually painted themselves only for ceremonies.

TOOLS

The baskets made by the Kawaiisu were somewhat different from those of other California groups. They used both the twining and the coiling methods, but in the coiled baskets they used a technique called *wicikadi*, meaning *wrapped around*, in which they wrapped the coils around the foundation rods, rather than sewing them. Willow, oak, rosebush stem, and deergrass were used to make baskets. The baskets were sometimes decorated by patterns made by

weaving in black fibers, or the quills of birds.

The Kawaiisu may have gotten some pottery pots from their neighbors to the east, but they probably did not make pottery themselves. They made baskets that would hold water by weaving them very finely and covering the baskets with pitch.

For hunting, bows and arrow were used. The bow was made of juniper wood, and the bowstring of twisted sinew (animal tendons). Arrows had points made from obsidian (volcanic glass), bound to the arrow shaft with sinew.

Obsidian was also used to make knives. Handles for the knives were made from a substance called *lac gum*, which was deposited by aphids on sagebrush. Nets were woven of cord, which was made by twisting three strands of fiber from milkweed stems.

TRADE

The Kawaiisu had trading relationships with all the groups around them, though they probably traded less with the Chemehuevi in the desert to the east than they did with the Yokuts and Tubatulabal to the north and the Chumash, on the west coast. From those to the north they got obsidian and salt in exchange for acorns.

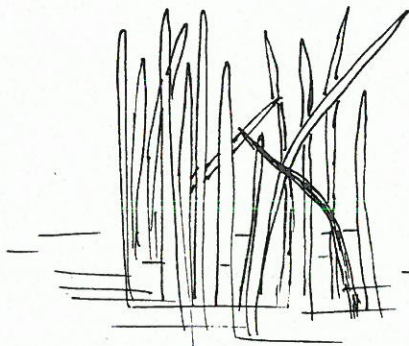
When goods could not be traded for other goods, shell beads were used as money. These beads came from the Chumash, who lived on the sea coast.

CEREMONIES

Dancing was an important part of every ceremony. Musical instruments were used by the Kawaiisu at their dances. They had a flute with six holes made of elderberry wood. They used split pieces of cane as clappers, and cocoons and deer hooves as rattles to keep the rhythm for the dancing.

Both men and women had special clothing for ceremonies. The men wore aprons made from the soft feathers of baby eagles, and they painted their bodies with white paint. Women used red paint on their faces, and baby eagle feathers in their hair.

Other groups were invited to come when the Kawaiisu held a ceremony in remembrance of those who had died. Brush and bark shapes were dressed in the clothing of the dead. The images were then thrown into the fire.



KITANEMUK

(kǐ tā nə,möök)



Tule reeds, used to make houses, baskets, mats

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Central California, at the southern end of the San Joaquin valley. [Kern County]	1770 estimate -- 500 to 1,000 1910 Census -- not known	Uto-Aztecan family

Little is known about the small group called the Kitanemuk. Talks with the few remaining members of the group in 1917 indicate that the earlier Kitanemuk way of life was much like that of their neighbors to the north and west. Though their language was part of the same family as the Serrano and Cahuilla to the south, the Kitanemuk had more in common with their other neighbors. Though some of their customs were the same, the Kitanemuk did not get along with the Yokuts, to the north.

Many of the Kitanemuk people had been taken into Missions San Fernando and San Gabriel by 1800, which led to the decline of the Kitanemuk villages and way of life.

SETTLEMENTS

The Kitanemuk lived in the Tehachapi Mountains at the south end of the San Joaquin valley. Their villages were along Tejon, Paso, and Caliente Creeks and other small creeks. Though some of their land was in the Mohave Desert, they lived mostly in the mountains.

The name *Kitanemuk* may have come from *ki* meaning *house*. In later years, the people were called the Tejon Indians. Another name by which they have been known is *Haminot*, which is a word from the Kitanemuk language meaning *what is it?*

In each Kitanemuk village there was a leader who advised the people about proper behavior and who helped to settle arguments. He had two men known as messengers, who carried his announcements to

nearby villages and who sometimes spoke for him in his own village. The village also had a ceremony manager who was in charge of the gatherings, feasts, and ceremonies.

HOUSES

The houses in Kitanemuk villages were probably made with a framework of poles, bent in and attached to a ridge pole. The ridge pole was held up by forked poles at each end of the building. Across the framing poles, smaller poles were attached to make a crosswork, which was covered with mats made of tule reeds. Several families may have shared a large house, with each family having its own entrance to the house and its own fireplace near the center of the house.

There was very little furniture inside a Kitanemuk house. Mats made of tule reeds were used by the people to sit on and to sleep on. They may also have used a wooden frame, set on legs off the ground, as a bed. This frame would have been covered with the tule mats.

An early report from a visitor in 1776 tells of a large square house in a Kitanemuk village. This may have been a special ceremonial building, though no other descriptions of assembly or dance houses exist.

It can be assumed that the Kitanemuk village had at least one sweathouse. The sweathouse was probably built around a hole dug down several feet into the ground. A low framework of poles made a dome shaped roof over the hole. A covering of

brush and earth helped to keep the heat inside the sweathouse when a fire was built in it.

The part of Kitanemuk territory away from the mountains was hot and dry. Although they did not have permanent villages in this southern portion, the people did make trips there, when the weather was cool, to gather plants and salt from dry salt lakes.

FOOD

Nuts and seeds were an important part of the food of the Kitanemuk. Like most early Californians, they depended on acorns, gathered in the fall, for their meals through the entire year. Piñon nuts were also gathered and stored. Seeds from a variety of plants such as chia and wild oats were collected by beating the grasses with a seedbeater, a special basket made from tule reeds. Seeds were ground to make a kind of flour. This flour was then mixed with water and made into small cakes which were baked in an earth oven.

Many plants had roots which added to the food supply. Tule roots were dried and pounded into a flour for making mush. The roots of the brodiaea, or wild hyacinth, plant were roasted in hot coals and eaten like potatoes. The leaves and stems of other plants like clover and ferns were eaten fresh.

The streams along which the Kitanemuk built their villages supplied fish. Nets and spears were used to catch the fish. In some of the streams, fishermen could catch the fish with their bare hands. Birds such as ducks, mud hens, and geese were caught in snares set up in places where the birds came to feed. Bird eggs were gathered from nests.

Deer were found in the hills, and killed with bow and arrow. The taking of a deer was an important event. More common was catching small animals such as rabbits, ground squirrels, and wood rats.

CLOTHING

The apron-like skirt worn by the women was made from tule reeds, fastened to a waist band woven from reeds or made from a piece of deerhide. The men often wore no clothing. Robes, made from strips of rabbit skins woven together, were worn over the shoulders in cold weather, and used as blankets for sleeping.

Sea shells and seeds were used to make necklaces and earrings. Women sometimes painted their bodies with red, white, and black paint.

TOOLS

From stones, shells, wood, and reeds, the people made the tools they needed. Baskets were important for carrying, storing, and cooking food. The Kitanemuk probably used both the twining and coiling methods of making baskets, with tule reeds forming the basis and other plant fibers used to finish the basket. Traps, snares, and nets were woven from cord, which was made from plant fibers.

Pieces of stone and shell were used for scraping and cutting. Obsidian (volcanic glass) for spear and arrow points was gotten through trade.

TRADE

The Chumash, neighbors to the west, and the Tubatulabal, neighbors to the north, were friends of the Kitanemuk. These groups traded goods with each other. The Mohave and Quechan, who lived southeast of the Kitanemuk, also visited in Kitanemuk territory for purposes of trading. However, the Kitanemuk did not often make the trip to the Mohave or Quechan areas.

From the Chumash, the Kitanemuk got the clamshell disks that were used as money by most of the early people of central and southern California. These disks were made from broken pieces of clamshells, shaped into small circles. A hole was drilled in each circle so that the disks, or beads, could be strung on strings. The smoother and more polished a string of beads was, the more valuable it was.

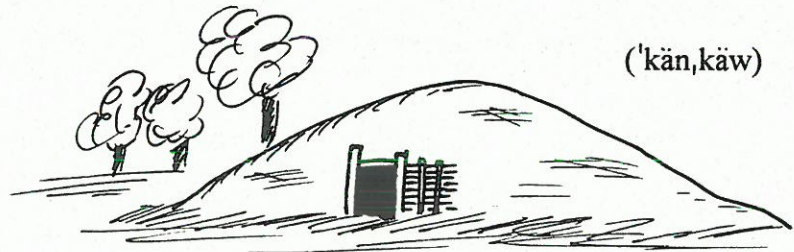
The Chumash also brought sea shells for ornament, seaweed, sea urchins, and other ocean products to the Kitanemuk, as well as wooden bowls and boxes which the Chumash made.

CEREMONIES

The Kitanemuk celebrated the beginning of summer and winter by making offerings of feathers and bead. They believed that certain sacred stones would protect their houses from storms and them from illness. These stones, which had various shapes, came from the coast. They were wrapped with baby eagle feathers, seeds, and beads.

KONKOW

('kän,käv)



Konkow earth-covered house used for dances

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
North central California [Butte County, eastern Glenn County]	1770 estimate -- not known 1910 Census -- not known	Penutian family

The Konkow are sometimes called the Northwestern Maidu. Their language was similar to the Maidu who lived to the northeast of them, as well as to the Nisenan who lived south of them.

SETTLEMENTS

Konkow villages were located along the Feather River and along a portion of the Sacramento River. Their territory also included a section of the Sierra foothills to the east of their villages. Much of Konkow territory had wet winters and dry summers. The rivers that cut through Konkow territory had carved deep, narrow canyons. The Konkow chose spots on the ridges above the rivers for their villages. About 150 Konkow village sites have been identified.

Each Konkow village had a headman. Although the headman had more authority than others in the village, he did not make rules. Rather, he was an advisor and a spokesman for the other people.

The name *Konkow* comes from a native term *kóyo mkàwi*, meaning *meadowland*.

HOUSES

The Konkow built three types of houses. Small cone-shaped houses were covered with slabs of bark. These were used as family homes in the winter. Larger, earth-covered houses were also used in the winter, usually by several families at a time. The larger houses were built around a pit dug in the ground, making the floor of the house lower

than the ground. The poles that framed the house were covered with bark and branches, and then with earth. The headman's house, larger than the others in the village, might serve as the assembly house for the community.

For more than half of the year, the Konkow lived in temporary shelters built near where they were gathering food. They went to places in the valleys to gather seeds in the spring, into the mountains to hunt in the summer, and to places where there were groves of oak trees in the fall. As they moved around, the Konkow made campsites by putting up fences of brush and branches in a big circle. Several families lived inside each enclosure, which did not have a roof.

FOOD

Deer, fish, and acorns were the most important parts of the Konkow food supply, as they were for many early California peoples. The Konkow spent more than half of their year traveling from the valleys to the mountains and back to the valleys, gathering the various plants that were available and hunting and fishing.

Besides acorns from the oak trees, other nuts and seeds were eaten. The Konkow used the nuts from the digger pine tree, either eating them as they came from the tree, or grinding them into a flour from which mush or bread could be made, similar to the way acorns were used. The shells of the digger pine nuts were made into beads.

The men traveled to the mountains in the summer to hunt deer and elk. They often worked together to trail and capture these larger animals. The extra meat was dried at the temporary campsites, and later carried back to the permanent village for use during the winter. The Konkow also hunted small animals such as squirrels and rabbits, and birds such as ducks, geese, and quail. They did not eat bear, mountain lion, buzzards, lizards, snakes, or frogs.

A sweet drink was made from the berries of the manzanita bush. Wild mint was used to make a tea drink. Wild rye grew in the valleys in Konkow territory. These seeds, as well as other seeds, berries, roots and bulbs were used for food. From the rivers, the Konkow got salmon, eels, and other fish. Some salt was available from salt deposits, but the Konkow also used dandelions, watercress, wild garlic, and onion to add flavor to their food.

CLOTHING

Konkow women wore a two-piece apron-like skirt, one piece covering the front and the other the back. The skirts were made either from deerskin, or from thin pieces of bark. In warm weather, men often either wore nothing, or wrapped a piece of deerskin around their hips. The Konkow did not wear moccasins. To keep warm in the winter, they put a blanket or robe over their shoulders. Blankets were made of deerskin or mountain lion skin.

The Konkow kept their hair cut to a shorter length than many of the neighboring groups. They used a hot coal to singe the hair off at the length they wanted. Konkow men did not let beards or mustaches grow on their faces, but pulled out the hairs. The people kept their hair neat and clean by using soaproot for shampoo, and pine cones and porcupine tails as combs and brushes.

Women had their ears pierced, and wore ornaments of bone or wood in their ears. Men had their noses pierced, and wore woodpecker feathers. The people also wore bracelets and necklaces made of shell, bone, and feathers. Both Konkow men and women had tattooing on their chins.

TOOLS

The tools that the people made were mostly connected with the process of collecting and

preparing food. Several kinds of baskets were needed. The Konkow used both the twining and coiling methods of making baskets. In making twined baskets, they used slender willow or redbud branches for the upright parts, weaving in pieces of roots and fibers from other plants. The baskets were decorated with designs worked into the basket by using roots dyed black or red.

Since food was often gathered some distance from the village, burden baskets to carry the supply back were important. Burden baskets were worn on the back, and were held in place by a woven strap that went around the forehead or over the shoulders. Carrying sacks were made of cord. The cord came from fibers of the milkweed plant, twisted together. Cord was also used to make nets for catching fish and snaring small animals. Tule rushes that grew along the rivers were used to make mats used for sitting and sleeping on, and for covering doorways.

The Konkow did not make boats. The rivers in their area flowed too swiftly. The Konkow caught fish by stretching large nets across a stream. They also used fishing spears. Bows and arrows and knives were used in hunting. Knives and spears were made from basalt, a hard volcanic rock. Pieces of bone and stone were also used as scrapers in preparing animal skins.

TRADE

The Konkow used clamshell disks as money. The clamshells came from the coast along Bodega Bay, and were traded from one group to another throughout central California. The round pieces of clamshell were polished and strung on strings. They were used in trade with neighboring groups. The Konkow traded with the Maidu for pine nuts and salmon. They supplied arrows, bows, and deer hides to the Maidu. From other neighbors the Konkow got abalone shells which they used for ornaments.

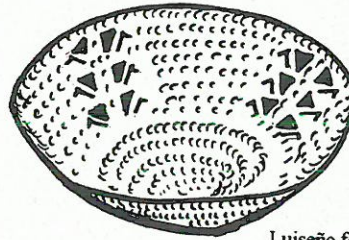
CEREMONIES

The Konkow had a ceremony to celebrate the catching of the first salmon of the season. Only after each man in the village had eaten a piece of the first fish caught could more fishing take place. Other ceremonies marked the time when girls and boys became adult members of the village. Dancing and music were always a part of the ceremonies.



LUISEÑO/ JUANENO

(lōō wī'sā,nyō / hwä'nā,nyō)



Luiseño feast basket

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Southern California coast [San Diego County, parts of Riverside & Orange Counties]	1770 estimate -- 5,000 1910 Census --500	Uto-Aztecan family

The Luiseño and the Juaneño are sometimes referred to as two groups because of the two missions (Mission San Luis Rey and Mission San Juan Capistrano) built in their territory in 1776 and 1798. Based on language and culture, they were probably one group.

SETTLEMENTS

Luiseño territory stretched from the ocean inland along the San Luis Rey and Santa Margarita rivers. The Juaneño were to the north of them, from the sea to the crest of the Sierra Santa Ana mountains. Villages were located both on the coast and along rivers and streams in the inland hills. There may have been as many as 50 villages.

Each village was separate, with very little connection to its neighbors. The village owned a certain area, and individuals and families owned places within the village area. Village boundaries were marked and protected. Each village had its own hunting, fishing, and food gathering areas, and the people seldom traveled far from their village. Permission had to be given before people from one village could walk across the land belonging to another village.

The names *Luiseño* and *Juaneño* came from the names of the Spanish missions. Before that time, the people probably had no group name for themselves.

Each village had a leader who inherited the position from his father. The leader directed food gathering activities, religious ceremonies, and warfare. He had an assistant who carried messages for him.

HOUSES

The Luiseño and Juaneño built their houses in a cone shape, with a circle of poles leaning together at the top. The frame of poles was covered with a layer of bark, branches, or tule reeds, and then with earth. The floor was dug out about two feet below ground level. There was a fireplace in the middle and a smokehole in the roof. The entrance sometimes had a short tunnel before the door.

Most of the daily life activities were carried on outside, under thatched shade roofs. Cooking was done outside unless the weather was too cold or rainy.

The sweathouse was built like the houses but it was smaller and oval in shape, with the entrance on the long side. The men used the sweathouse every day to clean their bodies.

FOOD

Animals hunted by the Luiseño/Juaneño were deer, antelope, rabbits, woodrats, mice, ground squirrels, mountain quail, doves, ducks, and other birds. They did not eat tree squirrels or reptiles, but did like grasshoppers. From the ocean they got sea mammals, fish, crabs, lobsters, and mollusks. They caught trout and a few other fish in the mountain streams. People who lived away from the ocean had fishing rights at certain places on the coast. To cook meat and fish, the Luiseño/Juaneño used both open-fire broiling and cooking in an earth oven.

Acorns were the most important plant food for the Luiseño/Juaneño, as they were for many early Californians. Each village owned an oak grove in the mountains, where they went each fall to gather the acorns. Grass seeds and the seeds of the sunflower, sage, chia, manzanita, wild rose, holly-leaf cherry, prickly pear, and sage were also gathered. The seeds were dried and ground up, then boiled in water to make a mush.

Other plants that added to the food supply were leafy greens, cactus pods and fruits, thimbleberries, elderberries, wild grapes, and wild strawberries. The buds, blossoms and pods of the yucca plant were eaten, along with a variety of other bulbs and roots.

CLOTHING

The two-piece aprons worn by the women had a back section made from an inner layer of bark, softened by pounding. The front section was usually made of cord, netted together. Sandals were made from the fibers of the yucca plants. Women sometimes wore a cap on their head, especially when they were carrying a heavy load by means of a head strap. Men did not usually wear any clothing, but if the weather was cold, they put robes over their shoulders. The robes were made of strips of rabbit fur woven together, or of deerskin or sea-otter skin. Otter-skin robes were the most prized.

The men wore earrings and noserings made from bone or cane. Necklaces sometimes had bear claws or deer hooves along with pieces of shell, bone, or clay. Human hair was woven to make bracelets and anklets. Both men and women tattooed and painted their bodies.

TOOLS

When hunting, the Luiseño/Juaneño used a shoulder-height bow made of wood, with arrows either hardened and sharpened by fire or fitted with stone tips. Pieces of deer antler were used to shape the quartz stone into arrowheads. The strings on the bows were of cord twisted from plant fibers. Smaller animals were caught with a curved throwing stick, or in a trap or net.

For fishing in the ocean, they made dugout canoes of yellow pine logs. They also had lightweight canoes called *balsas*, which were made from bundles

of tule reeds tied together. Fish hooks were made of bone or shell. They also used basket fish traps, dip nets, and harpoons to catch fish.

Wood and stone were used to make food paddles, bowls and cups, head scratchers, and tools for drilling and pounding. Pieces of deer antler, pounded with a stone, served as chisels or wedges when working with wood and stone.

Coiled and twined baskets were made by the Luiseño/Juaneño. The finely-made coiled baskets were often decorated with designs in tan, red, or black. They were used for gathering, storing, and cooking food. Pottery jars were made from clay and fired in open pits. The pottery was usually not decorated.

TRADE

Ownership of private property was important to the Luiseño and Juaneño. Things that they considered valuable were trade beads, items used in their ceremonies, eagle nests, and songs.

The Luiseño/Juaneño did not make many trips for the purpose of trading with other groups. However, they did get steatite (soapstone) from the Gabrielinos, and obsidian from people who lived to the north of them. The clamshell beads strung on strings, common to many central and southern California people, were used as money by the Luiseño/Juaneño.

CEREMONIES

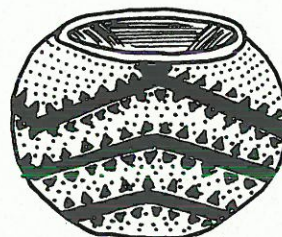
The Luiseño/Juaneño built circular ceremonial enclosures called *wamkis* in their villages. The fence around the ceremonial area was made of brush. The celebration of important events (deaths, births, or boys and girls becoming adults) included the making of sand paintings inside the *wamkis*. The paintings were always done in a circle, and represented things of nature such as animals, birds, the sea, mountains, and stars. After the ceremony, the sand painting was destroyed. The Luiseño/Juaneño were one of the few California groups who did sand paintings.

For each ceremony there was feasting, dancing, and singing. Music was made with bird-bone and cane whistles and flutes, clappers, and rattles made from turtle shells, gourds, or deer hooves. Gifts were given to the guests at the feast.



MAIDU

(mī,dōo)



Maidu coiled basket

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northeastern California [Plumas County & southern Lassen County)	1770 estimate -- 9,000 1910 Census -- 1,100 (includes Konkow & Nisenan)	Penutian family

The Maidu were one of three groups that spoke similar languages and lived close to each other. The term *Maidu* is sometimes used to refer to all three groups. The Maidu proper were the Mountain Maidu, the most northeastern of the three. The other two associated groups are the Konkow (or Northwestern Maidu) and the Nisenan (or Southern Maidu).

SETTLEMENTS

The area occupied by the Maidu was a series of mountain valleys. The villages in each valley were known to the people by the name of the valley. These valleys were about 4,000 feet above sea level. The Maidu placed their villages along the edges of the valleys rather than in the flat middle, because the valley bottoms were often wet from melting snows.

Communities were made up of three to five villages, with an average of seven to ten houses in each village. The main village had the ceremonial earth-lodge. Though this was not necessarily the largest village, it was usually the one where the headman of the community lived. In fact, the headman often lived in the earth-lodge. His job was to give advice to the people, and to speak for them with other groups. Each community held certain land on which they had hunting and fishing rights. Guards were posted to make sure that people from other communities did not hunt or fish there. People did not usually travel more than 20 miles from home during their lifetime.

HOUSES

The Maidu lived in houses that were partly underground during the winter. Several families shared a house, which they would build in the spring when the ground was soft. Then they could dig down to a depth of about four feet. The houses were round, with diameters of from 20 to 40 feet. The poles that formed the frame for the house were covered with bark, and then with packed earth. The village ceremonial house was of the same design.

Some Maidu built cone-shaped houses from poles covered with bark. These were smaller than the earth-lodges. In the summer, the people made temporary shelters near where they were hunting or gathering food. These shelters were made with poles and a flat roof of oak branches and leaves. There were no walls.

FOOD

Since the Maidu lived in the mountains, they depended more on animals like deer for their food. They were good hunters. Sometimes a man hunted alone, and sometimes with a group of men. They had hunting dogs to help in the hunt. Deer and elk were followed for days until the animals were tired and could be killed more easily. Squirrel and rabbits were shot with arrows, or caught in nets. Geese, duck, and quail were used as food, but birds of prey such as eagles were never eaten. Several kinds of insects including grasshoppers and crickets were eaten.

Before it was eaten, meat was roasted over an open

fire or baked. An oven was made by putting rocks in a hole and lighting a fire in the hole. When the rocks were hot, the burning coals were raked out. The food to be baked was wrapped in large leaves and covered with the hot rocks.

The Maidu used many plants growing in their area for food. They ate roots, stems, leaves, and seeds of plants. Acorns from several kinds of oak trees, including the huckleberry oak and the bush chinquapin that grow in the northeastern mountain region, were gathered. The Maidu also gathered the nuts of the sugar pine and yellow pine, which they ate plain or cooked into a soup.

Fish were sometimes caught in nets, and sometimes speared. The nets were made like bags, held open at the mouth by a piece of willow branch. The mouth of the net could be closed, after the fish swam in, by means of a pole tied to the opposite side of the mouth.

Manzanita berries were crushed and mixed with water to form a stiff dough. When water was poured over the dough, it became flavored with the sweet berry flavor, making a manzanita cider. Another drink was a type of tea made from wild mint.

CLOTHING

The Maidu did not need to wear much clothing. If the men wore anything at all in the warm summer weather, it was a simple piece of deerskin around their hips. Women wore a double apron, one section covering the front and the other covering the back. The apron was made of deerskin or of bark.

In the winter, the Maidu wore moccasins on their feet. The moccasins were made of deerskin, with a seam sewn up the front. They were stuffed with grass for extra warmth. Deerhide was wrapped around the lower part of the legs when it was snowy. These leggings were worn with the hair side in. Over their shoulders, the people wore robes made from deer or mountain lion skins.

The Maidu wore their hair long and hanging loose. Some men wore a net cap. For ceremonies, the net cap was decorated with feathers. Maidu women wore a basket cap made of tules. Tattooing was done by the Maidu. The men often had vertical lines

on the chin. Women also had tattoos on the chest, arms, and abdomen. The tattoo was made by piercing the skin with a fish bone or pine needle, and rubbing in a dye or charcoal.

TOOLS

Canoes were used by the Maidu. These were dugout canoes made by burning out the middle of logs. They were steered with one paddle or with a pole. The Maidu also made log rafts for crossing rivers by binding together several logs with vines.

Roots of yellow pine and bear grass, plus stems of the maidenhair fern, were used by the Maidu for making baskets. Baskets used for carrying loads and for storing and serving food were made by the method called twining. Designs were made with pieces of redbud, or pine root dyed black with charcoal. Coiled baskets were made when the basket needed to be firmer and water-tight. A bundle of three slender stems was made into a circular shape. The coils of stems were tied together with other fibers.

Nets, bows and arrows, knives, and spears were used in hunting and fishing. Obsidian (volcanic glass) was used to make arrowheads. Knives and spears were made from hard black basalt rock, fastened to a wooden handle.

TRADE

Clamshell disks served as money for the Maidu. The pieces of clamshell were made into beads. The Maidu got rough shells from the coast people, and finished them into polished beads themselves. Magnesite (a kind of stone) beads were also prized. Both types of beads were strung on strings.

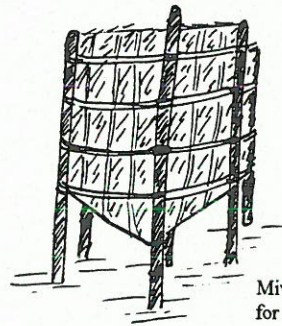
The Maidu traded with their neighbors. From the Achumawi, to the north, they got obsidian and a green dye. From the Konkow they got bows, arrows, deer hides, and several kinds of food.

CEREMONIES

The Maidu held many dances, both for special ceremonies and for fun. Along with the dancing they used a rattle called a *wasóso*; the name sounds like the sound the rattle made, like that of swishing pebbles. Several kinds of flutes and whistles were also used to make music for the dancing.

MIWOK

(mē,wäk)



Miwok granary
for storing acorns

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Central California [Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Mariposa, Contra Costa Counties, northern Madera & San Joaquin Counties, southern Sacramento County]	1770 estimate -- 9,000 1910 Census -- 670	Penutian family

Though they now share a name with the groups known as the Coast Miwok and Lake Miwok, the territory of this largest group of Miwok was separated from that of the Coast and Lake Miwok.

SETTLEMENTS

The Miwok, also called the Eastern Miwok, lived mostly along the foothills of the Sierras, and up into the mountains below the line of heavy winter snows. Northern branches of the group, known as the Plains Miwok and the Bay Miwok, lived along the Sacramento River and its delta. The Miwok considered themselves to belong to tribelets, or small groups of villages, of 100 to 500 people.

Each tribelet was led by a headman, who inherited the position from his father. The headman settled arguments and directed the hunting and food gathering. Young hunters supplied food for the headman, who was a wealthy person. To assist him there were speakers and messengers who made sure everyone knew what the headman decided. Each village within a tribelet had a speaker who was important as a sort of sub-chief.

Every thing and every person in the Miwok world was classed as either belonging to water or to land. Personal names often related to which group the person belonged. On the water side were such things as goose, frog, salmon, cloud, and ice, but also deer, antelope, coyote, rock, and sand. The land side included bear, fox, lizard, bluejay, fire, and drum.

HOUSES

In mountain areas, the Miwok house was made of layers of bark slabs leaning against each other in a cone shape. In the lower foothills and on the plains, the house was made around a frame of poles covered with bundles of grass or tule reeds, or with mats woven from tule reeds. In the center of the house was a fireplace and an earth oven. Pine needles covered the floor. Tule reed mats and animal skins were used for sitting and sleeping.

The largest building in each community was the assembly house, used for dances and other gatherings. A hole three to four feet deep was dug in the ground. The roof beams were held up by center posts and by the edge of the hole. In this way, a room 40 to 50 feet across could be made. The roof beams (which were also the upper walls) were connected by smaller branches, and then covered with layers of brush, pine needles, and earth. There was a smoke hole in the center of the roof, and a door at one side. The village sweathouse was made like the assembly house, but much smaller.

FOOD

The Sierra Miwok depended on deer as their main source of meat. For the Plains Miwok, elk and antelope were easier to get. Each group traveled to the other's area for hunting. Black bear and grizzly bear were hunted in the Sierras, though the Plains Miwok did not eat bear, fox or wildcat. Smaller animals like rabbits, beaver, squirrels, and woodrats

were used as food, but not coyotes, skunks, owls, snakes or frogs. The Plains Miwok took salmon and sturgeon from the Sacramento delta waters. The Sierra Miwok caught trout in mountain streams. Fish and meat were cooked over an open fire, or roasted in the ashes of the fire. Earth ovens heated by stones were used to bake and steam food.

In the spring, the Miwok gathered green plants to eat fresh. They ate columbine, milkweed, wild pea, sheep sorrel, and many other greens. In the summer, many types of seeds were gathered. Roots and mushrooms were also eaten. In the fall, pine nuts and acorns ripened and fell from the trees. Seven types of acorns were gathered by the Miwok and stored in village granaries for use throughout the year. The granaries were round, as big as five feet across and 12 feet high. They were made by standing poles in a circle, and lacing grapevines and smaller poles through the frame, then lining the inside with grass, twigs and brush.

CLOTHING

Northern Sierra Miwok women wore a piece of deerskin wrapped around as a dress. In Central Miwok territory and among the Plains Miwok, the women wore a two-piece apron-type skirt made of deerskin, grasses, or shredded tule reeds. Miwok men wore a piece of deerskin around their hips. For added warmth in cold weather, both men and women used blankets or robes made from animal skins. Deer, bear, mountain lion, coyote, and rabbit skins were used to make robes.

Young children had their ears and noses pierced, and wore flowers as ear and nose ornaments. Adults wore beads, shells, bones, and feathers as ear and nose ornaments. Both men and women had tattoos, usually three lines running from the chin down the body. Hair nets were worn only by the village leaders, except at special ceremonies.

TOOLS

Bows and arrows were used in hunting and in warfare. The Sierra Miwok used cedar wood to make the bows, which were backed with layers of sinew (animal tendons). Pieces of antler were used to chip and shape the arrowheads. Also used in warfare was a spear with a tip made from obsidian (volcanic glass). No shields or body armor were

used by the Miwok.

The Sierra and Plains Miwok used both the twining and coiling methods of making baskets. Young willow branches were used as the foundation for both types of baskets. Redbud fibers were wrapped around the willow coils in the coiled baskets. Coiled baskets took more time to make, and were used when the basket needed to be watertight. Twined baskets were used for carrying and as seed beaters.

Tule reeds that grew in marshy areas were woven together to make mats, used on the floors of houses. Bundles of tules were tied together around a frame made of willow poles to make a kind of canoe, used on the delta by the Plains Miwok. Wooden paddles were used to propel the canoes. In the mountains, rafts made from two logs tied together with vines were used for crossing streams.

String and cord were important in the making of nets which were used to catch fish, birds, and small animals. Fibers from the milkweed and hemp plants were rolled into string.

TRADE

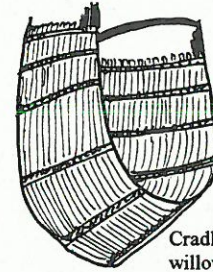
Clamshell disks were used as money, though they were considered less valuable among the Miwok than among their neighbors to the north. Pieces of clamshell were shaped into small circles, holes bored in them, and strung on strings. Miwok men and women wore strings of clamshells as necklaces, and to show their wealth. Olivella shells and magnesite (stone) cylinders were also strung on strings and used in trade. The Sierra Miwok got salt and obsidian from groups on the east side of the Sierras, and shells from those living on the sea coast. Baskets and bows and arrows were traded between groups.

CEREMONIES

Some Miwok ceremonies were connected with religious practices. For these, special robes and feather headdresses were used. Other dances were held for fun and entertainment. Some Miwok dances included clowns called *Wo'ochi* who were painted white and represented coyotes. The Miwok also had the *Uzumati* or grizzly bear ceremony, where the dancer pretended to be a bear, with pieces of obsidian attached to his fingers as claws.

MIWOK, COAST & LAKE

('mē,wäk)



Cradle made of willow shoots (Lake Miwok)

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Central California. [Coast Miwok - Marin County; Lake Miwok - Lake County]	1770 estimate --Coast 1,500; Lake 500 1910 Census -- Coast 11; Lake 7	Penutian family

The Coast Miwok and the Lake Miwok were the northern members of the large Miwok group, most of whom lived inland, from the Sacramento River delta to the Sierra Nevada mountains. It was Coast Miwok people whom Sir Francis Drake met in 1579 when he explored along the California coast. The description of the people written by Drake's party was later confirmed by research.

SETTLEMENTS

Coast Miwok villages were on Bodega Bay and Tomales Bay, on the protected shores of San Francisco Bay, and in the wooded peninsula between these bays. Today's place names of Cotati, Olema, Tomales, and Tamalpais come from the Coast Miwok. The Lake Miwok lived along several creeks south of Clear Lake. They made trips to Bodega Bay, in Coast Miwok territory, to gather food.

Larger villages each had a headman, the *hóypu*. One of his jobs was to give speeches about how the people should behave and what work needed to be done. An assistant leader, the *málle*, helped to make sure that what the headman said was carried out. The *máyen* (or *máien*) was a woman leader who supervised some of the important ceremonies, and sometimes told the *hóypu* what to do.

HOUSES

Their houses were round, made on a frame of poles (often from the willow tree) around a hole dug in the ground. A large center pole supported side poles that were all lashed together at the top. Slender

poles were tied across the upright poles. Over all of this, bundles of rushes or tule reeds were tied with cord. The reeds were then covered with dirt. The fireplace in the center of the house was surrounded by stones. A smokehole over the fireplace could be covered with a sealskin to keep out the rain. A flat woven mat covered the doorway.

Large villages had sweathouses or ceremonial houses built in much the same way as the family houses, though with the ground dug out four or five feet deep. These buildings had entrance tunnels that slanted down to the underground room.

FOOD

There was a big variety of food available for the Coast and Lake Miwok. Oak trees were common, and acorns was one of the basic foods. Buckeye nuts were used much like acorns, ground into a meal and made into mush. Berries from the pepperwood (or California laurel) tree were made into cakes, or used to make a drink said to be something like chocolate. Manzanita berries were dried and then made into a flour that was rolled into balls and eaten as a sweet. Nuts from the yellow and sugar pine trees were eaten, as were the seeds that came from the pine cones.

The sea was an important source of food for both the Coast and Lake Miwok. They did not eat sea mammals, but did eat fish, eels, crabs, mussels and clams. Seaweed was gathered and dried. After being baked, it could be saved for eating later. The

Coast Miwok, of course, had easier access to the ocean than did the Lake Miwok. Both groups caught trout and other freshwater fish in the streams. Salmon were taken as they entered the rivers to spawn.

Deer and elk were hunted all during the year. Deer bones were cracked open to get the marrow. The grizzly bear was less common than the deer and more difficult to kill. Smaller animals such as rabbits, squirrels, wood rats and gophers were easier to catch. Birds were hunted both as food and for their feathers. Ducks, geese, mud hens, and other waterfowl, as well as quail and other land birds, were caught in traps or nets.

The Lake Miwok liked to eat the larva (newly hatched) of yellow jackets, which they roasted. They also roasted and ate grasshoppers.

CLOTHING

Because the climate was mild, the people did not need many clothes to keep warm. Men sometimes wore an apron-like loin cloth tied at the waist. Women wore a skirt, either made in two sections like a double apron, or in one piece with an opening down one side. The clothing was made of deerskin or of tule reeds tied together.

Deer or rabbit skins were used to make blankets or capes that were worn over the shoulders. The rabbit skins were cut into strips and then fastened together with cord to make a blanket. Both men and women usually had their feet bare. Men wore a net cap on their head, sometimes with the soft feathers of baby eagles drawn through the mesh of the net. Feathers were also used to decorate bracelets and belts.

TOOLS

The Coast and Lake Miwok were skilled in making baskets, which they used for all cooking, carrying, and storing. Women did most of the basketmaking, though men sometimes made carrying baskets and special willow containers for their hunting equipment. Both methods of making baskets (twining and coiling) were used. Willow sticks were bent to form the basic shape of the basket. Woven through the willow were pieces of grass or pine roots. Tule reeds were used to make mats. Designs were made by using bulrush roots blackened in

ashes, or redbud sprouts. Special baskets were decorated with abalone shells and with red and white feathers.

From wood the Coast and Lake Miwok made bows and arrows, hollow-log foot drums, and double-bladed paddles for their rafts. The bow was backed with sinew from the wing of the brown pelican. The arrows had three feathers. Obsidian (volcanic glass) and flint (a type of quartz) was used for axes, spear tips, knives, and arrowheads. The flint was shaped with tools made from deer and elk antler.

To cross streams or bays, rafts of a few logs or of tule reeds were made. Bundles of reeds were bound together with grapevines or rope made of milkweed fiber. The rafts were shaped somewhat like canoes.

TRADE

Clamshell beads were used as money. The beads were made by polishing small disks of shell, punching a hole in each, and stringing them on cords. Though the clamshells came from Coast Miwok territory, the people here did not seem to have any advantage of wealth and did not engage in a great deal of trading. The Lake Miwok had a source of magnesite (a stone that turns reddish when heated) from which beads were made. Magnesite beads were of more value than clamshell beads (one report is that a one-inch magnesite bead was worth two yards of clamshell money).

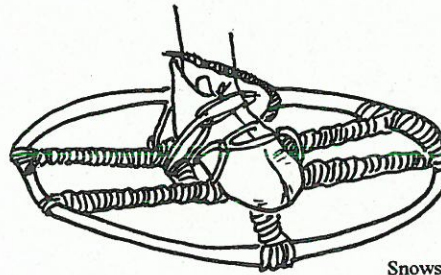
CEREMONIES

The Coast and Lake Miwok held many dances during the year. Sometimes a large dance house was built for a special ceremony. Dances were held to celebrate the capture of bear, deer, or salmon; to mark a young person's becoming an adult; to install a new headman. In some ceremonies, the dancers would take on the role of a bear or a coyote. Sometimes only the men danced; other times women and children participated, with a woman sometimes being the head dancer.

Dance costumes were made from the skin of a brown or white pelican, cut in such a way that the wings made the sleeves of the costume. Feather headdresses were worn. Foot drums, flutes, cocoon rattles and split-stick clappers made music for the dances.

MODOC

(mō, dōk)



Snowshoe

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northeastern corner of California [northeast Siskiyou County & northern Modoc County]	1770 estimate -- 500 (in Calif.) 1910 Census --20 (in Calif.)	Shapwailutan family

The Modoc may not be considered as California Indians, since their territory was as much in present-day Oregon as in California. Their language and customs were closely related to the Klamath people, who lived in Oregon. The Modoc did, however, occupy a part of California that is today known as Modoc County. They also shared some customs with the Shasta to the west, and with the Achumawi to the south.

In California history, the Modoc are noted for their defense of their lands in 1872-73 when for several months they outwitted the American soldiers, who outnumbered them, by fighting from the lava caves and trenches. The Modoc leader at that time, a chief named Kintpuash, was known as Captain Jack.

SETTLEMENTS

In California, the Modoc occupied land south to the Pit River, and east almost to Goose Lake. The main settlements were near Lower Klamath Lake and Tule Lake. This area contains a lot of marsh lands,

The name *Modoc* may have come from *Móatokni*, meaning *Southerners*. The people did not use this name for themselves, but called themselves *maklaks*, meaning *the people*. To name specific groups of people, they used a description of where the group lived, such as *Moatak maklaks*, meaning the people who lived on the lake to the south (*muat*).

The leaders of Modoc villages probably inherited their position, the son of a leader replacing his father.

HOUSES

The Modoc had two types of houses. During most of the year, they lived in brush houses. These were made in an oval shape, from 12 to 25 feet long and about half that wide. A frame of willow poles was covered with several layers of mats made from tule reeds.

In the winter, the Modoc lived in an earth-covered lodge. The floor was dug out several feet below ground level. Roof beams were supported by posts inside, with willow poles forming the side walls. Tule mats and brush were placed over the poles, as in the summer house, but then the entire structure was covered with a heavy layer of earth. The earth lodges were sometimes as big as 50 feet across, with the roof being 20 feet above the floor. The smokehole in the roof was also the main door. A ladder to climb down to the floor was made by cutting notches in a pole.

Sweathouses used by the Modoc were small structures made of poles covered with mats. Stones were heated in a fire outside, then brought into the sweathouse where water was poured on them, making steam.

FOOD

Since there were few oak trees in Modoc territory, they did not use acorns as their main food like most California Indian groups. The food that replaced the acorn for the Modoc was the *wokas*, a large yellow water lily that grew in the marshy areas. The people

went out in canoes to gather the seeds of this water lily, usually collecting the seed pods before the seeds were fully ripe. The pods were then dried in the sun and the seeds pounded out. There were several different names for the seeds, depending on how ripe they were and how they were prepared for eating. Seeds gathered when they were fully ripe were called *spokwas*, and were considered the finest kind. Some seeds were boiled into a thin mush. The dried seeds could be stored for eating later in the year.

Deer meat and fish were important foods for the Modoc. They did not have much salmon, but caught smaller fish in the lakes. Ducks and other waterfowl were snared in large nets, held at the sides by several men and then dropped over the birds.

CLOTHING

Shirts and leggings made from deerskins were worn by Modoc men. The women's dress, also made of deerskin, was a full gown that hung from the shoulders.

The tule reeds that grew in the marshes were used to make other articles of clothing. Tule strands were twined together to make shoes, which were lined with grass. These shoes were used in the winter, as they were warmer and more waterproof than moccasins made of deerskin. Deerskin shoes were used in the summer, when people were walking longer distances. Snowshoes were made by bending a small branch into a hoop shape, and stretching strips of hide across it. For walking in marshy areas, the Modoc used a smaller version of the snowshoe.

Tule reeds were also used to make knee-high leggings. For more warmth in cold weather, women wore a cape or blanket made from shredded tule or sagebrush bark over their shoulders. Men wore a cap without a top, like an eye shade, made from tule reeds. Porcupine tails were used as hairbrushes. Infants' heads were wrapped in such a way as to flatten the forehead.

TOOLS

The tule reeds were used by the Modoc to make many of the things they needed. In addition to tule mats, shoes, and clothing, they used the tule reeds to make baskets. Two fibers from the tule were twisted into a string, which was used to form the

frame of the basket. Other tule fibers were twined in, making a rather soft basket. Whereas other early California groups used a variety of materials in basketmaking, the Modoc relied almost entirely on tule reeds. Their baskets were decorated with patterns in black or yellow from the leaves of cattail rushes, or with porcupine quills dyed yellow with moss.

The Modoc made canoes by digging out a fir log. The canoes were about two feet wide, and from 12 to 30 feet long. They were thin and lightweight, suited only for quiet lakes and marshes rather than rushing rivers. The canoe paddles, about four or five feet long, were made of cedar wood. Often two people paddled the canoe, one in the back and one in the middle. The load was placed in the back, so that the front of the canoe rose out of the water. The Modoc also used rafts made from bundles of tule reeds lashed together. The rafts could carry a heavy weight, but moved very slowly in the marshes.

For pounding the *wokas* and other seeds, the Modoc used a stone tool called a *muller*. This was a flat slab, usually of lava rock, with two fingers, or horns, sticking up from the base. The woman using the muller held it with her thumbs pressed against the protruding horns, and stroked it back and forth to crack the shells of the seeds.

For hunting, bows and arrows as well as spears and harpoons, with tips made of obsidian (volcanic glass), were used. The hunter carried the arrows in a quiver made from a tule reed mat. The string used to tie together the tule reeds was made from shreds of nettle bark. For fishing, small dip nets on hoops and longer gill-net seines were made of string.

TRADE

Dentalium (tooth-shaped mollusk) shells were used as money. The hollow shells were strung on strings by size, the longer shells being worth more. The shells came from the northwest coast, mostly from Vancouver Island, and were traded from one group to another, until they reached northern California.

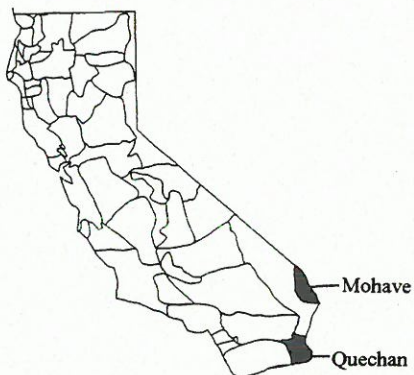
CEREMONIES

Little is known of Modoc ceremonies. They did celebrate the girls becoming adults with a dance.

MOHAVE and QUECHAN

(mō'hävē)

(kwə'chän)



Mohave painted pottery bowl

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Southeastern California, along the Colorado River [San Bernardino County & eastern Imperial County]	1770 estimate -- Calif. (not known) 1910 Census -- Calif. (not known)	Hokan family

Both the Mohave and the Quechan (also called the Yuma) lived mostly east of the Colorado River, in what is now Arizona. Their culture is more like the southwestern groups than it is Californian. However, they also occupied an area in California.

SETTLEMENTS

The area along the Colorado River gets very little rain. The summers are hot and the winters are mild. Quechan and Mohave settlements were located on high ground away from the river during the winter and early spring, when the river might flood. The people moved closer to the river in the late spring and summer. Some settlements had as many as several hundred people, but families were usually spread out over a mile or two, rather than clustered in villages.

Both Quechan and Mohave thought of themselves as tribes made up of many clans or bands. The tribe came together to make war against neighboring tribes, and to celebrate the harvest. The Mohave and Quechan were often allies against neighboring tribes. Each settlement had one or more headmen who were chosen by the people. The headmen from all the settlements sometimes met together to discuss things of importance to the entire tribe.

HOUSES

Houses in this desert country were usually just shade roofs (called *ramadas*), with four or six poles supporting a flat roof covered with bundles of reeds or grasses. For cold weather, the houses had side

walls made from poles slanting from the ground to the roof, covered with bundles of grass and then with a layer of mud several inches thick. Sometimes a settlement would have one or two such houses larger than the rest, where the leaders lived. If the weather was very cold, they would invite others to stay with them.

It seems that neither the Mohave or the Quechan used sweathouses, as most early Californians did.

FOOD

Unlike most of the early Californians, the Mohave and Quechan were farmers. They depended on growing part of their food, rather than on hunting and gathering only wild food. The flooding of the Colorado River each spring left rich soil in the valley along the river bottom. Here the people planted maize (corn), melons, beans, and pumpkins. They also planted the seeds of wild grasses.

Men and women worked together to raise crops. The men cleared the land, dug planting holes, and weeded. Women planted the seeds and worked with the men in the harvest. Often several families worked together to plant and harvest a crop. In September the corn was picked and the husks removed in the fields. The ears of corn were placed on the roofs of the ramadas to dry in the sun before being stored in large baskets.

In addition to the crops grown in their fields, the Mohave and Quechan women gathered wild food. A variety of wild seeds grew along the river. The

desert produced several kinds of cactus with edible fruits, as well as mesquite. The beanlike pods of the mesquite plant were pounded and crushed so that the pulp (soft part inside) could be removed. The pulp was dried and ground into flour, which was mixed with water to make cakes. The crushed pods also could be soaked in warm water to make a sweet-tasting drink.

Meat was not common in the Mohave or Quechan diet, as there was very little game for them to hunt. Hunters sometimes traveled to the mountains east of the river to hunt deer. Rabbits were caught in traps or with curved throwing sticks. More common in the diet was fish taken from the Colorado River. A stew made from fish and corn was a favorite meal.

CLOTHING

In the hot, dry southwestern desert, people did not need to wear many clothes. Women made apron-like skirts from the inner bark of the willow tree, pounded until it was soft. The knee-length skirts were made in two pieces, one for the front and one for the back. Men either went without clothing, or wore a girdle, woven from pieces of willow bark, around their hips. Children usually wore no clothes.

For the few times when the weather was cold, both men and women wore robes or blankets over their shoulders. They made the blankets from strips of rabbit skins sewn together. Sometimes they carried a piece of burning wood, called a *firebrand*, to keep themselves warm.

Mohave and Quechan men and women wore their hair long, treating it with a mixture of reddish mud and the sap from willow bark. Men rolled their hair into long strands, sometimes as many as 20 or 30 of them, that hung down their backs. Both men and women painted designs on their faces, often keeping the same design for many months. The paint was a protection from the hot desert sun, as well as being a decoration. They used plants to make red, yellow, green, black and white dyes. Men wore bead or shell ornaments in their ears and noses.

TOOLS

The Mohave and Quechan were not known for their skill in making tools. Since they did very little hunting, their bows were simple and their arrows

often had no sharp points. In fact, they made very little use of stone or bone for tools or implements. From wood they made planting sticks and hoes used in weeding the gardens.

Although they lived along the river, the Mohave and the Quechan did not build boats. Once in a while they would tie several logs together to make a raft, but they usually swam when they wanted to cross the river. To get their supplies or their children across the river, they put them in a very large pottery bowl and pushed it ahead of them as they swam across.

Fishing was done from the river banks with nets, traps, or long-handled scoops. Nets and traps were made from cord, which was made by twisting plant fibers together. The scoops were woven from reeds and plant fibers, like baskets.

The Mohave and the Quechan made both baskets and pottery containers, which they used for carrying and storing food. Pottery bowls, made from clay found along the river, were sometimes decorated with designs in red and black. Their baskets were coarsely woven from arrowweed branches, often with the leaves left on them. Women carried loads on their backs in net bags attached to rough wooden frames, supported by a band across the forehead.

TRADE

The Mohave and the Quechan did not show much interest in gathering wealth for themselves. They shared food supplies with each other, and did not value other possessions. They were all rather equally well-to-do or equally poor.

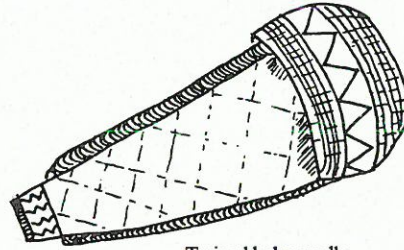
Trading was done between the Mohave and Quechan, and with groups living both east and west of them. The Quechan grew wheat and traded it to the Mohave, who did not grow wheat. From the Hopi, to the east, they both got blankets. They also had contacts with other California groups.

CEREMONIES

Each year, people from all the settlements would gather with their tribal neighbors to celebrate the fall harvest. Each family brought food for the feasting. Communities also joined together once a year for a mourning ceremony to remember those who had died during the past year.

MONACHE

(mō' nă, chē)



Twined baby cradle

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
East-central California on the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada mountains [Fresno & Tulare Counties]	1770 estimate --4,000 (western & eastern Mono) 1910 Census -- 887	Uto-Aztecan family

The Monache, also known as the Mono or Western Mono, were connected by language with the Eastern Mono and other Paiute Indian groups living on the east side of the Sierras.

SETTLEMENTS

There were at least six groups of Monache. Their settlements were on the west side of the Sierra Nevada mountains, at elevations from about 3,000 to 7,000 feet. Their neighbors lower down the western Sierras were the Foothill Yokuts. Monache villages were along the North Fork of the San Joaquin River, on the Kings River, and on many creeks running down from the mountains. The settlements were small, usually made up of several villages with three to eight houses in each village.

Some of the Monache followed the Miwok and Yokut custom of dividing the people into two divisions, with each division being connected with certain animals, called *totems*. A family's totem animal was considered a source of power for that family, and was protected. The headman of a Monache settlement usually came from the Eagle line. The messenger, who helped him, came from the Roadrunner or the Dove line. In some villages, there were headmen from both of the divisions. It was the job of the headman to decide when to hold ceremonies, and to give advice to the people.

The name *Monoche* may have come from the Yokut word used to refer to these people. The people called themselves *nimü*, which meant *persons*.

HOUSES

In some Monache settlements, the house was cone-shaped, about 6 to 12 feet in diameter, with the floor dug out about a foot below ground level. A frame of poles was tied together at the top, leaving an opening for a smoke hole. The frame was covered with bundles of grass and small branches. Somewhat larger, oval-shaped houses were made with a ridgepole supported by posts; poles were leaned from the sides to form the walls. The poles were connected with flexible willow branches, and covered with bundles of grass. A woven mat covered the doorway.

In the higher mountains, large pieces of bark were used to cover the framework of cone-shaped houses. The floor of the house was at ground level, and earth was often put around the outer wall for extra warmth. Most houses had a shade roof extending from the house, to make an outdoor working area.

Most villages had a sweathouse, made like the larger oval-shaped houses but smaller and earth-covered. A fire was built in a pit inside the sweathouse, and men of the village gathered there in the afternoons.

FOOD

Monache hunters worked together to track down deer and bear, which were killed with the bow and arrow. Hunters sometimes wore a deer mask so that they could get closer to the deer and drive them into a trap. Bears were often caught as they came out of their caves in the spring. The hunting party shared

the deer and bear meat. Smaller animals such as squirrels and rabbits were smoked out of their holes, or trapped between stones. Pigeons were caught with a rope noose (loop). Tame pigeons were kept in cages and used to attract the wild pigeons. From the creeks, the Monache got fish by building small fences across the creek, and then using a harpoon to spear the fish.

Acorns were found only in the lower elevations of Monache territory. The people made trips to gather acorns in the fall. They also went over the crest of the mountains to the east side to gather pine nuts. The supply of nuts was stored in a granary built on a platform about six feet off the ground. Willow mats formed the sides of the granary.

Other foods eaten by the Monache included insects, seeds, berries, and roots. A sweet drink was made from manzanita berries. Wild honey was collected whenever it was found.

CLOTHING

Monache women probably wore the double apron typical of many early California groups, and men may have worn a similar front apron or piece of deerskin fastened around the waist. They usually did not wear anything on their feet. The women may have worn a basket cap, used to cushion the forehead for the strap of the carrying baskets, which rested on the forehead. Both men and women often had tattoos on their faces, and wore ornaments in their ears and noses.

TOOLS

The baskets made by the Monache were done by both the twining and coiling methods, and were used for all carrying, storing, cooking, and serving of food. Mush was cooked in a basket by placing stones, heated in a fire, into the cooking basket. Two pine sticks were used to lift the hot stones from the fire. A mush stirrer was made from a stick that was bent into a loop at one end.

Besides baskets, the Monache made containers of pottery and of steatite. Steatite, or soapstone, was carved out into a bowl shape and used for cooking. Pottery was made by coiling strips of clay into the desired shape. The pot or bowl, after being fired in a pit, could be used for cooking on an open fire.

A special kind of basket was the baby cradle. The type made by the Monache was flat with a curved hood that kept the sun off the baby. Woven into the cradle was a design that showed whether the baby was a girl or a boy.

Bows used in hunting and warfare were three to four feet long and made of California laurel or juniper wood. For the string on the bow, a piece of sinew (animal tendon) was used. Arrows used in hunting birds and small animals had pointed ends but not arrowheads attached to them. Those used in hunting larger animals or in warfare had points made of obsidian (volcanic glass), which was gotten in trade from the Eastern Mono. Obsidian was also used to make knives, scrapers, and spear points. Most arrows had feathers attached to them. Arrow tips could be poisoned with venom from rattlesnakes.

String and cord were made from milkweed fibers and from willow bark. Pieces of fiber or thin bark were rolled on the thigh to twist them into cord. The cord was used to make nets and straps, and to fasten things together. Though women carried the heavy loads in baskets, men sometimes used carrying nets with a strap that went around the forehead.

TRADE

The Monache traded with the Eastern Mono on the other side of the mountains. From the Eastern Mono they got pine nuts, obsidian, and rabbitskins in exchange for acorns. The Monache also traded with the Yokuts, in the valley below them, and carried items between the Yokuts and the Eastern Mono. From the Yokuts, they got freshwater mussels.

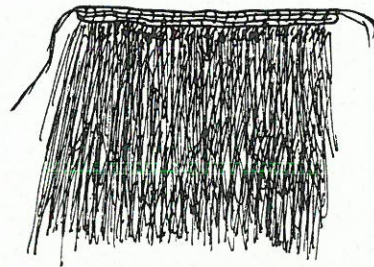
CEREMONIES

There were not many important ceremonies held by the Monache. They did not have special assembly or dance houses, but held community games and feasts in the open. The headman was in charge of inviting people to a feast.

People from one settlement often visited other settlements. One reason for a visit was to display birds, especially eagles, that they had captured. Dances were held in connection with the bird displays, and the owner of the bird was given gifts and money.

NISENAN

(ˈnēsəˌnən)



Skirt made from shredded bark

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
East central California [Sutter, Yuba, Nevada, Placer, El Dorado Counties and parts of Sierra & Sacramento Counties]	1770 estimate -- not known 1910 Census -- not known	Penutian family

The Nisenan are part of the Maidu group, closely related in language to the Maidu and Konkow, who lived to the north of them. Sometimes the Nisenan are called the Southern Maidu.

SETTLEMENTS

Nisenan territory reached from the Sierra Nevada mountains on the east to the Sacramento River on the west. Most of the villages were along the rivers that run west out of the mountains: the Yuba River, the Bear River, the American River, and the lower part of the Feather River. The people chose high areas or ridges along the streams for the location of their villages.

Some communities had only 15 to 25 people living in a single village; others had as many as 500 people living in a central village and a number of smaller settlements around that central village. The larger villages had 40 to 50 houses. Villages in the hill areas were usually smaller than those in the valleys.

Each community had a headman, who usually inherited his position from his father. If the people did not think the headman was doing a good job, he could be replaced by someone else that they chose. If there was no man in the village who could be a good leader, a woman might be chosen. Each family had a leader who met with the headman to make decisions. During times of crisis, the headmen of one village would take leadership over a larger territory. A village headman was a wealthy person. He was given food by the members of his village.

The name *Nisenan* was used by the people to refer to themselves. It means *from among us* or *of our side*. In addition to calling themselves Nisenan, the people named themselves for the valley or hill area in which they lived.

HOUSES

Houses in the valley areas were round, about 10 to 15 feet across. They were made with a framework of poles and covered with bundles of grass or mats made of tule reeds, and then with a layer of earth. The most important villages had dance houses, which were the largest buildings in the village. The dance house floor was dug down three or four feet below ground level. The roof was supported by several heavy beams and posts. The walls and roof were covered with tule mats and earth, like the family houses. The door to the dance house was on the east side of the house.

The Nisenan who lived in the hill villages made houses that were more cone shaped, with poles lashed together at the top. Pieces of bark and skins were used to cover the frame. Both hill and valley people built temporary shelters in summer, when they moved from their main villages to hunt for food. The temporary shelters were made of poles with roofs of brush, but no side walls.

Most villages had a sweathouse. It was made like the dance house, but much smaller, just large enough for four or five men.

FOOD

In Nisenan territory, food could be gathered throughout the year. The Nisenan had a great variety of foods for their meals. The early fall was acorn gathering time. Often an entire village would work together gathering acorns. The acorn supply for the village was stored in a special building called the granary. The Nisenan also gathered buckeye nuts, digger and sugar pine nuts, and hazelnuts.

Many other plants provided food for the people. Seeds were used to make a type of mush. Roots were dug from the ground in the spring and summer. They were eaten raw or steamed, or they were dried and pounded into a flour that was made into cakes. The cakes could be stored for eating in the winter. Roots that were favorites were wild onion, wild sweet potato, and a root known as *Indian potato*. Berries, plums, grapes, and other fruits grew naturally in Nisenan territory.

The men worked together to hunt deer, antelope, elk, and black bears. Wildcats and mountain lions were also used as food. Many small animals such as rabbits were caught with traps and snares. The rivers provided clams, mussels, and eels in addition to fish such as salmon, sturgeon, whitefish, and trout. Birds and insects added to the food supply. Large numbers of grasshoppers were caught by setting fire to a meadow and driving the grasshoppers into a pit. The insects were soaked in water and then baked in an earth oven. The wings and legs were removed by crushing them with a stone. They were then eaten whole, or ground into a flour and made into mush.

CLOTHING

Nisenan women wore short apron-like skirts made from tule reeds, or from shredded bark. Men often went without any clothing, or wore a piece of deerskin around their hips. When the weather was cold, both men and women wore a blanket or robe over their shoulders. People who lived in the hills usually made blankets from animal skins. In the valleys, blankets were more often made from bird feathers. Feathers were wrapped with cord to make long strips, and then the strips were woven together to make a blanket or robe.

The Nisenan did not usually wear anything on their

feet nor head. Both men and women kept their hair long. The men sometimes wore a net cap over their hair, or a headband. Women often had three lines tattooed on their chins. They wore ornaments of shells or bone in their ears and noses.

TOOLS

The Nisenan made coiled baskets, with three rods tied together forming the basic basket material. The rods were branches of hazel, willow, or redbud. String and cord for nets was made from milkweed and hemp fibers. Tule rushes were woven into mats. Bundles of tules were tied to one or two logs to make a simple canoe, pushed with a long pole or a single paddle.

Stone was shaped into knives, spear points and arrow heads, and scrapers. Bows and arrows, used in hunting and in warfare, were made of wood. The bows were two or three feet long, and backed with sinew (animal tendons). Arrows were made with hawk feathers on them.

TRADE

The Nisenan who lived in the valleys traded fish, roots, shells, beads, salt, and feathers to those who lived in the hills. From the hill people they got black oak acorns, pine nuts, manzanita berries, animal skins, and wood for making bows. The Nisenan also traded with groups farther away for shells, magnesite (a rock that turns reddish when heated), and obsidian (volcanic glass).

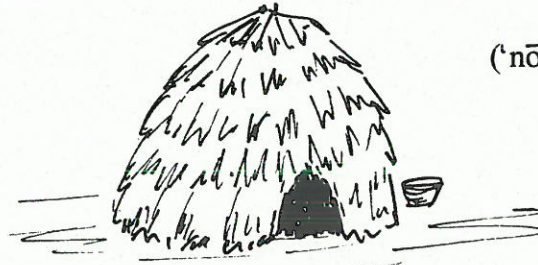
Clamshell beads were used as money, and were a sign of wealth. The pieces of clamshell, which came from the coast around Bodega Bay, were shaped into disks. The disks were polished, holes punched in the middle, and then strung on strings.

CEREMONIES

The village dance house was used for community gatherings and celebrations. The Nisenan held many dances. The Kamin Dance welcomed the arrival of spring. The Weda or Flower Dance was done in April. Harvest was celebrated with the Lole Dance. Other special occasions were the Dape or Coyote Dance, the Omwulu or Rabbit Dance, and the Numusla or Big Time dance. Flutes, clappers, and rattles were used along with singing at the dances. Each dance house also had a plank drum.

NOMLAKI

(ˈnōm,lä kē)



House thatched with bundles of grass

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
North central California, in the Sacramento River valley [Tehama & Glenn Counties]	1770 estimate -- 2,000 1910 Census -- not known	Penutian family

The Nomlaki were the middle group of the Wintuns, sandwiched between the Wintu to the north and the Patwin to the south, with whom they shared a similar language. They are sometimes known as Central Wintun or Proper Wintun. Their neighbors on the west were the Yuki, who were often their enemies but with whom they traded. On the east were the Yana and Konkow.

SETTLEMENTS

The Nomlaki were divided into the Hill and River groups. The Hill Nomlaki lived in the foothills to the west of the Sacramento River valley, extending to the summit of the Coast Range mountains. The River Nomlaki lived in the Sacramento River valley.

The term *Nomlaki* is from a word meaning *west language*, and was used first to mean a certain group of the Hill Nomlaki whose own name for themselves was *nomkewel*, or *west people*.

The 25 to 200 people who lived in each Nomlaki village were related to each other. A headman was chosen by the men of the village to lead the people in food gathering and ceremonies, and to settle arguments between members of the village. A son often followed his father as headman, but only if he were considered worthy of the position.

HOUSES

Family houses were made of bent saplings (young trees which were flexible). The saplings were tied together at the top with vines, and then covered with

a thatch made of bundles of grasses. The largest house in the village belonged to the headman. His house had a center post to support the longer poles that formed the frame. This house was used as a gathering place for men, and for village meetings.

In the summer, many people left the village and moved to a mountain area so that they could gather food that grew there. Each village had their own mountain place for their summer homes. Here they lived in temporary shelters made of poles with thatched roofs and no sides.

FOOD

At least eight kinds of oak trees grew in Nomlaki territory, and the people used the acorns from all of them. Some oak trees were considered to be owned by individuals. Gathering of acorns and other plant foods was done mostly by the women and children. In addition to acorns, they gathered pine nuts and many kinds of seeds and tubers. Some nuts and seeds were dried and stored for eating throughout the year. Clover was eaten fresh, like a salad. Several kinds of fruits, berries and mushrooms were found in the forests. Salt was gotten from the banks of certain streams in the spring.

Hunting was the job of the men. Boys were taught to hunt when they were young, first with a small bow and arrows, and later with a better bow. Some hunters were better than others, and got special recognition for their skill. They used several types of weapons in the hunt, including bow and arrows,

and clubs. The men sometimes joined together to hunt the larger animals. Deer and elk were driven into large nets about six feet high, that were stretched across an area as wide as 100 feet. Nets to catch rabbits were shorter, about four feet high, but as much as 300 feet long. Bears were especially hard to kill, but were valued for their fur. Some hunters were especially skilled in bear hunting.

Smaller game was caught in traps and snares. Slings were used to bring down birds. Grasshoppers were taken in large numbers by setting fire to the grass in an area.

Salmon were taken from the Sacramento River by the use of harpoons and weirs (brush dams built across a section of river). Other fish were caught with nets and traps, and sometimes by hand.

CLOTHING

Deerskin was the material most often used for clothing by the Nomlaki. The men wore a piece of deerskin covering their hips. Women wore skirts made of deerskin, decorated with seeds and shells. When deerskin wasn't available, clothing was made from the inner bark of trees, which was soft and pliable.

Though the Nomlaki did not wear moccasins, they did make sandals from strips of elkhide. Babies were carried on cradleboards that supported the baby's back but left the legs free. For warmth, rabbit skins were cut in strips and then woven together to make blankets. Bear furs, too, were valued as robes. A bearskin to use as a burial robe was often a person's most valued possession.

TOOLS

The best wood for making bows was yew wood, but this was not readily available in Nomlaki territory. It was sometimes gotten through trade. When yew wood wasn't available, juniper wood was used to make the bow, which was backed with sinew (animal tendons). Flint (quartz rock) or obsidian (volcanic glass) was used to make tips for arrows and for spears.

Both stone and bone were sharpened for use as knives. A knobbed throwing stick was made of California mahogany, and was used in hunting animals. The nets used in deer hunting were made

from sinew, which made a strong net. Nets for catching smaller animals and fish were made from fibers.

Baskets made by the Nomlaki were sometimes done by the twining method, but more often by the coiling method. They used a three-rod coiled form for their baskets. Baskets were used for carrying, storing, and cooking food. To cook in a basket, stones were heated in a fire and then dropped into the acorn mush or other food that was in the basket. The hot stones cooked the food.

TRADE

Clamshell beads were used as money. Pieces of clamshells were shaped into disks, a hole was punched and the disks were strung on strings. The clamshells came from Bodega Bay on the Pacific Coast, and were traded among the central California groups. Other items considered valuable by the Nomlaki were magnesite beads, made from a stone that turned reddish when heated; furs, especially the fur of the black bear; and eagle and yellowhammer feathers.

Trade was common between families and between villages, as well as with neighboring tribes. Some Nomlaki families had special skills, and they traded their goods with other families for things that they could not easily produce themselves. The Hill Nomlaki got fish from the River Nomlaki in return for seeds and animals. Some Nomlaki's considered trading to be their special skill.

CEREMONIES

The Nomlaki celebrated the coming of spring with a spring dance. They invited their neighbors to a feast, which the entire village worked together to prepare. The dancing was done inside the sweathouse. Both men and women took part in the dance, which was accompanied by two drummers, two singers, and one person to call out the dancers.

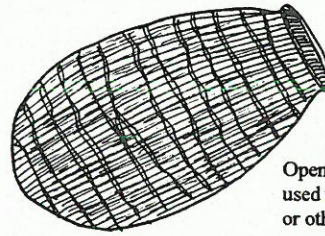
Another special ceremony was held when a girl became an adult member of the village. After undergoing certain tasks and rituals, the girl was honored at a festival which lasted for several days. There was feasting, dancing, and singing. The girl was dressed in beautifully decorated clothing, and was the center of attention.



PAIUTE

Northern and Owens Valley

(p̄i,yōōt)



Open twined basket,
used to hold live caterpillars
or other insects

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northeastern and east central border of California [eastern Modoc, Lassen & Mono Counties]	1770 estimate --not known 1910 Census -- not known	Uto-Aztecian family

Their territory was on the east side of the Sierra Nevada mountains, placing the Paiute with the cultures of the desert and Great Basin area of Nevada, rather than in the California culture area. Only a small percentage of the total number of Paiutes lived in what is now California.

SETTLEMENTS

Paiute settlements in California were located in a strip along the east side of the Sierra Nevada mountains, reaching more than a third of the way down the state. There were Paiutes living both north and south of the border area occupied by the Washo people.

The name *Paiute* may mean *water Ute* or *true Ute*. The most northern Paiutes have been known as the Surprise Valley Paiutes. Those just south of the Washo are sometimes called the Mono Paiute, and had some connection with the California Mono on the west side of the Sierras. Further south, near the middle of the state, were the Owens Valley Paiute. Though their languages were from the same language family, the Owens Valley Paiute and the Northern Paiute did not understand each other's speech.

Northern Paiute people moved around a great deal in their search for food. The family was the only stable unit. In the winter, a number of families would settle together for some months. During other seasons, smaller groups of families would travel together, making camps where they found a

food supply. Those in the Owens Valley made more permanent settlements than other Northern Paiute. Their moves to find food took them over a smaller area. Their village sites, some with as many as 200 people, were along streams or the Owens River.

Within the Paiute family, decisions were made by an elder family member. When groups of families were living near each other, a leader or headman was chosen by the group. His power was limited to advising the people and serving at ceremonies. Among the Owens Valley Paiute, a son usually followed his father as headman. With other Northern Paiutes, the group would choose a new leader.

HOUSES

For their winter or more permanent houses, the Paiute placed willow poles in a circle and either leaned them together at the top, making a cone-shaped dwelling, or bent them in a dome shape. The poles were covered with mats woven from tule reeds, when they were available, or with bundles of long grasses tied together. There was a smoke hole at the top, and an entry door covered with an animal skin. In the coldest areas, the floor of the house was sometimes dug down one or two feet into the ground, for added warmth.

When the people were to be living in a place for a shorter time, they put up windbreaks and shelters made of brush, with a roof but only one or no side walls.

Owens Valley Paiute villages had sweathouses, circular structures built over pits dug in the ground. They were heated by a fire built inside the entrance. The sweathouse served as a meeting place for the men.

FOOD

Piñon nuts were a main food for the Paiutes in California. The placement of their settlements depended on the supply of piñon nuts. Though the Owens Valley Paiutes were fond of acorns, these were much harder for them to get, since they grew mostly on the other side of the mountains. Both piñon nuts and acorns were ground into flour and cooked into a mush or baked as flat cakes.

Many types of seeds and berries were gathered. Berries were eaten fresh, or dried and used in soups and stews. Seeds were ground into flour and used to make mush or seed cakes. The seeds of Indian ricegrass, wild rye, and chia were important sources of food. In swampy areas, the roots of the wild hyacinth and other plants were used for food. In the Owens Valley, lowland areas were purposely flooded with water in order to increase the growth of certain plants. This irrigation was done by building a dam across a stream and digging ditches to divert the water to the area where the plants were growing.

Deer, antelope, and desert or mountain bighorn sheep were hunted with bow and arrows. Rabbit was the most common game. Other small animals such as marmots, ground squirrels, and porcupines were also caught using noose snares and nets.

Birds such as grouse, ducks, and other waterfowl were hunted by the Northern Paiute, who also collected duck eggs for eating. The Owens Valley Paiute did not do as much bird hunting. None of the Paiute in California depended much on fish. The Owens River had only a few small species of fish, and Owens Lake had none.

CLOTHING

The type of clothing depended on how far north people were living. In colder places, clothes were made from deerskins whenever they were available. Women wore an apron either with just one piece in the front or with a second piece in the back. If there

were no deerskins, the apron could be made of coyote, badger, or rabbit skins, or of strips of bark or bundles of grasses tied to a waistband.

Men wore a piece of deerskin wrapped around their hips. In colder weather, they wrapped strips of deerskin around their legs. Rabbit skins were cut in strips and woven into robes and blankets. Moccasins were made from a single piece of deerskin, sewn up the front. Women wore basket caps to protect their heads from the bands of the carrying baskets that rested on the forehead.

TOOLS

Baskets were used by the Paiute to gather and store many kinds of food. They used the twining method of basket-making to make carrying baskets of various sizes and trays for sifting and drying seeds. The Owens Valley Paiute made a special basket with a narrow opening in which they kept their shell-bead money. The shape of this basket came from the Great Basin cultures to the east, but the use--keeping shells as a sign of wealth--came from other California groups. Some Owens Valley Paiute women also made pottery from the reddish clay, a skill learned from groups to the east of California.

TRADE

The Paiutes living near Mono Lake and in Owens Valley had more friendly contact with other California groups than did the Paiutes further north. They made the trip across the Sierra Nevada Mountains and traded with the Yokuts, Miwok, and Tubatulabal. The Paiutes exchanged piñon nuts for the acorns that grew on the western side of the mountains. They also got salt from the Panamint Shoshones and traded it to the Monache. Strings of shell beads, which came originally from the people living along the sea coast, were used as money.

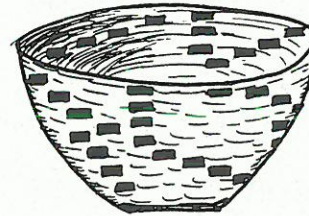
CEREMONIES

To celebrate the fall harvest, the people gathered for a Round Dance, where singers and dancers in special dance costumes performed. The dances were held outdoors, in a large space with a brush fence around it. Many Owens Valley groups came together each year for the Mourning or Cry ceremony, to remember those who had died during the past year.



PATWIN

(păt,wĩn)



Coiled cooking basket

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
North central California [Colusa, Solano, & Yolo Counties, eastern edges of Lake & Napa Counties]	1770 estimate -- not known 1910 Census -- not known	Penutian family

The Patwin were connected by a similar language with the Nomlaki and Wintu, to the north. Together, these three groups were known as the Wintun. The Patwin, being the most southern of the groups, are sometimes called the Southern Wintun.

SETTLEMENTS

The Patwin occupied the territory west of the Sacramento River, to the foothills of the Coast Range in the west and to San Pablo and Suisun bays in the south. They were divided into many tribelets, whose languages differed somewhat from each other. There were River Patwin, living in villages along the Sacramento River, and Hill Patwin, living in villages in the foothills. There were more river villages than hill villages.

A tribelet was made up one large village and several smaller villages. The people in a tribelet felt that they were connected to each other. Each village had a headman, chosen by the village elders for his ability, though a son inherited the position from his father if he were capable. The headman directed the food gathering activities of the village, and the ceremonies.

The name *Patwin* means *people* in the language of several of the tribelets. It was later used to refer to all of the people in this area.

HOUSES

Patwin houses were dug out of the ground, then covered with a framework of poles and branches,

over which earth was packed. They were round in shape. Larger villages had a ceremonial or dance house, built in the same way but larger than the family house. All the people in the village worked together to make the dance house. The village sweathouse was a smaller version of the same type of building.

FOOD

The Patwin ate fish from the river, and deer and other animals from the hills. On the Sacramento River, they built fish weirs (dams) of posts and willow sticks stuck into the river bottom. Salmon and sturgeon were caught in this way. Smaller fish such as perch, pike, and trout were caught in nets. Mussels were also gathered from the river. Some fishing places were owned by individuals, who gave permission to others to fish there.

Patwin men hunted deer, elk, antelope, and the brown bear. Sometimes a small group of men worked together to catch a large animal. One man would wear a deer head, so that he could get closer to the deer without alarming it. Ducks, geese, quail, and mud hens were caught in nets. Turtles and other small animals were also eaten. Meat was roasted over the fire, or dried in the sun for later use. Dried salmon or deer meat was ground into a flour.

Patwin families owned seed tracts, areas where the family could gather seeds such as sunflower, clover, wild oats, and other grasses. The seeds were dried and ground into meal. Acorns were a main food for

the Patwin. Groves of oak trees were owned by the tribelet, and the acorns were gathered by groups of women and children. They used the acorns for making mush, after grinding them into meal and mixing the meal with water. The mush was cooked in a basket by putting hot stones in the basket with the mush. Acorn meal was also made into bread and baked in a pit oven dug into the earth.

Other foods used by the Patwin were buckeye, pine nuts, juniper berries, manzanita berries, blackberries, wild grapes, bulbs, and tule roots.

CLOTHING

Patwin men usually did not wear any clothing. The women in villages along the river made skirts or aprons from tule reeds or shredded bark. Those who lived in the hills were more apt to have skirts made of deerskin. Neither men nor women wore hats or shoe. For warmth, as a cape worn over the shoulders or as a blanket, they used rabbit skins cut in strips and sewn together.

Although they did not eat grizzly bear, reptiles, or birds of prey, the Patwin did hunt them for their skins and feathers, which they used for special ceremonial clothing and decoration. Woodpecker and raven feathers were used in headdresses.

TOOLS

Bone, wood, and stone were used to make tools. Pieces of sharp stone served as scrapers and knives. Bone awls (sharp pointed tools) were used in making baskets, and in sewing skins into clothing. Arrow points and spearheads were made from obsidian (volcanic glass). Some bows were gotten in trade, but others were made from the buckeye, juniper, or dogwood trees. Mussel shells were used as knives to cut fish and meat into strips.

The Patwin who lived along the river used boats or rafts made of tule reeds. The tules were bound together with grapevines. Some of the boats were as long as 20 feet and as wide as six feet.

Cord or string was made from the fibers of the wild hemp or milkweed plants. This cord was used for nets for hunting and fishing.

Baskets were important to the people, as they were used for all types of carrying, storing, cooking, and

serving food. Baskets were also used as baby cradles. Both the coiling and the twining methods of making baskets were used by the Patwin. Their coiled baskets were the more finely done ones. They were sometimes decorated with feathers and shells. Twined baskets were used for gathering food and carrying burdens. Willow branches were used as the basis for both types of baskets. Designs were made on the basket by weaving in colored fibers. Black fibers were made by burying the fiber strands in mud for a few days. Red fibers came from split redbud shoots.

TRADE

Clamshell disks were used as money by the Patwin. They traded among themselves (between tribelets) and with other groups. The clamshell beads were gotten in trade from people who lived on the coast. At some times, the Patwin got the whole clamshells from the coast and made their own disk beads. Pieces of clamshell were shaped into small circles, a hole was punched in the middle, and the beads were strung on strings, 80 to the string. From the Pomo people, the Patwin got beads of magnesite (a kind of stone that turns reddish when heated).

Bows were also an item of exchange. The Patwin got them from the Pomo and from the Nomlaki. Sometimes they traded the bows to the Wappo. The Patwin were generally on good terms with the Pomo, and people freely visited in each other's area to fish or hunt. The Patwin also got obsidian in Pomo territory.

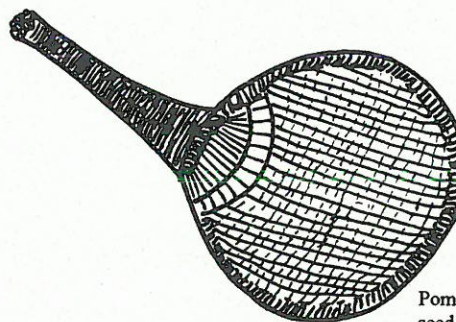
CEREMONIES

The Patwin were one of the groups that took part in the Kuksu or "big-head" rituals. This was a secret society to which men and boys over the age of eight belonged. Part of the ritual was a series of dances that were held in a special dance house.

In the villages along the river, the dances took place throughout the winter months, and each dance lasted several days and nights. In the hill villages, the dances were held in the summer. Fancy feather capes and headdresses were worn, and the dancers painted their bodies with charcoal, clay, and ocher. The dancers took the parts of coyote, deer, grizzly bear, goose, turtle, and other animals and birds.

POMO

(pō,mō)



Pomo
seed beater

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
North central California, from the Pacific Ocean to Clear Lake [Mendocino, Sonoma, & Lake Counties]	1770 estimate -- 8,000 1910 Census -- 1,200	Hokan family

The Pomo were actually seven separate groups with differing languages, each living in a defined area. Although their languages were somewhat related, they probably could not understand each other easily. Before other settlers came, they did not think of themselves as a single group, but as many groups.

SETTLEMENTS

The seven Pomo groups were: **Southwestern (or Kashaya) Pomo**; **Southern Pomo**; **Central Pomo**; **Northern Pomo**; **Northeastern (or Salt) Pomo**; **Eastern (or Clear Lake) Pomo**; **Southeastern (or Lower Lake) Pomo**. The heart of Pomo land was the valley of the Russian River. Their territory extended across the Coast Range mountains to the ocean on the west, and to Clear Lake on the east. Though some villages were along the ocean and some near Clear Lake, many more were located in the Russian River valley. Even the people near the coast preferred to have their settlements away from the ocean by some miles, along a river or creek.

The name *Pomo* may have come from a Northern Pomo word that was added to place names when referring to people who live at that place, as in *Buldam-pomo*, meaning *people who live at Buldam*.

A community was made up of several villages with one main village where the headman lived. There were several hundred small villages in Pomo territory, but only about 75 main villages. Each community had certain land on which they had the right to hunt and fish. In some communities,

individuals owned certain trees or fishing spots.

The number of headmen differed between the groups of Pomo. Some communities had one; some had several; one Central Pomo community is said to have had 20 chiefs all at the same time, each having a specific job in the community.

HOUSES

There were several types of houses built by the Pomo, depending on where the group lived. Eastern and Southeastern Pomo used the tule reeds that grew in marshy areas around Clear Lake. The tules were tied in bundles and then tied to poles that formed a circular or oval-shaped building. Several families shared a house, each family having a place inside for their fireplace and an entrance door.

Those who lived in the Russian River valley built their houses in the same way as the lake people, though often they used brush and grass instead of tules to cover the poles. The groups closer to the sea coast, where there were lots of redwood trees, built cone-shaped houses of poles covered with slabs of redwood bark. These houses were 8-15 feet in diameter and occupied by one family.

Each community had a small, round house built over a hole dug in the ground. This was used by the men as a sweathouse and for sleeping. Since the sweathouse was covered with brush or tules, it looked like a little grassy hill. Larger buildings (about 70 feet in diameter) with the floor dug out were used for ceremonies and dancing.

FOOD

What the Pomo ate depended on where they lived. Those in the coastal area had fish, shellfish, seaweed, seals and sea lions from the ocean, and deer, elk, and smaller animals from the redwood forests. Dried seaweed and kelp were especially liked, and were traded to those who lived in the inland valleys.

The Pomo men hunted deer, elk, antelope, rabbits, squirrels, and some kinds of birds. Sometimes each man hunted alone; other times they worked as a group to drive the larger animals into a corral, with one man wearing a deer-head mask.

The Eastern and Southeastern Pomo, near Clear Lake, depended on freshwater fish as their main food. There were many kinds of fish (blackfish, carp, suckers, bass, and pike) in the lake and the streams nearby. They caught the fish in the spawning season, and dried them so they would have food all year long.

Acorns were gathered and eaten by all of the Pomo. There were seven kinds of acorns in Pomo territory, plus buckeye nuts, berries, many kinds of seeds, roots, bulbs, and greens. The Pomo also ate grasshoppers and caterpillars. The Northeastern Pomo supplied salt from a large salt deposit in their area.

CLOTHING

Pomo people used tule reeds or shredded bark from redwood and willow trees to make their clothing. Only the more wealthy people had skirts or robes of deerskin. Women wore skirts that reached to their ankles. They also wore a cape over their shoulders, covering the upper part of their body.

Men often wore nothing. Sometimes they wore short aprons of tule or shredded bark, and capes over their shoulders. For cold weather, the people had blankets made of many rabbit skins. Other animal skins (sea otter, bear, puma, wildcat) were also used. The people's feet were usually bare.

Both men and women wore ornaments made of wood, bird bone, or feathers in their ears. They used shells and colored stones to make neck and wrist bands and belts.

TOOLS

Pomo baskets are widely known and praised for the

fine workmanship and variety of patterns. They made both coiled and twined baskets in many styles, using feathers and beads in the designs. Willow shoots were commonly used as the foundation for both twined and coiled baskets, with fibers of root or bark intertwined.

The Pomo who lived along the coast made rafts of driftwood bound with plant fibers. They used them to go to the offshore islands to hunt seals, sea lions, and mussels. The Clear Lake Pomo made raft-like boats from bundles of tule reeds bound together with grape vines. The Southeastern Pomo actually lived on islands in the lake. They used basket traps and spears for their fishing. For hunting large animals the Pomo used the bow and arrow, heavy spears and clubs. For smaller animals they used nets and traps. They had knives made from obsidian (volcanic glass) or chert (a type of rock) or bone.

TRADE

The Pomo held trade feasts where one group who had extra food would invite others to come to a feast. The guests brought clamshell or magnesite (a reddish stone) beads which they traded for food supplies to take home with them. In addition to food, bows and arrows, arrowheads, obsidian blades, belts, robes, feathers, and skins were traded or purchased. The Northeastern Pomo, who had the big salt deposit in their area, expected payment from people who came to get salt.

The clamshell beads used as money came mostly from Bodega Bay, in Coast Miwok land. The Pomo were known as good counters. They were able to use numbers in the thousands.

CEREMONIES

The Pomo called their dances *he* or *ke*, meaning *sing*. A ceremony, which combined several days of dancing, was called *haikil*. Both men and women wore colorful dance clothing, made by the men. They used many bright feathers and beads to decorate the dance costumes. Headbands had flicker (a type of woodpecker) feathers in them.

Singing was important to the Pomo. They sang love songs, lullabies, hunting songs, and religious songs. They made music with flutes, whistles, rattles, and drums made from hollow logs.

SALINAN

(sə' lē nən)



Basket cap worn by women

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Central California coast [San Luis Obispo County, southern Monterey County]	1770 estimate -- 3,000 1910 Census -- 16	Hokan family

The explorer Gaspar de Portolá recorded a meeting with Salinan Indians in 1769 as he explored along the central California coast. He reported seeing seven villages.

SETTLEMENTS

The territory where the Salinan lived was a rugged mountain area where the hills of the Coast Range came down to cliffs and rocky beaches along the Pacific Ocean. This area included the headwaters of the Salinas River, but most of the Salinan villages were located along the Nacimiento and San Antonio Rivers. The mountainous area was used for hunting.

There were two major divisions of Salinan--one northern, one southern--and one minor division along the coast. There were small differences in language between the groups. The northern group became known as Antoniaños after being taken into Mission San Antonio de Padua. The southern group became known as Migueleña after Mission San Miguel was built in their territory. The small group on the coast were called Playaños, meaning *of the beach people*. The name *Salinan* comes from the Salinas River, and was first used in the 1890's.

The people lived in villages with an average of about 100 people in each village. Each village or small group of villages had a headman. He was chosen by the men of the village because of his courage, but he was usually a wealthy person as well as brave. The headman did not hunt or fish, but had food given to him by the villagers. In some Salinan areas there

was a District Chief who had several village headmen under him. The headmen directed the food gathering and hunting activities of the villages, declared days of rest, and led war parties. Salinan villages often had disagreements with one another, and the headmen took the lead in settling these disputes.

HOUSES

Salinan houses were made with a framework of four posts forming a square about ten feet on each side, plus one post in the center. Four roof poles supported a thatched roof of rye or tule grasses tied together with thin strips of willow wood or bark. The walls were also covered with bundles of tule reeds. The floor was at ground level, with a fire place in the middle and a smoke hole directly above.

Each Salinan village had a sweathouse. A round pit about four feet wide and one foot deep was dug. Around the pit, brush was arched over to make a dome-shaped hut. Deer skins were placed over the brush, and a layer of mud spread over the skins. A fire in the middle of the hut produced smoke and heat, but no steam.

There are reports of assembly houses or dance houses in Salinan villages, but no descriptions of how they were built.

FOOD

Six kinds of acorns grew in Salinan territory. Acorns were collected in the fall and stored in tall

basket granaries made from slender branches of white willow trees. Other plants used as food included wild oats, sage and sunflower seeds, pine nuts, buckeye nuts, grapes, prickly pears, yucca root, and bulbs. Three kinds of clover were eaten raw. Blackberries, strawberries, elderberries, gooseberries, toyon berries, and choke cherries were gathered.

Salmon and trout were caught in the Salinas River and other streams. From the ocean, the Salinan got bullhead fish, clams, abalone, mussels, crabs, and seaweed. Many animals were hunted in the hills and valleys, including deer, antelope, mountain lion, wild sheep, ground squirrels, and rabbits. Two kinds of quail and other small birds were caught with nets. The northern Salinan ate lizards, but none of the Salinan ate dogs, coyotes, or wolves, nor did they eat birds of prey such as the hawk, condor, buzzard, or eagle. Bears were hunted for their skins but were not often used as food.

CLOTHING

In summer many people wore no clothing. Sometimes the women would make a skirt like a double apron, with one part in front and the other part in back. They used tule reeds and grasses tied in small bundles to make the skirts. In colder weather, both men and women wore capes or blankets made from rabbit or otter skins, or from tule grass. They sometimes put a layer of mud on their bodies to keep them warm.

When carrying a heavy burden basket on their back, they wore basket caps so that the strap supporting the burden basket could rest on the cap instead of on the forehead. The Salinan wore their hair at shoulder length, tied at the neck with a strip of deerhide. For decoration they painted their bodies with red, white, blue, and yellow dyes, and wore earrings made from abalone shells.

TOOLS

The Salinan used both twining and coiling methods for making baskets. Willow branches and tule reeds were the main materials for the baskets, with fern roots woven in to make the design. Split grasses were soaked in water and then used as sewing thread to hold together the coils. An awl (sharp pointed tool), made from the sharpened end of the ankle

bone of a deer, was the needle.

Pieces of bone and shell were used as wedges and fishhooks. Stone was shaped into arrowheads, spear points, scrapers, choppers, and grinders.

TRADE

The Salinan used abalone or mussel shells to make beads which were used as money. The value of the bead was based on its color. Blue beads which were long and came from some other area were the most valuable. Owning just two blue shells made a man wealthy. Pink beads, valued for their shininess, were next in value. White beads were worth less. It is reported that the Salinan loaned money at an interest rate equal to the amount of the loan for each day the money was kept. This was very high interest!

The Yokuts, to the east, were good friends of the Salinan, who visited them and fished in their lakes. The Yokuts had access to the ocean through Salinan land. The Salinan traded shell beads and unworked shells to the Yokuts for obsidian (volcanic glass for spear points), seeds, lake fish, and animal skins. They also traded with the Chumash to the south for shell ornaments, and wooden dishes. The Salinan were seldom on good terms with their neighbors to the north, the Costanoans.

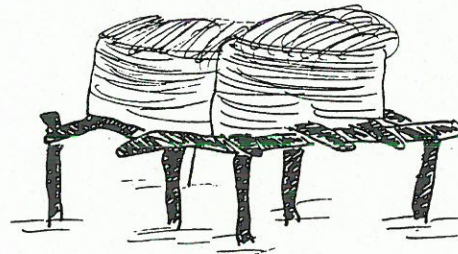
CEREMONIES

Some dances were done by a single dancer. In the Coyote, Bear, Owl, and Deer dances, the dancer imitated the actions and sound of the animal. One or two dancers performed the Kuksui dance. The dancers were naked with their bodies painted red, white, and yellow. They wore feather headdresses with eagle feathers extending from their foreheads. The Kuksui dance was accompanied by singers, sitting in a row and clapping their hands.

While no instruments were used in the Kuksui dance, at other times the people used cocoon rattles, wooden rasps (notched sticks rubbed against each other), rattles and flutes made of elderwood, and bone whistles. They may also have had a drum made by stretching an animal skin over a wooden frame. Group dances were part of the celebration when a community building was completed. These dances were held more as social events than for any ceremonial purpose.

SERRANO

(sə' rā, nō)



Granary for storing mesquite beans

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Southern California [San Bernardino County, eastern Los Angeles County]	1770 estimate -- 1,500 1910 Census -- 100	Uto-Aztecan family

The Serrano were a small group, though their name is sometimes used to include several other groups whose languages were close to the Serrano language. The Vanyume, who lived along the Mohave River, may have spoken a dialect similar to the Serrano. Little is known about the Vanyume.

SETTLEMENTS

The Serrano called themselves *Takhtam*, which meant *men* or *people* in their language. The name *Serrano* is from the Spanish word for *mountaineers* or *highland people*. The place where Serrano settlements were located ranged from about 1,500 feet elevation to over 11,000 feet, and included desert and mountain areas. More of the villages were in the foothills of the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains, where there were streams and small lakes. There were just a few villages in the desert area because there were only a few places where water was available all year round.

Each Serrano community (which usually consisted of one village) owned a creek or a water hole and the land around it. The village was often located at the point where a stream came out of the foothills. Each small band of people belonged to one of two totem (symbol) groups, the *Wild Cats* or the *Coyotes*.

The leader of each clan was called the *kika*. A man usually inherited the position of *kika* from his father, though sometimes the wife of a *kika* carried on for him after his death. The *kika* was in charge of the ceremonies and religious life of the community, in

addition to settling quarrels and advising the people on matters of daily life. The *kika* was assisted by another man called the *paxa*, who helped with important ceremonies.

HOUSES

Serrano families built houses that were round and dome-shaped, made with a frame of willow branches bent together and fastened at the top. The frame was covered with bundles of tule reeds. Each family had their own house, which was used mostly for sleeping and for storing their belongings.

Although each house had a fire pit in the center, much of the cooking and other activity took place outside the house. In order to have shade, the people built *ramadas*, which were thatched roofs supported by poles.

The largest house in the village belonged to the *kika*. This house also served as the place for ceremonies.

Each village had a sweathouse, usually located near the stream or other water source. The sweathouse was a large round building, partly underground. It was framed with willow poles and covered with tule reeds and earth. A fire was built in the center of the sweathouse. Men, women, and children gathered in the sweathouse. After the hot air made them sweat, they went into the stream to wash off the sweat.

FOOD

The food that the Serrano gathered depended on whether they lived in the foothills or the desert. The

desert people had honey mesquite and piñon nuts, yucca roots, and cacti fruits. Those in the foothills had acorns as well as piñon nuts. The desert people often traveled into the foothills to gather acorns and other nuts. Nuts were stored in granaries built of willow poles and covered with tule reeds.

In the foothills and mountains there were many animals that were used as food. Special hunting parties went out to find deer, mountain sheep, and antelope. Smaller game such as rabbits and other rodents were caught in traps or with curved throwing sticks. Some birds were taken for food; the quail was the most important of the game birds for the Serrano. They did not do much fishing.

Other roots, bulbs, and seeds, including chia seeds, were important to the food supply. The food was cooked either in earth ovens, or by boiling it with water in baskets heated by hot stones. Some of the meat and vegetables were dried in the sun and stored for use in the winter.

CLOTHING

The climate was warm much of the year and the Serrano did not need many clothes. They used tule reeds fastened to a cord to make short aprons or skirts. Pieces of mesquite bark may also have been used to make skirts. They also had the skins of deer and antelope to use as coverings when they needed them for warmth. Rabbitskin blankets were made by sewing together strips of rabbit skins. When traveling across the desert areas or into the mountains, the Serrano probably wore sandals made from plant fibers and strips of deerskin.

TOOLS

Baskets made by the Serrano were used for carrying, storing, and cooking food. The coiled baskets were finely done using grasses and reeds, and decorated with colors of yellow, red, brown, and green, and with seeds. Some pottery bowls were made from the clay in the area, but the pottery was not decorated.

Pieces of bone and stone were shaped into tools by the Serrano. A sharp-pointed bone served as an awl for making holes in deerskin, and for sewing together reeds or strips of rabbit skins. Stone was shaped into knife blades, scrapers, and arrowheads.

The Serrano used bows and arrows when hunting larger animals. Their bows were made of wood and backed with sinew (animal tendons).

The yucca plant which grew in Serrano territory provided the fibers from which they made cord and string. Cord was then used to make bags, as well as nets and snares to catch small animals and birds.

TRADE

Trade for the Serrano was mostly between villages in the desert and in the foothills. The desert people went once a year to the mountains to get acorns and other food that wasn't available in their own area. In exchange they traded desert fruits and seeds. The Serrano probably also had trade with the Cahuilla, who lived to the south of them.

The shells that the Serrano used as money came from the Chumash, who lived on the coast. Pieces of clamshell were shaped into disks, holes punched in them, and then strung on strings. The more the shells were handled, the more polished they became and that made them more valuable.

CEREMONIES

Ceremonies were held to celebrate the birth of a child, and the coming of age of both boys and girls. The ceremony following a death lasted for seven days. Each community had a bundle of objects used in the ceremonies. This bundle was considered to be sacred, and was very important. Taking care of it was the main task of the *paxa*, or assistant leader of the village.

A part of some ceremonies was the killing of an eagle which had been raised in the village just for this purpose. The eagle feathers were used to make a costume for a dancer, whose dance was like the flight of the eagle. After an eagle dance, which was held in the ceremonial house, singing and dancing went on all night long. The family holding the ceremony gave gifts and shell money to their friends.

The Serrano used several musical instruments with their dancing and singing. Rattles were made of turtle or tortoise shell, or of deer hooves. Whistles and flutes were carved from bone and wood. Bull-roarers made of a piece of wood attached to a string made a roaring noise when whirled around.

SHASTA

(shă stə)



Vest made of sticks, used as armor

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northern California on the Oregon border [Siskiyou County]	1770 estimate -- 2,000 1910 Census -- 100	Hokan family

The Shasta were the most northern of the groups in the Hokan language family. Their way of living was a mixture of the central Californian and the northwestern Californian ways.

SETTLEMENTS

Shasta territory reached as far north as the Rogue River Valley in what is now Oregon. This was a land of forests and mountains, almost all at 2,500 feet in elevation or higher. Most of the 150 known Shasta settlements were at the mouths of creeks where they flowed into one of the main rivers (the Shasta, Klamath, or Scott rivers).

There were three smaller groups connected with the Shasta. To the southwest lived the Konomihu and the New River Shasta (who were on the East and South Forks of the Salmon River more than on the New River). To the southeast lived the Okwanuchu.

Some Shasta villages had only one family. Larger villages each had a headman whose job was to keep peace among his people and help to settle quarrels. Also, each of several divisions, or groups of villages, had a headman.

The name *Shasta* may have come from that of a chief called *Sasti*. It is familiar because of Mt. Shasta and Shasta County.

HOUSES

Shasta houses were rectangular in shape, built around an excavation about three feet deep. Wood planks formed the end walls and the roof, which

slanted to a peak in the center. The side walls were dirt piled up to reach the eaves of the roof. Inside, the walls were lined with slabs of bark. A fireplace pit was in the center of the house. Some houses held one family, some held several families. An opening in the end wall was covered with a straw mat for a door.

Some Shasta villages had an assembly house, built like the dwelling houses but larger and dug deeper down into the ground. All the people of the village gathered here for special occasions. Sometimes visitors stayed in the assembly house. It was also used as a sweathouse.

The largest villages had separate sweathouses, built like the assembly house but smaller. They were heated by a fire. Women were not allowed to come in; men and boys over the age of 12 spent time there, and slept there. There were also small family sweathouses, used by both men and women, where steam was made by throwing water on hot rocks.

FOOD

Deer meat and acorns were the main foods of the Shasta people. They also ate bear, several small animals and birds, salmon, trout, eels, crawfish, turtles, mussels, grasshoppers and crickets. While the men hunted and fished, the women gathered acorns, other nuts, seeds, roots, bulbs, and insects. Women and children collected mussels from the Klamath River by diving to the river bottom.

Acorns from the tan oak tree, which were the

favorites of the Shasta people, were gotten in trade from the Karok, to the west. Black-oak acorns were the best liked of those that grew in Shasta territory. The Shasta used some farming techniques. They scattered wild seeds, thinned out crops of tobacco plants, and watered crops by hand in dry weather.

Food was baked in earth ovens, boiled in baskets with hot rocks, or cooked directly over an open fire. Manzanita berries were used to sweeten foods, and to make a cider drink. Salt was probably gotten from the Karok, who had access to seaweed from the ocean. Extra meat and fish was dried and stored in outside pits or in baskets for later use.

CLOTHING

Clothing was usually made from deerskins, the women wearing a two-piece apron that covered from the waist to below the knees. The men wore a shorter deerskin apron, and deerskin leggings and caps. Women's caps were made like baskets. The skins of both deer and bear were used to make robes. People along the Klamath River made blankets from raccoon skins. Moccasins made of deerskin were tied around the ankles.

Shasta women had three wide stripes tattooed on their chins. Both men and women had their ears and noses pierced, and wore ornaments made of beads, shells, and feathers, and necklaces made of bear teeth and bird claws. Special clothing was decorated with beads or porcupine quills. Grease or marrow was mixed with red, white, yellow, or black dyes to make face and body paint.

TOOLS

The Shasta that lived along the Klamath River used canoes. Most of the canoes were purchased from the Karok or Yurok, to the west. The Shasta themselves made some dugout canoes from sugar pine logs. In some areas they made rafts by tying together bundles of tule reeds.

Some baskets were made by Shasta women, but many baskets were purchased from their neighbors to the west. Each person had a basket that served as an eating bowl. Deerskins were also used to make containers for carrying seeds and roots.

Pieces of bone or elk horn were used as scrapers and wedges to shape wood into spoons, paddles to stir

acorn mush, and digging sticks. Spoons were also made from the kneecaps of elk. Knives were made from obsidian (volcanic glass).

For fishing the Shasta used nets, basket traps, hook and line, and spears. Bows and arrows were used for hunting and in battles with enemies. Both arrows and bows were painted. Arrows used for war and hunting large animals had tips of obsidian. In battle, Shasta men wore vests made of elkhide or sticks bound together with cord. Cord and nets were made from the fibers of wild hemp.

TRADE

Both dentalium shells (tube-like mollusk shells) and red woodpecker scalps were used as money. The dentalium shells came by trade from the Karok, western neighbors of the Shasta, and from other groups closer to the coast. These shells were used as money by tribes from Vancouver Island down to northwestern California. Some clamshell disks were also used as money, but these were considered less valuable by the Shasta people.

Most disagreements were settled by the payment of an amount of money. Each person had a fixed value, based on how much was paid for that person's mother when she was married.

Much trade was carried on by the Shasta. From the Karok, Hupa, and Yurok to the west they got acorns, baskets, canoes, dentalium and other shells, and gourds. In exchange they gave pine nuts, obsidian blades, and wolf and deer skins.

CEREMONIES

The Shasta did not hold many big ceremonies, but they sometimes attended the White Deerskin Dance held by their neighbors, the Karok. They took things to trade with other people at the dance.

The Shasta held important ceremonies for both boys and girls at about age 12. Other ceremonies were held before a war party departed for a raid, and when they returned victorious. Women took part in the war dance, which lasted for several nights. There were also special ceremonies with singing, dancing, and praying before a group of men went out to hunt. Headbands with yellowhammer (a type of woodpecker) feathers or red woodpecker scalps were worn for ceremonies.



TATAVIAM

(tə' tə v̄əȳəm)



Yucca plant
used for food and fibers

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Southern California [Los Angeles County]	1770 estimate -- 1,000 or less 1910 Census -- none	Uto-Aztecan family

Within ten years of the founding of Mission San Fernando in 1797, almost all of the Tataviam people had been taken into the Mission. The area shown on some maps of California Indian tribes as being that of the Tataviam is labeled as Fernandño on other maps. The Fernandño are commonly grouped with the Gabrielino.

SETTLEMENTS

Tataviam villages were mostly along the upper part of the Santa Clara River, on the southern slopes of a range of hills. Elevations were from 1,500 to 3,000 feet above sea level. Their territory included part of the Sawmill Mountains and the edge of the Antelope Valley. Their neighbors to the north and west were the Chumash people, on the east were the Serrano, and on the south were the Gabrielino.

The name *Tataviam* was used by the Kitanemuk, who lived north of the Tataviam, to refer to these people, but was not used by the Tataviam themselves. The name comes from the Kitanemuk words for *sunny hillside* or for *he is sunning himself*. When used as a name for this group of people, it meant *people facing the sun* or *people of the south-facing slope*. Their Chumash neighbors called them the *Alliklik*.

Some Tataviam villages were small, with just 10 or 15 people. There were, however, two or three large villages of about 200 people, as well as some with 20 to 60 people. The village leader was usually a wealthy man or the head of a large family.

HOUSES

The Tataviam used willow poles to make the frame of their house. The flexible poles were placed upright in a circle, then bent in to meet at the top. The poles were bound together with cord. Other poles were fastened across the basic frame. Over the poles, bundles of tule reeds were tied to make a dome-shaped thatched house. The tule reed thatching was thick and kept the house warm in winter and cool in summer. This type of house was easy to make, so when the thatch got old, a new house was built.

Inside, the floor was of hard packed earth. A fireplace was in the center of the round house, with a smokehole in the roof. Sometimes a mat woven of tule reeds was used as a door covering.

For much of the year, when the weather was mild, the house was used just for sleeping and storing things. Much of the cooking, sewing, basketmaking, and toolmaking took place outside.

The sweathouse was an important building in the village. It was made much like the homes, but smaller and closer to the ground. The brush was covered with mud, and the fire inside was kept from making much smoke. Sweating in the sweathouse helped to keep the body clean, and was a part of the social life of the villagers.

FOOD

An important food for the people in this area was the bud of the yucca plant. These were baked in earth

ovens. Acorns were also a main part of the diet, as they were for most of the early Californians. The women spent a lot of time preparing the acorns for eating. After the outer shell was taken off, the nut meats had to be dug out of the inner shell and dried in the sun for several days. Then they could be stored for use later in the year. The dried nuts were ground up to make a flour, or meal, which was made into mush or flat cakes. The grinding was done on a stone called a mortar, using another hammer-shaped stone called a pestle to crush the nuts.

Other plant foods gathered by the people were juniper berries, manzanita berries, the fruit of the prickly pear cactus, and seeds. Chia seeds from the sage plant were roasted before eating. The same tule reeds that were used to cover the houses also provided food. The young roots of the plant were baked and eaten.

There were some deer and antelope in the hills, and the men hunted them with bows and arrows. Smaller game animals such as rabbits and squirrels were caught using traps and clubs or throwing sticks and slingshots.

CLOTHING

Tataviam women wore skirts made either from bark or tule reeds. Bark used for clothing was the inner bark of the willow, sycamore, or cottonwood tree. This bark was cut in strips and then pounded until it was soft enough to be attached to a belt. Tule reeds and grasses were woven to make a flat mat-like piece that could be fastened to a belt.

Tataviam men and children usually wore no clothing. Men had a belt made from cord to which they attached things they needed to carry, like tools or food. For the times when the weather was cold, both men and women had capes made from deerskin.

Both men and women tattooed their faces by pricking tiny holes with a cactus thorn and rubbing charcoal or other dyes into the holes. They also painted their faces and bodies with red and brown paint. This protected their skin from sun and wind.

TOOLS

The yucca plant provided fibers that were twisted together to make cord. This cord was used for

making nets and traps, as well as for tying things together. The bones of deer and antelope were made into scrapers and knives. Hunting bows were made from elderberry or juniper wood. Arrows for small game were made of hard wood with the points hardened and sharpened by fire. Longer arrows used in hunting deer and antelope had stone tips.

The Tataviam probably made baskets using both the twining and coiling methods. Baskets were important to them for carrying, storing, and cooking their food. They also used earth ovens for roasting food.

TRADE

Strings of shell beads were worn by the people of Southern California as decoration, as well as a sign of wealth. The beads used as money were made from clam and olivella shells by shaping broken pieces of shell into small disks. The disks were polished, the more polished ones being the more valuable.

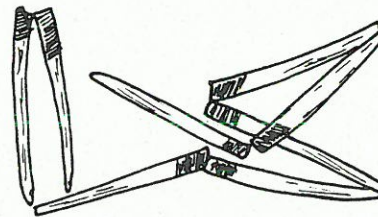
It is likely that the Tataviam traded with the Kitanemuk who lived to the northeast of them, and with the Gabrielino and Chumash on the west. Both the Gabrielino and the Chumash had many resources, particularly from the sea, that the Tataviam did not have. The shells that were used as money came to the Tataviam from the Chumash. From the Gabrielino they got pots and other utensils made of steatite (soapstone), in addition to dried fish. In exchange, the Tataviam could offer deerhides and meat, berries, and cactus fruit.

CEREMONIES

An important ceremony held each year, in the late summer or early fall, was the mourning ceremony to remember those who had died during the previous year. Connected with the ceremony was a bundle of sacred objects. It was the responsibility of the leader of each village to take care of the sacred bundle until it was needed for a ceremony.

Ceremonies always included dancing, singing, and feasting. The people gathered in a large round enclosure built especially for the ceremony. The fence that surrounded the area was made of brush. There was no roof. People from nearby villages were invited to share in the feasting.

TOLOWA



('tō lə wu)

Dentalium shells used as money

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Extreme northwest corner of California [Del Norte County]	1770 estimate -- 1,000 1910 Census -- 150	Athapaskan family

Their location in the extreme northwestern corner of present-day California meant that the Tolowa had close ties with the people along the Oregon coast and in the Rogue River Valley, where there were others whose languages were of the Athapaskan family. The Tolowa also had much in common with the Yurok people, who lived just south of them.

SETTLEMENTS

Though Tolowa territory included some miles of coastline along the Pacific Ocean, the Tolowa were known as the people of the Smith River. Their land probably included much of the area drained by the Smith River. Land away from the ocean or river, however, was used mostly for hunting.

The name *Tolowa* was given to these people by their neighbors, the Yurok. The Tolowa did not refer to themselves as *Tolowa*, but used the word in their language that meant *person* or *people*. The village names that are known came from lists made by the Yurok and the Rogue River Athapaskan groups.

There were eight important Tolowa settlements, each with its own section of ocean-front property. The people of the various villages did not consider themselves to be part of a larger group.

HOUSES

To make their houses, the Tolowa used tree trunks that had fallen. Sometimes they made a tree fall by building a fire its base. The fallen log was split into planks using pieces of deer or elk antlers as wedges,

which they hit with rock hammers. The walls of the house, which were low, formed a square and were covered by the overhanging roof planks.

Inside, the house was bigger than it looked from the outside. Most of the inside was dug out so that the floor was several feet below ground level, leaving a wide ledge around the inside walls. This ledge was used to store food and utensils. The women and girls worked and slept in the lower portion of the house, where the cooking fire was built.

The men and older boys spent more time in the village sweathouse than they did in the family homes. The sweathouse was made of wood planks, much like the family houses, but smaller.

FOOD

The ocean and the river were a good source of food for the Tolowa. The men used spears and nets to catch fish. In the fall, when the salmon went upriver to lay their eggs, the men built dams in the river to help them catch the fish. They also fished for lamprey eels in the river, and gathered large ocean mussels (shellfish) along the ocean beach.

Because they had boats, the Tolowa could go out onto the ocean to hunt for seals, sea lions, and sea otters on the off-shore rocks. Whales that were washed ashore were claimed by the nearest village. The people used the skins of these animals as well as the meat. They also hunted deer, elk, and smaller animals in the inland forests.

Acorns were an important food for the Tolowa. Each fall, the people traveled inland from the coast several miles to gather the acorn crop from the oak trees. Tolowa families held the rights to acorns from certain groves of oak trees. Enough acorns were gathered in the fall so that some could be dried and stored for the winter. Other nuts, berries, and seeds were added to the food supply.

CLOTHING

The Tolowa, like their northwestern California neighbors, used deerskins to make their clothes. The men wore a wide strip of deerskin folded around their waist. Women's dress was an apron-like skirt made in two sections, a front and a back. Women's skirts were often fringed and decorated with pine nuts, seeds, and shells such as abalone and clamshells. Deerskins were also used as blankets and shawls, worn around the shoulders when the weather was cold.

Before being made into clothing, the deerskins were often treated by a process called *tanning*. The skins were soaked in water for several days to loosen the hair, which was scraped off. Then the hides were soaked in an ash solution, stretched and dried. This process resulted in soft leather.

TOOLS

Tolowa women wove baskets using young, slender branches and pieces of plant roots. The method they used is called *twining*, in which the branches or strips of roots are woven in and out across other branches. Baskets were used for gathering and storing food. Tightly-woven baskets could be used for acorn mush and soup. Baskets for carrying things were cone-shaped and hung across the shoulders from a strap that went over the forehead. Babies were carried in baskets shaped like big slippers.

Canoes were made by the Tolowa, as they were by the neighboring Yurok. They used the trunk of a redwood tree that had fallen down. The inside was hollowed out by burning it, and then scraping it out with stone-handled tools made of mussel shells. The canoes were made watertight by a layer of wood pitch. The Tolowa used these canoes on the Smith River as well as in protected bays along the ocean.

For splitting logs and planks, the Tolowa used wedges of elk horn, pounding them with rock mauls (hammers).

Bows and arrows were used both for hunting and for warfare. The Tolowa used thin pieces of yew wood to make the bow, which was about three feet long. Arrows were about 30 inches long, and had tips of flint or obsidian (volcanic glass).

TRADE

For money the Tolowa used the dentalium shells that were the standard currency for most of the early northwestern people. No doubt the Tolowa received the dentalium shells from the people further north along the Pacific Coast, and traded them on down the coast to other California groups. Although dentalium shells could be found in the sand under the ocean water off the California coast, the Tolowa did not dig for their own shells, but traded for them with more northerly groups. Many of the shells came from the waters around Vancouver Island.

Dentalium shells are tooth-shaped mollusk shells that can be strung on strings. The shells were divided into five groups by their length, from about 1¾ inches up to 2½ inches. The larger the shell, the more value it had to the native people. Shells were usually grouped by size on a string. Strings of dentalium shells were traded for boats, skins, or wives.

The Tolowa were considered to be wealthy people by their neighbors, the Yurok.

CEREMONIES

The Tolowa held the Deerskin Dance, a dance also made by other prosperous groups in northwestern California. At a Deerskin Dance, the men had an opportunity to show off their most valued possessions, such as their best deerskins, woodpecker scalps, and special pieces of obsidian (volcanic glass). Only the men participated in the Tolowa Deerskin Dance, which lasted several days.

Another dance said to have been held along the Smith River was known as the Salmon Dance. It was probably part of a new-year ceremony, celebrating the supply of salmon in the river.



TUBATULABAL

(tə, bătłə' bäl)



Coiled basketry bowl

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Central California [Tulare County & northern Kern County]	1770 estimate -- 1,000 1910 Census -- 150	Uto-Aztecian family

The Tubatulabal people are divided into three groups: the Pahkanapil, the Palagewan, and the Bankalachi. The languages of these three were very much alike. The Tubatulabal were also known as the Kern River Indians. They were a branch of the Shoshoneans, who lived in the Great Basin area that extends into Nevada.

SETTLEMENTS

Tubatulabal villages were located along the valleys of the Kern River and the South Fork Kern River, especially near the junction of these two rivers. These valleys are at 2,500 to 3,000 foot elevations. Summers in these valleys were hot and dry; winters were cold and rainy, with some snow. The rest of Tubatulabal territory was mostly mountains rising as high as 14,500 feet.

The name *Tubatulabal* is a Shoshonean word meaning *pine-nut eater*. This name was used for them by the Yokuts to the west and the Kawaiisu to the south, as well as by the Tubatulabal themselves.

Each of the three groups of Tubatulabal had a headman whose duty was to represent the group in disputes. The headman was chosen by the people for his honesty and good judgment. The old headman's son or brother was often chosen, but only at the consent of the people. The three groups joined together in times of crisis.

Villages were small, with two to six families. The Tubatulabal lived in their villages only a few months during the winter. The rest of the time they moved

around, gathering food.

HOUSES

In the winter villages, houses were made with a frame of poles bent together to form a round dome shape. The frame was covered with brush and then with mud. The houses were small, holding a single family. Mats made from tule reeds covered the floor.

Much of the year the family worked, ate, and slept in a shelter that had a roof but no walls. Four poles stuck in the ground with two poles between them supported a roof of brush that gave shade from the sun. A similar but larger building, sometimes with two brush walls, was used by a group of families for special ceremonies. On some trips to gather food, groups of people slept in large areas surrounded by a brush fence but without any roof. This type of enclosure was also used for guests when they came to a ceremonial dance.

Most villages had a sweathouse built near a pool or stream. The sweathouse was round and made of branches and logs covered with brush and dirt. In Tubatulabal villages, women and children as well as men used the sweathouse.

FOOD

The Tubatulabal gathered acorns from the Greenhorn Mountains in the late fall, and piñon nuts from the eastern slopes of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in the early fall. Acorns were picked up

from the ground, dried in the sun, and stored in granaries built up off the ground. Piñon nuts were knocked off the tree branches and heated in a fire to make them open. Then the nutmeats were taken out of the shells, dried in the sun, and stored in large round pits lined with stones. Granaries for storing acorns were located in the winter villages. The pits for storing piñon nuts, however, were placed in the area where the nuts were gathered.

Other plant foods gathered by the Tubatulabal included seeds (chia, wild oats), leaves, bulbs, tubers and roots, and berries (juniper, manzanita, gooseberries, boxthorn berries). Plants were cooked by boiling them into a mush with water, or by roasting or baking them in earth ovens. When berries were pounded and mixed with water, they could be shaped into cakes, dried in the sun, and stored for the winter. Sugar crystals were gathered from the stalks of honey dew cane. Rock salt came from dry salt lakes in the Mojave Desert.

Fish were an important part of the food supply. Large animals such as deer, bear, mountain lion, mountain sheep, and antelope were hunted with bow and arrows. Traps and snares were used to catch rabbits, squirrels, and mice. Birds such as quail, pigeon, teal, and coot were caught near water holes. Meat and fish were cooked by roasting or broiling over an open fire, or salting and drying for use later.

CLOTHING

The women wore the double apron-type skirt like many other early California groups. The skirts were made of deerskin. In warm weather, men did not wear any clothing. For colder weather, men and women wore vests or sleeveless jackets made of deerskin. When on trips to gather food or hunt, both men and women sometimes wore moccasins made of deerskin with pitch on the bottom.

Women decorated their bodies with tattoos, and wore earrings, noseplugs, and necklaces made of clamshells or olivella shells. Men wore decorations only for special dances or ceremonies.

TOOLS

Baskets were made from split willow branches or yucca roots. The Tubatulabal used both the twining and coiling methods of making baskets, but they put

designs only on the coiled baskets. Pieces of tree yucca roots made red patterns; pieces of devil's claw made black ones. Baskets were used for carrying food, sifting grains, cooking, and serving food. The Tubatulabal also made pots from the red clay that was found in the South Fork Kern valley. The pots were formed by stacking rolls of clay on top of each other and pinching them together. The pots were dried in the sun and heated in an open fire until they were a grayish color.

For hunting, bows and arrows were used. The arrows had obsidian (volcanic glass) tips set on wooden shafts with feathers. Many kinds of nets, traps, and snares were woven from plant fibers. For rabbit hunts, a very large net was set up across a canyon, and the rabbits were driven into the net. Deer bone was used as a scraping tool, and for shaping stone into knives, hammers, grinders, and pounders. The sharp-pointed spines from the barrel cactus were used as needles for sewing and basketmaking.

TRADE

Clamshell disks were used as money. Pieces of clamshell were shaped into round beads, holes were punched in the middle, and the beads were strung on strings. Clamshell beads were used by a young man's family to pay for a bride. The clamshell money was also used in trade with neighboring groups.

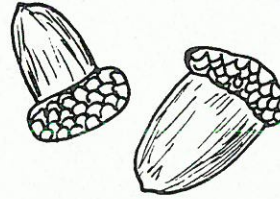
CEREMONIES

A participant in Tubatulabal ceremonies was the clown, or dance manager. This position was passed on from father to son. The clown's face was painted with red and white stripes for ceremonies. He danced backward and spoke nonsense lines, to bring humor to the solemn ceremonies. If the people wanted to get rid of their headman, the clown was the one to speak critically of the headman and to call for his replacement.

For music with their dances, the Tubatulabals had several kinds of rattles, a quill whistle, a flute made from an elderberry stalk, and a musical bow. Both men and women took part in the dances, which were usually round dances. The dancers formed two circles around the fire, with the women on the inside.

WAPPO

(wä pō)



Acorns, the main food source

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Central California just north of San Francisco Bay [Napa County & eastern Sonoma County]	1770 estimate -- 1,000 1910 Census -- 73	Yukian family

The Wappo are one of the four groups included in the Yukian language family. The dialect spoken by the Wappo differed from that of the Yuki, Huchnom, and Coast Yuki so that these groups would not have been able to understand each other easily. The Wappo were separated from others in their language family by about 40 miles of Pomo territory.

The Wappo were probably a group of Yuki who left the area where most of the Yuki lived and moved south. Over time their language changed somewhat. The Wappo were surrounded by people who spoke other languages, but they were friends with their neighbors most of the time.

The Wappo were known as kind people, who were not greedy. They felt that for a person to own something was rude to others in the group, and so they shared everything.

SETTLEMENTS

Wappo villages were located in river and creek valleys just north of San Francisco Bay, and inland from the ocean. The Napa River ran through Wappo land. Some villages were on a stretch of the Russian River and on Elk Creek, which runs into the Russian River. These river valleys were surrounded by low mountains. A small group of Wappo lived, at one time, at the southern end of Clear Lake, quite far from the rest of the Wappo villages.

Each Wappo village had a headman who might be elected, appointed, or chosen because of some job

he was doing at the time. At times there was more than one headman in a village, and sometimes a woman served as headman. The headman was in charge of dances and ceremonies, contacts with other villages, and passing on news and information.

The name *Wappo* was given to this group of early Californians by later settlers. It is a form of the Spanish term *guapo* meaning *brave, harsh, or severe*. The California town of Sonoma got its name from the Wappo ending *-noma*, meaning *town*, which the Wappo attached to the names of their villages.

HOUSES

Wappo houses were oval in shape. They were made with a framework of willow poles, each bent in toward the center of the oval, forming a shape that looked like an upside-down basket. Over the poles, layers of grass were tied, making a thatched covering. Inside, the floor was dug down about two feet below ground level. This kept the floor area from getting cold drafts of air from outside.

It was common for several families to live in a single house. Each family had its own doorway and its own fireplace inside, with a smokehole over the fireplace. Each village also had one or two sweathouses, smaller than the family homes but made in the same way. The men spent a lot of time in the sweathouse, sleeping there when the weather was cold.

Because of the annual flooding of the rivers in this

area, the Wappo built their homes on higher ground, sometimes as much as a mile away from the river. In the summer, they moved to camps closer to the river, living in temporary shelters while the weather was warm.

FOOD

Game that was available in Wappo territory included deer, rabbits, ducks, geese, and quail. Acorns formed a main part of the diet of the Wappo, as they did for most early Californians. They also ate buckeye nuts, several kinds of roots, and clover. They collected wild honey. Salt came from a saltlick at a nearby lake.

Some of the Wappo made trips each summer to get food, going west to the ocean to gather sea food, and north to Clear Lake for freshwater fish. The trip to the ocean would take several days, passing through Pomo land. From the ocean, the Wappo took abalone, clams, mussels, and crabs, as well as eels and turtles. They also fished for salmon and other saltwater fish. Before starting the trip back to their villages, they dried much of the fish so that it would not spoil. Dried seaweed was used as seasoning.

CLOTHING

Both deerskins and tule rushes were used by the women to make their apron-like skirts. A narrow piece was worn in the front, with a wider piece covering the hips in the back. In warm weather, the men often did not wear clothing, or else wore a piece of deerskin wrapped around the hips. Robes and blankets made of rabbit skins were worn by both men and women in cold weather.

Most of the time, men and women did not wear anything on their head or feet. For very cold weather, they made moccasins by sewing up a seam in a piece of deerskin.

TOOLS

Stones, sticks, and shells were used by the Wappo as tools to make the things they needed in order to gather and prepare their food. Mussel shells made good spoons and containers for small amounts of food. Stone was chipped and shaped to make mauls (hammers) and axes. A maul was used with a wedge to split logs for firewood. Pieces of shell and deer

antler were used to scrape both skins and wood. Small animals and deer were often trapped in nooses made of plant fibers, tied firmly together. Sometimes a slingshot was used, with rocks serving as the shot, when hunting ducks or geese.

Baskets had many uses among early California people. Of all the things the Wappo made, they spent the most time on the baskets. Wappo baskets were made like Pomo baskets, which are said to be the most beautiful in the country. Both twined and coiled baskets were made, with willow branches being the favored material for both kinds. The baskets were carefully formed and decorated.

Basketmaking was usually the work of the women in early California. However, the Wappo men did some basket work as well, making fish traps and eel baskets.

TRADE

Clamshell beads served as money for the Wappo. The pieces of clamshell were shaped and polished, and strung on strings in groups of ten. Sometimes beads made of magnesite (a stone found in the area) were added to the clamshell disks. The Wappo wore the strings of beads as decoration.

The Wappo carried on very little trade. At one time they got bows and yellowhammer headbands from people living further north. They also got magnesite beads from their northern neighbors, and seashells and sea food from the people living along the ocean.

CEREMONIES

The Wappo loved to dance. They often visited their neighbors for celebrations on feast days, which always included dancing. Musical instruments used with the dancing were the same as those that the Pomo used. They had cocoon rattles (several cocoons filled with pebbles and hung from a stick), split-stick clappers, and whistles and flutes made from elderberry wood.

The Wappo did not have special ceremonies for boys as they grew into men, as some of their neighbors did. They had a small ceremony when a girl became a woman. Events like marriage, divorce, and death were treated without a great deal of ceremony by the Wappo. No price was paid for a wife, but the two families exchanged equal gifts.

WASHOE

('wā,shō)



Invitation string with one knot for each day before the feast

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
East central California [Plumas, Lassen, Sierra, Nevada, Placer, El Dorado & Alpine Counties]	1770 estimate -- 500 (in Calif.) 1910 Census -- 300 (in Calif.)	Hokan family

The Washoe (or Washo) were as much a people of the Great Basin area in Nevada as they were of California. Living on the east side of the Sierras, they are not considered part of the California culture area. However, about half of their traditional lands are in California, and their language is part of the same language family as the Pomo, Shasta, and other California groups. They may once have had lands on the western side of the mountains, and been driven east by hostile neighbors.

SETTLEMENTS

Permanent Washoe settlements were mostly in the Truckee and Carson River valleys on the eastern slopes of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, at elevations of about 4,000 to 5,000 feet. A group of 3-10 houses, usually located on a spot of high ground near the river, made up a village. Many of the people living in the village were related to each other, and called themselves by a word that meant *the bunch, or many people living near one another*.

Individuals and small groups left these winter villages at various times to hunt and gather food, but some of the old people and children stayed in the winter village all year. An older person in each family served as the leader of that small group. All the Washoe communities helped each other and good relations with others were valued, but each family made its own decisions about food gathering. At times when a big hunt was to take place, one man was selected to be the hunt leader and many families worked together.

The name *Washoe* comes from a word *wasiw*, used by the people themselves, meaning *people from here*.

HOUSES

Winter houses were round, about 12-15 feet across, and made with a framework of poles placed in a circle and leaning together at the top. On the outside, the frame was covered with pieces of bark tied to the poles with strips of willow wood or deerhide thongs. Sometimes bundles of grass or tule reeds were used in place of the bark. Inside, the floor was sometimes dug down slightly below ground level. A fire pit was placed in the center, with a smokehole above it. The door to the house always faced the east, and there was often a covered passageway leading to the door.

The Washo probably did not use sweathouses. Also, they did not have large assembly or dance houses.

FOOD

There was a lot of food available in Washo territory. From Lake Tahoe and from the rivers they got trout, suckers, chub, and mountain whitefish. Deer, antelope, and mountain sheep were hunted in the Sierra Nevadas. Rabbits were an important part of the food supply. Thousands of rabbits could be taken at one time by groups of people who drove the rabbits into large nets. Other small animals used as food were porcupines, beavers, chipmunks, gophers, squirrels, woodchucks, badgers, mice, and moles.

Birds such as quail, grouse, geese, and swans were shot with bows and arrows or caught in nets. Grasshoppers and locusts were roasted, or dried and then ground up and mixed with other food.

Pine nuts were an important food for many of the Washoe, especially in the southern part of their territory where acorns were not found. Each family had rights to collect the nuts from a certain strip of land. The nuts were gathered in September and October, and stored in pits lined with pine branches, for use through the year.

In the spring, the women found many bulbs and roots such as wild onion, camas root, and bitterroot. Seeds from sunflowers, wild mustard, and wild rye were gathered. Tule reeds provided several types of food: the roots were roasted; young plants were eaten raw; seeds were cooked into a mush; tule pollen was used to sweeten other foods. The mountains and valleys also had many kinds of berries. The Washoe were fond of the chokecherry.

CLOTHING

Even in cold weather, the Washoe did not wear many clothes. They may have used deerskins to make short aprons or leggings. They usually had bare feet, though sometimes wore moccasins made of deerhide and lined with sage grass. Blankets made of rabbit skins were used both for sleeping, and as robes worn over the shoulders. It took about 30 rabbit skins, cut into strips and woven together, to make a blanket.

Both men and women wore earrings and necklaces made of bone, wood, seeds, or shells. Men wore a headband made of deerskin, with a feather in it. Women rubbed grease and red clay on their skin to protect it from the wind and sun. They made designs on their bodies with paint and tattooing.

TOOLS

The Washoe used both twining and coiling methods to make baskets, which were finely done. Willow branches were the most common basket material used, with fern root and redbud used for designs. Their coiled baskets were made like the Miwok and Maidu of California. The twined baskets were made like the other Great Basin (Nevada) tribes.

For fishing, the Washoe used spears, hook and line,

nets, traps, and weirs. For hunting, they had bows and arrows, and stone knives. Bows were made in several sizes, longer ones with curved ends used for hunting larger animals. The bowstring was a piece of deer sinew (tendon). Arrows were made of cane, sharpened on the end or tipped with a stone arrowhead. Nets and traps were used to catch small animals. Each family had a rabbit net, about 30 inches wide and as long as 300 feet, used to trap large numbers of rabbits at one time.

When hunting on the high mountains, the men wore snowshoes made from a flexible manzanita branch bent into a circle. Strips of deerhide were laced across the circle. The hunter used a long pole, like a ski pole, when wearing the snowshoes.

TRADE

The Washoe shared fishing and hunting rights with the Northern Paiute and Maidu, to the north. They did not engage in much trade with their neighbors, partly because of language differences, and partly because the Washoe had everything they needed in their own territory. However, they did sometimes get acorns, skins, and sea shells from the Nisenan (their western neighbor). With the Northern Paiute they traded deer skins, acorns, shells, and obsidian in exchange for antelope skins and cui-ui fish from Pyramid Lake. The Washoe may have gone all the way to the Pacific Ocean to collect shells.

Feathers were considered valuable, and used as a part of trades. The tail feathers of the golden eagle were especially prized, as were the feathers of the magpie. These feathers were used in ceremonies and for decoration.

CEREMONIES

There was much visiting back and forth between communities of Washoe people. When one group was planning a festival, they would send a messenger to the other settlements to invite their friends to come for a feast. The messenger took a string with knots in it, one knot for each day before the feast, so the guests would know when to come.

Each family held a small ceremony before going to their oak or pine tree groves to gather nuts in the fall. Families came together for festivals at nut harvesting time, with teams competing in games.



WHILKUT

('hwi lkut)



Necklace of dentalium shells

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northwestern California [Humboldt County]	1770 estimate -- 500 1910 Census -- 50	Athapaskan family

The Whilkut were closely linked by language with the Hupa and Chilula, but they were considered the "poor relatives." Not as much is known about the Whilkut as their more populous neighbors to the north, the Hupa and the Yurok. Probably their customs were much like the Hupa.

SETTLEMENTS

Whilkut villages were located on the upper part of Redwood Creek, above the territory of the Chilula, and on parts of Mad River, which ran parallel to Redwood Creek to the southwest. Their land was mountainous and rugged, and covered by forests.

There may have been more than twelve Whilkut settlements along Redwood Creek, and at least 16 along Mad River. In addition, six Whilkut villages on the North Fork of the Mad River have been identified. The villages were probably quite small.

The name *Whilkut* comes from the word the Hupa used to refer to these people, *Hoilkut-hoi*. They are also known as the Redwood Indians.

HOUSES

The manner in which the Whilkut built their houses was one thing that marked them as poorer and less skilled than their neighbors. Instead of cutting planks of wood from fallen trees, they used pieces of bark. They placed the bark slabs in an upright position to form the walls, and also used bark to make the roof. The Whilkut houses were rectangular in shape, like those of their wealthier

neighbors. However, they did not have a pit inside to enlarge the living area.

The type of sweathouse found in the villages of other northwestern California tribes were not used by the Whilkut. Instead, some Whilkut villages had special buildings in which they held ceremonies. These buildings were round, and were covered with dirt, like the earth lodges of central California tribes.

FOOD

Since each of their settlements was close to either a creek or a river, the Whilkut depended on the streams to provide much of their food. Redwood Creek and Mad River had salmon, steelhead, and lamprey eels, all of which were caught and cooked fresh. In addition, some fish were smoke-dried and stored for use in times when food was not as plentiful.

The mountains also provided food for the Whilkut. Nuts, berries, and seeds were gathered. Edible bulbs were dug up. Leafy green plants, roots, and fruits could be found in the meadows and woods.

Acorns were a main part of the diet for the Whilkuts, as they were for most early Californians. Each tribe felt that the acorns growing on trees in their territory belonged to them, and people from outside their group were not to gather their acorns. The Whilkut had conflicts with the Wiyot, who lived on the coast, when Wiyot women gathered acorns from trees that the Whilkut considered theirs. The Wiyot had very few oak trees in their own area.

Autumn was the time when the acorns were harvested. This is when the acorns began to fall from the trees. The women usually did the gathering, with the children helping. It might take an entire day for a family to collect the acorns from one tree. They avoided collecting acorns which had cracks or holes in them, as these might have worms.

Before the acorns could be used for food, they had to be cracked and ground up into a flour called *meal*. Sometimes the women did this grinding right there by the oak trees, because the acorn meal was lighter than the whole acorns to carry back to the village. Acorns that were to be stored for the winter were dried in the shells, and then cracked open and ground into meal later, when they were needed.

Venison was also part of the regular food of the Whilkut. Deer were plentiful in the hills that bordered Redwood Creek and Mad River, and they were hunted by the people. Sometimes smaller animals such as rabbits or squirrels were caught in snares or traps. The meat was cooked by roasting it on hot coals, or by hanging it on sticks over the fire.

CLOTHING

The clothing worn by the Whilkut was like that of other early people living in the area. Deerskins provided the material for the clothes of both men and women. Men wore just a folded piece of deerskin around their hips. Older men in the villages often went without clothing when the weather was warm. In winter, blankets of deerskin or of smaller skins sewn together were used by everyone to keep warm.

The women made apron-like skirts, with one piece covering them in the front and a second piece in the back. Sometimes the skirts were decorated with fringe, or with seeds and shells sewn onto them. Both women and men usually had their feet bare. Only when going on a long trip would they wear moccasins made of deerhide.

TOOLS

Whilkut women made baskets much like those of other early northwest California women. They used a method called *twining*, where fibers from plants or strips of root were woven in and out between slender young branches. Baskets were important to

the people. They were used to carry the food that they gathered, to store extra food, and even for cooking. Baskets also served as cradles for babies.

The Whilkut are known to have used baskets made by another method, called *coiling*. This was the method used by people who lived to the south. It is likely that the Whilkut got their coiled baskets by trading for them, rather than making them.

The men in Whilkut villages used deer and elk antlers to scrape pieces of wood into the shapes they needed for use as spears, bows and arrows, traps for catching small animals, and paddles for stirring acorn mush. The Whilkut did not have canoes, like the people on the coast near them. They waded into the creek or river to catch fish with spears, or by building dams of brush across the creek. Sometimes they caught the fish with their bare hands.

TRADE

The Whilkut lived in the area where dentalium shells were used as money. These tooth-shaped mollusk shells are found in deep ocean water off the coast of North America. The shells valued by early Californians came from around Vancouver Island. They were traded from tribe to tribe along the Pacific Coast, and eventually came to the people living in northwestern California.

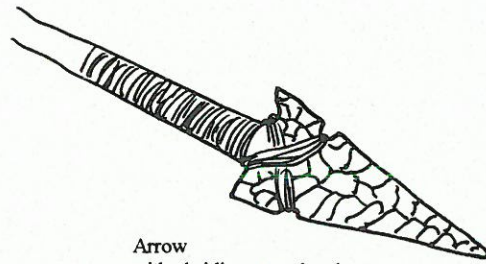
Dentalium shells ranged in size from very small up to about 2½ inches long. Only shells at least 1¾ inches long were considered valuable enough to be used in trade. Some men had marks tattooed on their arms so they could measure the size of the dentalium shells. The shells were strung on strings, grouped by size. The longer shells were considered to be the more valuable ones. Since the Whilkut were considered by their neighbors to be poor people, it is likely that they did not have much wealth in dentalium shells or other prized possessions.

CEREMONIES

The fact that the Whilkut were considered to be poor by their neighbors probably means that they did not hold big dances, and did not have articles of value to display at dances. Early reports indicate that the Whilkut had ceremonies that differed from the Chilula and Hupa, but we do not know just what these were like.

WINTU

(ˈwɪn,tʊʊ)



Arrow
with obsidian arrowhead

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northern California [Trinity County & western part of Shasta County]	1770 estimate --12,00 (Wintu, Nomlaki, Patwin) 1910 Census -- 1,000	Penutian family

The Wintu have been grouped with the Nomlaki and the Patwin, living south of them, because their languages were similar. The three groups together have been called the Wintun. The Shasta were the northern neighbors of the Wintu, with the Yana and the Achumawi to the east.

SETTLEMENTS

Wintu settlements were located along the upper Trinity River, along a portion of the Sacramento and McCloud rivers, and on numerous creeks. There were at least nine groups of Wintu, referred to by the area where they lived, such as "in-the-west-ground" for those in the upper Sacramento valley, or "north people" in the upper McCloud River valley. Each village had from four to 30 houses where 20 to 150 people lived; there were a number of villages in each of the geographic areas.

The people considered that they belonged to the village, but not to any larger group. Village leaders were expected to be good singers and dancers, in addition to knowing how to guide the daily life of the people. The eldest son inherited the position from his father, if he was considered to be capable enough. The headman did not need to hunt and fish; a share of all the food gathered was given to him.

The name *Wintu* comes from *wintuh*, meaning *person*, which the people called themselves.

HOUSES

Family houses were made of slabs of bark and pieces

of evergreen branches, fastened to poles which were tied together at the top to make a cone shape.

Larger villages had an earth lodge which was used as a sweathouse, as a gathering place for the men, and as a sleeping place for men who did not have a family. The earth lodge was circular in shape, and the floor was dug down several feet below ground level. It had a center pole, with other poles framing the sides. These were covered with bark, branches, and then earth. The main door to the earth lodge was the smokehole in the roof. A ladder, made either by notching a log or by tying sticks across a post with grapevines, allowed the men to climb in and out of the earth lodge.

FOOD

Men hunted deer, either individually or as a group. In a group hunt, which lasted about three days, traps were set up and the deer was driven into the snare. Brown bears were hunted in the fall, when they were fat and sleepy. Dogs were used to help chase deer or bear. Grizzly bears were not eaten, but their hides were used. Other meat eaten by the Wintu included rabbits, gophers, squirrels, wood rats, quail, and other birds. Grasshoppers were boiled in baskets and then dried in the sun.

In the spring and in the fall, the chinook salmon ran in the McCloud and Sacramento rivers. Steelhead trout were caught in the upper Trinity River, and suckers in all the streams and creeks. The men worked together to catch large numbers of fish with

nets. The fish were baked in a pit lined with heated stones and covered with more hot rocks. If there was more fish than could be eaten, it was dried and then ground up into a salmon flour, which was stored for use in the winter. Salmon flour was a valuable item in trading.

Acorns were the main plant food of the Wintu, as they were for most early Californians. The acorns were ground into acorn meal which was used to make mush and bread. Buckeye nuts were popular in northern Wintu territory. Manzanita berries were used for soup and for cider. Other plants used for food were soaproot, clover, miner's lettuce, skunkbush berries, hazel nuts, pine nuts, wild grapes, and sunflower and cotton flower seeds.

CLOTHING

Wintu women wore an apron or skirt that hung from the waist to the knees, and was made from shredded maple bark. For special occasions, women had fringed front and back aprons of deerskin. If men wore anything at all, it was pieces of deerskin around their hips. Blankets and robes were made from whole deerskins, or from strips of rabbit skins woven together.

Women wore basket hats; men wore net caps with soft feathers in them. Feather skirts and headdresses were used for ceremonies. Women had one to three vertical lines tattooed on their chins. They wore necklaces and earrings of abalone shell, clamshell disks, and pine nuts.

TOOLS

Members of a Wintu village might become especially skilled in making a certain type of tool. In some villages, there were several men who made nets, traps, and spears for fishing. Others made bows and arrows. Arrowheads were chipped from large pieces of obsidian (volcanic glass) using a piece of deer antler. The tips were fastened to the arrow shafts with a pitch made from salmon skin. The bows were made of yew wood, backed with shredded deer sinew (tendon) and decorated with designs.

The Wintu did not have boats, but crossed streams on rafts made from several logs bound together with cord. The cord was made from fibers of the iris plant. Women gathered and shredded the plants, but

men made the cord. The raft was guided by using a long pole. Small children and supplies were often floated across a stream in a large basket.

The twining method of making baskets was used by the Wintu. Hazel, skunkbush, and poison oak were used for the foundation of the basket, with pine roots and various grasses and ferns completing the design. Baskets were used for carrying, serving, storing, and cooking food, and for sifting acorn meal and seeds.

Pieces of bone or deer horn were sharpened and used as awls (pointed tools) for sewing and making baskets. Mussel shells were used as thumb guards, or thimbles, when making rope. Mush paddles, about 30 inches long, were used to stir the acorn soup and to take the hot stones out of the cooking baskets. They were made from oak

TRADE

The Wintu used both the northern dentalium shells and the central clamshell disks as money. Both kinds of shells were strung on strings that were about the length of an outstretched arm. Both men and women owned dentalium and clamshell beads; women also used baskets as an item of trade.

The Wintu got dentalium shells from the Shasta to the north, in exchange for deer hides and woodpecker scalps. They traveled 60 miles northeast into Modoc territory to get obsidian (volcanic glass). From the Achumawi they got salt in exchange for salmon flour. Various groups of Wintu also traded with each other, as their resources differed depending on where they lived.

Things considered valuable by the Wintu included bows and arrows; elkskin armor; bear, deer, elk, and otter skins; woodpecker scalps; obsidian knives and spears with obsidian tips.

CEREMONIES

Groups of Wintu liked to get together for dances, called *conos*. A village with extra food would invite its neighbors to come for feasting, dancing, and games. Dances were held to celebrate the pine nut and clover harvests, the salmon runs, and successful hunts for deer and bear. A dance called the *suneh*, or *begging dance*, was done when property was being transferred from one person to another.

WIYOT

(wē,yät)



Salmon harpoon head,
attached with elk hide strap to a pole

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northern California coast [Humboldt County]	1770 estimate -- 1,000 1910 Census -- 100	Algonquian family

Wiyot territory connected with the territory of the Yurok, a larger group to the north. The Wiyot had many things in common with the Yurok, but there were also important differences. The Wiyot and the Yurok used many of the same tools, and their houses, clothing, and food were similar. However, the Wiyot had fewer ceremonies and rituals than the Yurok. They were a very practical people.

SETTLEMENTS

The Wiyot lived along the shore of the Pacific Ocean. Their villages were located in three areas, and they had a name for each group of villages. Those on Humboldt Bay were called Wiki; those near the mouth of the Mad River were called Batawat, and those near the mouth of the Eel River were called Wiyot. Their neighbors used the name *Wiyot* to refer to all three areas, but the Wiyot themselves did not use the name in this way.

Wiyot territory included about 35 miles of coast line, and extended about 15 miles back from the coast. The coastline at this point is low and sandy, unlike the rocky coastline to the south and to the north. Most of Wiyot territory was redwood forests. The rest was sand dunes, tidal marsh, or open prairie. Every Wiyot settlement was on a stream or bay. They preferred the still water on a protected bay or near the mouth of a river more than the open ocean.

There was no formal organization in the villages or among the Wiyot as a whole. The men with the most power were those who had the most wealth.

HOUSES

Houses built by the Wiyot were made of redwood planks, cut with stone tools from the redwood trees that grew nearby. The houses were rectangular in shape, with pitched roofs. A smoke hole in the middle of the roof allowed for a fire to be built in the middle of the dwelling. The entrance to the house was along one side, covered with a sliding wood door. It was usual for two or more families to live in one house. There were sleeping places in the houses for both men and women.

Each Wiyot village had one sweathouse, built like the dwelling houses but smaller. Inside was a fire pit lined with stones. The Wiyot sweathouse was used for relaxation and ceremonies, but seemed to have less importance than the sweathouses in other northern California regions. Only occasionally did the Wiyot men sleep in the sweathouse.

FOOD

The ocean and rivers were the most important source of food for the Wiyot. Clams were gathered from the beaches. Fishing was done in the ocean as well as in the rivers. Salmon, the mainstay of the Wiyot diet, were caught as they swam upstream. The people used several kinds of nets, weirs (dams), and traps to catch the fish. Sea mammals were also used as food, especially sea lions and whales that had been stranded on the beach.

Deer and elk that lived in the redwood forests were hunted by the Wiyot, who used the meat as well as

the skins. The forest also supplied huckleberries and other wild berries.

Acorns were not as important to the Wiyot as to many early Californians, because there weren't many oak trees growing in the redwood forest region. However, they did use some acorns which they ground with stone tools called mortar (a bowl-shaped stone) and pestle (a club-shaped stone used to pound the acorns). They may have gotten acorns from neighboring groups, or they may have made trips into the interior to gather acorns.

Meat and fish were cooked either by boiling, roasting, or smoke-drying them. Smoke-dried food would last for many months.

CLOTHING

Deer and rabbit skins provided the material from which the Wiyot made their clothing. The Wiyot made more use of rabbit skins than did their neighbors. They used robes of skins to cover their shoulders. The men wrapped a piece of deerskin around the lower part of their body. The women wore aprons of deerskin that hung from their waist to below their knees. The aprons were decorated with fringe and with strings of nuts, seeds, or shells.

Both men and women wore moccasins on their feet when the weather was cold, or when they were going long distances in the forests. The moccasins were made of deerhide, and were sometimes decorated with shells.

The Wiyot women often had tattooing on their chins. Sometimes the tattoo was in stripes running down the chin, but more often it was a solid tattoo.

TOOLS

The Wiyot made canoes from redwood logs, as did the Yurok to the north. Only people who lived in an area of redwood forests that grew close to the water made these canoes. The redwood log was dug out using fire and tools made of stone and mussel shell. The front and back of the boat were blunt and square. These canoes were used both in the ocean and in the rivers. They were sometimes as long as 18 feet.

Baskets made by the Wiyot were used for carrying things, for cooking, and for wearing as hats. The

method of basketmaking is called twining. Various types of branches and plant fibers were used for the twining. Hazelnut shoots were often woven with fibers from ferns or tree roots. Wiyot basket hats had a dome-shaped top. Their cooking baskets were smaller at the bottom, flaring out in the middle and then curving back in at the top. The baskets were decorated by weaving in fibers of darker and lighter colors, or by staining parts of the basket with dye. A reddish dye was made from alder tree bark. Another method of dyeing fibers was to bury them in the mud for a time, which made the fibers darker in color.

Bows and arrows were the most common weapons of the Wiyot. The bows were made of yew wood, with bowstrings of deer sinew. When battling with an enemy, the men wore armor made from elkhide and carried shields, also made from hides.

TRADE

Dentalium shells were used as money by the Wiyot. These tooth-shaped shells were used all along the northwestern coast, from Vancouver Island to northern California. The dentalium shells used in northern California mostly came from further north and were traded down the coast. The shells were strung on strings by size, with the larger shells being worth more.

Having many dentalium shells and prized skins made a Wiyot man wealthy. Woodpecker scalps were also highly valued. Although being rich was important, the Wiyot did not make slaves of people who had no wealth.

CEREMONIES

The Wiyot had fewer ceremonies than their northern neighbors, and they held the ceremonies less often. They performed the Jumping Dance, as did other northern groups, but they did not do the Deerskin Dance. The Jumping Dance for the Wiyot was done only at the village of Hieratgak on Humboldt Bay, and lasted for five days.

Unlike other northern groups, the Wiyot permitted women to join in the dances. In the Wiyot Jumping Dance, a woman stood in the middle of the line of dancers. The dancers sometimes wore obsidian (volcanic glass) pieces on thongs around their necks.



YANA

(yā nə)



Sinew-backed bow with sinew bowstring

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
North central California [Shasta & Tehama Counties]	1770 estimate -- 1,500 1910 Census -- not known	Hokan family

The Yana were divided into four groups. The southernmost group was the Yahi. Much of the information about the Yana came from Ishi, the last surviving Yahi man, who came out of the foothills in 1911. Ishi lived at the University of California in Berkeley until his death in 1916. He became well known through *Ishi, the Last of His Tribe*, the story of his life written by Theodora Kroeber.

SETTLEMENTS

The Yana lived east of the Sacramento River in the valley and foothills that bordered the territory of the Wintu, who occupied the land right along the river. Mt. Lassen, a large volcano, was the greatest landmark of the Yana's territory, which ranged in elevation from 300 to over 10,000 feet.

In early times, the northern, central, and southern Yana were each called by different names by their neighbors. The name *Yana* simply means *people*. The Yana were often not friendly with their neighbors. The Yahi Yana fought with the Maidu to the east. The Wintu and Achumawi neighbors to the north disliked the northern Yana. Relations with neighbors were seldom good for very long at a time.

Many tribelets, or groups of villages, existed within Yana territory. The headman's house and the assembly house were in the largest village of the group. The position of headman was inherited. The headman was usually a rich person, and was the only person in the tribelet who was allowed to keep a vulture as a pet! Headmen did not have the power

to control the people; instead they made suggestions as to how the community should act.

HOUSES

Northern and central Yana built large earth-covered houses in which several families lived. They were made with a post in the center, and the entrance was through the smoke hole in the roof. Bark and reeds covered a frame of poles, which was then covered with earth. Assembly houses were made in the same manner.

The southern and Yahi Yana made smaller houses where one family lived. These were cone-shaped, with long slabs of cedar or pine bark covering the frame of poles. Dirt was banked against the lower part of the outside walls, to keep out water.

FOOD

Acorns, gathered in the fall from the black oak tree, was the most important food for the Yana. If the acorn crop was good, they could store enough to last them until the next fall. Roots, tubers, and bulbs were also gathered and roasted or steamed before being eaten. Sunflower and other seeds, buckeye nuts, hazel nuts, pine nuts, berries and fruit added to the meals of the Yana.

Yana hunters wore a deer-head mask to sneak close enough to a deer to bring it down with their bow and arrows. Deer was the most important game animal, but rabbits and quail were also caught with snares and traps. Salmon, trout, and suckers were

taken from the streams; river mussels were available to the northern Yana. Earthworms, grasshoppers, and small rodents were also eaten.

In central Yana territory there was a salty swamp. When the mud was dried, it could be used as salt. Yana from north and south came here to gather salt.

In the fall, there was a lot of food available near the Yana villages in the foothills. In the heat of summer, food was scarce and the people moved to the higher mountain areas in search of deer, berries, and seeds. Here they lived in temporary shelters made from poles and branches, or in caves.

CLOTHING

Yana women wore an apron made of shredded bark or tule reeds, fastened to a belt of buckskin. Some aprons had only one piece, worn in the front. Others had a second piece, made of deerskin, to cover the back. The aprons of wealthy women were decorated with deerskin tassels and pine-nut beads.

In cold weather, wealthy men wore deerskin leggings that covered them from the hips to the ankles. Men with less wealth wore an apron-like loin cloth. Some men also had hats made of elkskin and moccasins of deerskin. The skins of deer, rabbits, wild cats, coyotes and bears were used to make robes and blankets.

Necklaces and ear ornaments were made from juniper berries, magnesite (a type of rock) beads, shells, bear claws, and clamshell disks. Feather headbands, belts hung with red woodpecker scalps, and face and body paint were used for special occasions. Tattooing of the face was not common.

TOOLS

The most common method of basketmaking among the Yana was the twining method, also used by other northern California people. Tender branches from young hazel or willow trees were used for the warp (upright) pieces that formed the shape of the basket. Between these branches, split pine roots and sedge grass were woven. Designs were made from white, black, and red strands of plant fiber. Yana baskets were not as evenly woven as the Pomo baskets, and the edges were not as carefully finished.

Cord and rope were made from milkweed and Indian

hemp plants. Heavier cord was made by peeling the bark from trees or shrubs, then pounding it, shredding it, and twisting it into ropes. This heavier cord was used for nets, caps, and skirts, as well as for tying things together. Strong nets were needed for catching fish and trapping rabbits. Some fish nets were as long as 200 feet.

The Yana made bows from yew wood when they could get it, or from mahogany, juniper, or hazel wood. Arrows used for birds and small game had blunt tips. Obsidian (volcanic glass) and basalt points were used as tips on arrows used for hunting larger game. Hunters carried their arrows in a quiver made from an otter skin with the fur side out.

During the winter, when there wasn't as much food gathering to do, the Yana made tools. From antlers and bones they made wedges, flakers, awls (sharp tools to punch holes), and harpoon tips. Spoons and scrapers were made from mussel shells. Brushes were made from soaproot fiber.

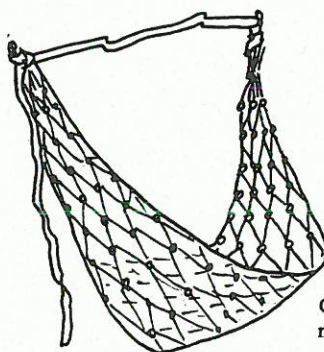
TRADE

Both dentalium (tooth-shaped mollusk shells) and clamshell beads were used as money by the Yana. Pieces of clamshell were shaped into small disks, a hole punched in the middle, and strung on strings. The clamshells came to the Yana from the coastal areas to the south. The dentalium came from the northwestern California groups. The Yana were at the crossroads of the two types of money, and likely used both kinds.

The Yana were not often on good terms with their neighbors, and did not like outsiders to come to their area. Also, they had to spend so much time gathering their food that they didn't have much time left to make or gather things to sell, which may account for the small amount of trade they had with other groups. They did get obsidian from the Achumawi and Shasta; dentalium shells from the Wintu; clamshell and magnesite beads from the Maidu. In return, they supplied deer hides and salt.

CEREMONIES

Little is known of Yana ceremonies or dances. Rituals to bring good luck to the hunters were held. Ceremonies were held when boys and girls became adult members of the group.



YOKUTS

(yō,kuts)

Carrying net
made from milkweed fibers

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Central California [Stanislaus, Merced, Fresno, Madera, Kings, Tulare, Kern Counties, southern San Joaquin County]	1770 estimate -- 18,000 1910 Census -- 533	Penutian family

The Yokuts occupied a strip about 250 miles long in the central San Joaquin valley and a smaller strip of the eastern foothills that rise along the southern half of the valley. The Yokuts are sometimes divided into the Southern Valley Yokuts, the Northern Valley Yokuts, and the Foothill Yokuts. Their languages were much alike.

SETTLEMENTS

About 40 or 50 separate tribes, each with its own name for itself, are included in what is now known as the Yokuts. Each tribe had a certain territory and some differences in language from the other tribes. The average number of people in each tribe was 350, sometimes living in one village and sometimes in a group of villages. Most of the valley villages were on the east side of the valley, on high places along the rivers. The foothill villages were between 2,000 and 4,000 feet in elevation.

The Yokut people divided themselves into either *Tohelyuwish* (West) or *Nutuwish* (East), and certain animals were connected with each group. A person inherited his animal connection, or *totem*, at birth. The family would never kill or eat their animal totem, but always treated it with respect. The main totem of the Tohelyuwish was the eagle; the main totem of the Nutuwish was the coyote. The village headman usually came from the Eagle line. His assistant, the messenger, came from the Dove line.

The name *Yokuts* comes from a word meaning *person* or *people* in the language of one group.

HOUSES

The Yokuts lived in permanent houses most of the year, leaving only in the summer for trips to gather food. Their houses were of several types. Single families made houses that were oval shaped, framed with side poles tied to a central ridge pole and covered with tule mats. The Southern Valley tribes also built larger houses for as many as ten families. These houses had steep roofs, with roof and walls covered with tule mats. Each family had a fireplace and a door in the large house, but no walls separated one family from another. Houses in the foothills and dry valley places were sometimes built with the floor dug down a foot or two into the ground. In marshy areas, the floor was level with the ground.

Each village had a sweathouse, dug down into the ground and covered with brush and earth. Only the men used the sweathouse, both for sweat baths and for sleeping. Southern Valley Yokut villages did not have dance or assembly houses, though these may have been used in Northern Valley villages. Both Valley and Foothills people put up shade roofs like porches outside their houses, so they could work outside in hot weather.

FOOD

The San Joaquin Valley provided a variety of food for the Yokuts. Fishing was done all through the year, especially by the Northern Valley tribes. Lake trout, perch, chubs, suckers, salmon and steelhead were caught in the lakes and rivers. Waterfowl such as geese, ducks, and mud hens were caught with

snare in the tule marshes. Mussels and turtles were enjoyed as food by the Yokuts, but they did not eat frogs or many insects. Antelope, elk, and deer were killed when they came to the lakes to drink. Other animals and birds that were eaten included wild pigeons, quail, rabbits, squirrels and other rodents, and dogs. The Yokuts may have been the only early Californians to raise dogs as food.

Acorns were not plentiful in all parts of Yokut lands. The Southern Valley tribes had to travel each year to find a supply of acorns, or trade with their neighbors for them. Seeds and roots, especially from the tule plants, were a more important part of their food resources. Both roots and seeds were dried and ground into a flour, which was made into mush. Clover and other greens were eaten in the summer. A kind of salt grass provided seasoning for the food.

CLOTHING

Yokut women wore a skirt made in two pieces, a narrow fringed part in the front and a larger piece in the back. The skirts were made of tule reeds, marsh grass, or rabbit skins. Men wore a piece of deerskin around their hips, or else they went without clothes. Both rabbit skins and mud hen skins were used to make robes, which the people wore around their shoulders when the weather was cold.

The Yokuts wore moccasins of deer or elk skin on their feet only when walking in rough country. Women wore a basket cap on their head when they were carrying a burden basket, which was held on by a forehead strap. Some women had tattooing on their chins.

TOOLS

Tule reeds were used to make many things that were needed by the people. Tule reeds were made into baskets, cradles, and mats. The Yokuts used both the twining and coiling methods of making baskets. Some baskets were made on a foundation of tule reeds bound together with string. The people made baby cradles, bowl-shaped cooking baskets, cone-shaped carrying baskets, flat basket trays, seed beaters, and baskets for holding water. Some Foothill Yokuts made rough pottery bowls.

Wood and stone were not as plentiful in the San Joaquin Valley as in many parts of California.

Obsidian (volcanic glass) for knives and arrowheads had to be gotten in trade from the north and from the mountain areas. When obsidian was not available, other stones like chert, jasper, and quartz were used to make knives and scrapers. Pieces of animal bone were sharpened to make awls, pointed tools used to punch holes and as needles in sewing.

Bows and arrows were used in hunting and in warfare. Though some bows and arrows were made by the Yokuts, others were gotten in trade from other groups. The bows were backed with sinew (animal tendons). The arrows had feathers on them. Other animals were caught with traps and snares made from branches and brush. Fish traps were set up across streams. Spears were also used for fishing. Some birds were caught with nets made from milkweed fibers. An important tool was the one with which the hot stones were taken out of the cooking basket. This was a stick about 30 inches long with a loop at one end, used for stirring the mush and lifting out the stones.

The Valley Yokuts had canoe-shaped rafts made from tule reeds tied together in bundles. These boats were large enough to hold six people. They were pushed with long poles. The Foothill Yokuts made rafts by lashing together two logs.

TRADE

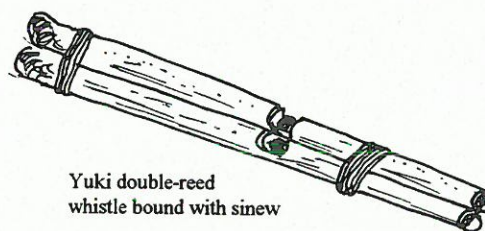
The Yokuts got seashells from the people who lived on the coast, and made them into money, which they called *keha*. Pieces of clamshell were shaped into small circles, holes punched in the middle, and the disks strung on strings. Cylinders of clamshell, called *humna*, were valued even more. Northern Valley Yokuts also traded with the Costanoans for mussels and abalone shells, and with the Miwok for baskets, bows and arrows.

CEREMONIES

Many Yokut dances and ceremonies were held outside, with brush fences surrounding the dance area. Eagle feathers, especially from baby eagles, were an important part of ceremonial decoration. Eagle down was used to make ceremonial skirts, known as *chohun*. Tall headdresses, called *djuh*, used the tail feathers of magpies around a base of crow feathers.

YUKI

('yōō kē)



Yuki double-reed
whistle bound with sinew

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northwestern California [Mendocino County, northern Lake County]	1770 estimate -- 2,000 1910 Census -- 100	Yukian family

The Yuki were the largest of four groups united by the Yukian language family, a language family found only in California. The other Yukian speaking peoples were the Huchnom, the Coast Yuki, and the Wappo. The culture of the Yuki was different from the northwestern tribes, though their lands bordered. It was also different from the larger groups to the south and east, who considered the Yuki to be rough mountain people.

SETTLEMENTS

Yuki territory was completely in the Coast Range Mountains, a rugged land. It included the area along the upper part of the Eel River above the North Fork, except for the part of the South Eel River occupied by the Huchnom.

Yuki villages, each of which had a local headman, were grouped into *tribelet*s. Each tribelet had a dance house, located in one of the larger villages, and a tribelet chief. The job of the tribelet chief was to encourage the people and to settle disputes, while the local headman decided where the people would go to gather food. Groups of tribelets made up tribal subdivisions. There were likely more than 500 Yuki village sites, making up the eight or nine tribal subdivisions. Each tribelet occupied the land along a part of the river or a creek that joined it.

The name *Yuki* is a Wintun word meaning *stranger* or *foe*. The Yuki did not use this name for themselves. Their neighbors regarded them as fierce and warlike.

Tribelets had war chiefs, in addition to the tribelet chief. The Yuki fought with the Nomlaki to the northeast and the Pomo to the south, and sometimes with the Cahto. They also did not get along with the Coast Yuki, though they shared a similar language.

HOUSES

The Yuki word for house was *han*, and their dance house was called *iwil-han*, meaning *poisonous house* or *powerful house*. Houses were cone-shaped, starting with a circle on the ground. Larger buildings were dug out inside so the floor was below ground level. A center pole supported a series of rafter poles. Over the poles, layers of bark, grass, pine needles and earth formed the walls. A low entrance tunnel was made by four forked sticks covered with poles and earth. A deerskin or large woven mat covered the doorway. The largest dance houses could hold several hundred people.

Smaller houses were built with fewer poles. The smallest had no center pole; the framing poles and bark formed a cone shape that supported itself at the top. A fire pit was placed in the center of the house.

FOOD

Deer, acorns, and salmon were the main foods of the Yuki. Their location on the upper Eel River, near the headwaters, meant that the Yuki did not have as good a fish supply as the neighboring Wailaki, downriver. At times the water level in this part of the river was so low that the salmon were almost stranded in pools. Then the Yuki men could dive in

and catch the salmon by hand. At other times they used spears, nets, traps, and poison to catch salmon and trout. They had a supply of fresh fish all year.

The men used snares as well as bows and arrows when hunting deer. Sometimes the hunter wore a deerhead disguise in order to get closer to the game. Bears were hunted only for their skin. The Yuki did not eat bear meat.

Acorns provided the Yuki with the mush that was a part of almost every meal. They also gathered various other nuts and seeds, clover, tubers and roots, berries, mushrooms, and bird eggs. The Yuki ate grasshoppers, though they did not eat gopher, weasel, fox, wolf, coyote, beaver, or snake meat.

CLOTHING

The Yuki did not seem to need many clothes. Women wore a fringed skirt or apron made of deerskin. Young men wrapped a piece of deerskin around their hips, and older men usually wore nothing. When it was cold, both men and women put a deerskin blanket over their shoulders. They seldom wore moccasins. Basket caps worn by women in other areas were not as common among the Yuki.

Yuki men covered their heads with nets made of iris fibers. These nets were decorated with feathers when the men were dressed for special ceremonies. Both men and women had tattoos on their faces, mostly on the cheeks. Some Yuki had small bones inserted through their noses or earlobes.

TOOLS

A variety of tools were made to help with getting and preparing food. Wood was used to make bows and arrows, spears, and paddles to stir the acorn mush. The wood was shaped by scraping it with pieces of bone or elkhorn. Mussel shells were used as spoons, though the acorn mush was commonly eaten by scooping it up with two bent fingers. Flat stones and club-shaped stones were used as mortar and pestle to grind the acorns into flour. Knives and hammers were also shaped from stone.

In their warfare, the Yuki used arrows with flint or bone points, with the shafts decorated by feathers. Other weapons were knives or daggers made of flint (quartz), clubs, and slings.

The Yuki made coiled baskets from dogwood, honeysuckle, hazel, or willow shoots, sewn together with fibers of redbud. These baskets, though not as finely made as the Pomo baskets, were decorated in patterns and colors of white, red, and black. Twined baskets, which were made more quickly, were not decorated. The Yuki had no boats or rafts; sometimes children or old people were floated across the river in large baskets pushed by swimmers.

TRADE

Trade was common between the Yuki and their neighbors to the south. Though they often fought with the Pomo, they also traded with them for shells and beads, ocean fish, mussels, seaweed, and salt. In exchange, they gave furs and food products.

The most important shells obtained from the Pomo were the clamshell disks used as money. The pieces of clamshell had small holes drilled in them and were kept on strings, like beads. Beads made from magnesite stone were also valued. The Yuki got some dentalium shells (tooth-shaped mollusks) from the Pomo, but these were not the large dentalium shells used as money by the northwestern groups.

The Yuki system of counting is based on the number eight. They counted by using the four spaces between their fingers, putting two twigs in each space to equal eight.

CEREMONIES

The Yuki felt that ceremonies were important, and they had many special customs having to do with young people growing into adulthood.

In January and May, an Acorn Sing was held. This was a happy ceremony, held to please Taikomol, the creator of the Yuki world, so that there would be a good acorn crop. Sometimes both men and women danced, and special feather capes and dance skirts were worn.

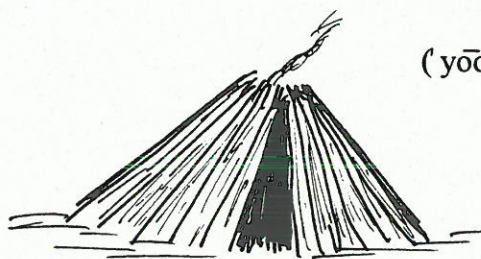
Before each battle, the Yuki danced a war dance. They celebrated victory with another dance.

Headbands made with yellowhammer (a type of woodpecker) quills were worn by the Yuki during ceremonies. With the dancing they used rattles and whistles.



YUKI, COAST

(yōō kē)



House made of slabs of redwood bark

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northwestern California coast [Mendocino County]	1770 estimate -- 500 1910 Census -- 15	Yukian family

The Coast Yuki shared a name and a similar language with the Yuki (who lived inland), but the two groups were not friendly with each other. The inland Yuki did not visit the coast. The territory of the Cahto separated the Yuki from the Coast Yuki.

The Coast Yuki were friends with the Cahto; they used each other's territory freely. The Coast Yuki were also friends with all of their other neighbors (the Sinkyone, the Pomo, the Huchnom). Sometimes they got involved in the wars that their neighbors had with other groups, but they were not known as a warlike people.

SETTLEMENTS

The Coast Yuki lived along a 50-mile stretch of the ocean, on what is known as the Mendocino Coast. This is a rocky coast with cliffs. During the summer the Coast Yuki camped along the windy beaches, but their more permanent villages were a bit inland, where the land was covered with redwood forests. The largest stream that ran through their territory was Ten Mile River, which emptied into the ocean.

There were eleven Coast Yuki groups, each made up of several villages. Each group of villages had a headman who was elected by the people. Each occupied land that included a strip of ocean coast and extended eastward into the forests.

The name by which these people called themselves was *Ukoht-ontilka*, meaning *ocean people*, or *people beside the big water*.

HOUSES

The houses in which the Coast Yuki lived during the winter were cone-shaped, made in a style similar to the Yuki buildings but somewhat smaller, without the center pole used by the Yuki. The side poles that met at the top to form the cone shape were covered with slabs of bark from the redwood trees. The Coast Yuki did not dig down inside the house to make the floor lower, as many of the northern groups did. They dug only a small pit for the fireplace.

When the Coast Yuki moved closer to the ocean in the summer, they built brush huts as shelters. These shelters were rebuilt each summer.

The dance houses of the Coast Yuki were larger than their dwelling houses. They had a large center post and a pitched roof. The dance house had a roof entrance as well as a ground-level door. The doors both had coverings which were closed when the dance house was used as a sweathouse.

FOOD

Living along the ocean meant that the Coast Yuki had more access to sea food, and depended less on deer and elk than did groups that lived inland. Salmon was one of their main foods. They used harpoons to catch the salmon as they swam upstream. As the salmon came downstream, they were caught in scoop nets. Another type of net which hung from a pole was used to catch surf fish. The fish ran into the net when the tide was going

out. The men did the fishing and hunting, and the women gathered nuts and seeds.

Along the beach, both men and women collected mussels. These shellfish added to the food supply, and their shells were used as tools. Abalone were found on the rocks along the coast. The rocks also provided salt, which formed when ocean spray evaporated. Sea lions and seals were hunted from the shore, as the Coast Yuki did not have canoes.

Although acorns were not as plentiful here as in many parts of California, they still formed an important part of the food supply for the Coast Yuki. Grass seeds were in good supply, and were collected for food on the hills above the rocky cliffs.

Deer and elk were sometimes caught in snares, though these were not as important in the food supply of the Coast Yuki as the sea food. Although this group kept dogs as domesticated animals, they did not eat dog meat.

CLOTHING

The climate along the coast was mild, and the Coast Yuki did not feel the need of many clothes. Strips of deerskin were used to make simple apron-type skirts. Men wore a piece of deerskin wrapped about their hips. Elk and bear skins, though there were fewer of them, were used as blankets and robes. They rarely wore any kind of covering on their feet.

Coast Yuki women had tattoos on their faces. There were a variety of tattooing patterns, each showing to which group the woman belonged.

TOOLS

The Coast Yuki used bows and arrows for hunting and in warfare. They made the bow of yew wood, smoothed with flint and wrapped in sinew (tough tendons from deer or elk). In addition, they got bows made of hazel wood from the Cahto. The Coast Yuki also made harpoons and clubs from wood. A special wooden spatula was invented to pry abalone off the rocks.

Mussel shells made good scoops and spoons. The Coast Yuki also used the mussel shell like an extension of their thumb nail, to help in separating the fibers of the iris plant when they were making rope and cord. This rope and cord was used to

make nets, which were used for catching fish and in snares used to catch small animals.

The baskets made by the Coast Yuki were most often done by the method called twining, where slender branches were interwoven with pieces of root and other plant fibers. Because of their contact with the Pomo, to the south, the Coast Yuki were familiar with coiled baskets, and probably made some of that type as well. Coiled baskets took longer to make.

Baskets were used for gathering, storing, and cooking food. Closely woven baskets were watertight, and the contents could be heated by dropping in stones that had been heated in a fire. The technique of basketmaking was also used to make flat mats used as door coverings.

TRADE

Pieces of clamshell were used as money by the Coast Yuki, as well as by their neighbors to the south and east. Clamshells were easy to find along the sea coast to the south, where the Pomo lived. The shells were broken into pieces that were shaped and smoothed into disks. When a hole was punched in the disks, they could be strung like beads on a string.

The Coast Yuki were active traders. They got clamshell disks and magnesite (a type of stone) beads from the Pomo. At yearly trading sessions with the Cahto, they got acorns, grasses, and seeds. From other inland groups they got flint, obsidian (volcanic glass), and tobacco. In turn, they traded mussels, fish, and other ocean products.

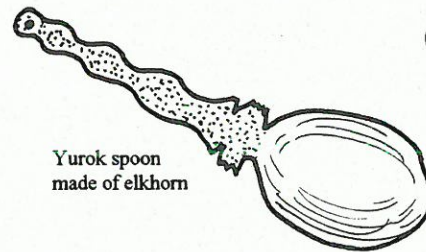
Unlike the northwestern groups, the Coast Yuki did not place definite money values on many things. There was no purchase price for a wife, nor death price to be paid for a person killed in an argument.

CEREMONIES

The Coast Yuki held a dance each fall to celebrate the acorn harvest, called the *Shok-hamp*. Men, women, and children all took part. Other dances were called *feather dances*, and were held more for fun than for any religious purpose. Feather dances were held outdoors, and the dancers wore fancy feather capes and headbands of yellowhammer (a type of woodpecker) quills. Rattles and a foot drum were used in some ceremonies.

YUROK

('yȫ,räk)



Yurok spoon
made of elkhorn

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE
Northwestern California [Del Norte & Humboldt Counties]	1770 estimate -- 2,500 1910 Census -- 700	Algonquian family

The Yurok had many customs that were like those of the native people of the northern Pacific Coast, along what is now Oregon, Washington and Vancouver Island. The tools that they made were nicely finished and often decorated. Money was very important; every person and every action had a measured value. A rigid, detailed code of rights and laws covered everything in life. These things set the Yurok apart from many other early Californians.

SETTLEMENTS

Yurok villages were either along the Klamath River or on the shore of the ocean. Land back in the hills away from the river or ocean was used only for hunting or gathering food and firewood. The villages ranged in size from 3 to 24 houses.

Not only did the villages have names, but the Yurok also named each house site. These house site names were based on their size or location or something that happened there, such as *narrow*, *trail descends*, or *where they prepared for dancing*. Property was owned by individuals. Though individuals lived in groups, the villages had no government.

The names that the Yurok used for each other were short phrases referring to where the person lived, such as *old man at Wahsekw* or *proud one of Meta*. Instead of referring to places as north, south, east or west, the Yurok thought in terms of flowing water, saying *downstream* or *upstream* or *across the stream*. The name *Yurok* meant *downstream*.

HOUSES

The Yurok house was built of redwood planks split from logs with wedges, and held together by squared poles tied with grapevines. The walls were low. The door was a round hole about two feet in diameter, located a few inches above ground level.

Inside the house, a pit several feet deep was dug, leaving a wide shelf around the room. People used a notched log ladder to climb down inside. In a fire pit in the center, food was cooked by hanging it on poles over the fire. The women and children worked, ate, and slept here. Utensils and baskets for food were stored on the wide shelf.

Each village had several sweathouses, smaller than the family houses and dug out inside to about four feet below the ground. A fire of fir branches heated the sweathouse with thick smoke. Each sweathouse had seven sleeping places where men and boys slept, except when the weather was very warm.

FOOD

Acorns were the main food of the Yurok, with fish (mostly salmon) also important to them. Deer were plentiful, and were caught with snares. Bulbs were dug in early summer, and seeds were gathered. Salt was furnished by a seaweed which was dried in round blackish cakes. When a whale was washed up on the shore, the Yurok dried the flesh. They prized whale meat above all other food, but they never hunted whales.

The Yurok used nets as well as harpoons for fishing. Nets were made of string rolled from fibers of a leaf. The salmon harpoon had a slender shaft over 20 feet long, with barbs of bone or horn.

CLOTHING

The Yurok used deerskins to make clothes. Young men usually folded a deerskin around their hips. Older men were apt to wear nothing. Women wore a deerskin apron slit into fringes, and a small round cap woven like a basket. Women often decorated their dresses with shells and seeds. In cold weather, both men and women put a blanket of deerskin over their shoulders. The people used moccasins made of deerskin only when going on a long walk. When the men went into the hills in winter to hunt, they made snowshoes from branches and grapevines. They also wore short buckskin leggings for warmth.

The chins of Yurok women were tattooed with three stripes, so broad that they covered almost the entire chin, going down from the corners of the mouth.

TOOLS

Baskets made by the Yuroks were finely done by the method called twining. New slender hazel branches were used for the vertical supports of the basket; split roots of pine, redwood, or spruce were woven around the hazel branches. Decoration was done with strands of grass or fern stems, and red dye made from alder bark. Baskets were used for gathering, cooking, and storing food. Baskets for carrying things were cone-shaped and hung across the shoulders from a strap over the forehead. Babies were carried in baskets shaped like huge slippers.

Elk horn was used as a tool for weaving, for making flints, and for spoons. Mussel shells were also used as spoons. The Yuroks, unlike many early Californians, used spoons rather than fingers for eating their acorn mush. Their spoons had handles carved in decorative patterns. The long "mush paddle" with which they stirred the acorn mush was also decorated with geometric designs.

Yurok canoes were dug out of half of a redwood log, using fire and a stone-handled tool of mussel shell. The canoes were used both on the ocean and the rivers. They had square prows and round bottoms. Usually, two people paddled the canoe,

one seated with a steering paddle, the other standing with a stout pole, 6-8 feet long.

The Yurok did not often fight. When there was a conflict, the weapons used were the bow and arrow, and a short stone club called *okawayya*. To protect their bodies in a fight, the men wore vests made of thick elk hide or of rods bound together with string.

TRADE

The money of the Yurok was dentalium shells, tooth-shaped mollusk shells found in the sand under deep ocean water. The Yurok got the shells from tribes further north. The hollow shells were strung on strings about 27 inches long. The larger the shells, the more valuable the string was. A string would hold 11 of the largest shells or 15 of the smaller shells. A boat might be traded for two 12-shell strings. A wife from a good family might cost ten strings of varying sizes, plus other items of value.

Also highly valued by the Yurok were woodpecker scalp, which were used in dance headdresses, and deerskins that were either very light or very dark in color. A white deerskin was a priceless possession that would never be given away by its owner.

A man's importance in the village depended on his wealth. Some wealthy men had slaves. A person became a slave because of an unpaid debt.

CEREMONIES

Ceremonies were held in an attempt to insure good crops or lots of salmon, or to prevent disasters. Most ceremonies began with an old man reciting a long memorized chant. Then a dance lasting for five or ten days was done by the men. The men displayed their most valued possessions at the dance.

The Deerskin Dance was done in the autumn, when the people gathered for ten or twelve days of dancing. The Deerskin Dance was often followed by the Jumping Dance, which lasted two days. In both these dances, the dancers stood in a line facing the audience, with a singer in the middle of the line. They swayed in time to the step of the dance, which was a stamp with one foot or a short hop. They made music on a wooden flute that had three or four evenly spaced holes.

GLOSSARY

SOME WORDS THAT MAY BE NEW TO YOU

archeological Based on the study of objects left by people who lived long ago.

asphaltum A brownish-black mixture of substances occurring naturally, used in paving and waterproofing.

awl A pointed tool used for making holes in things such as wood, leather, or stone.

Bering Strait The strip of water that connects the North Pacific Ocean with the Arctic Ocean.

Channel Islands A group of islands off the coast of California near Santa Barbara.

coiling A method of making baskets used by the California Indians. A slender, flexible branch is made into a circle shape, continuing on to more circles, thus making a coiled shape. The circles are sewn together with fibers from a plant, using a sharp object as a needle to weave the fiber in and out between the coils.

culture All of the skills, beliefs, and behaviors that make up a way of living.

dentalium Tooth-shaped shells of a soft-bodied sea animal.

descendants A person's children, grand-children, and all further offspring.

dialect A variety of a language spoken by a group of people.

dip net A hand-held fishing net lowered into the water to catch fish.

fibers Long, tough thread-like pieces from a plant.

flint A very hard quartz crystal.

gill net A fish net set vertically in the water so that when fish swim into it, their gills are caught in the net.

granary A place for storing grain or other food.

headman The leader, sometimes called a chief, of a community or village of California Indians. In some communities the headman was chosen by the people; in others, the position was hereditary, being passed from father to son.

magnesite A type of rock found in northern California and valued by the California Indians, who shaped it into beads. When heated, the stone turns a reddish color.

mesquite A shrub or small tree that grows in the southwestern United States and produces edible bean-like pods.

mortar A dish-shaped container, usually of stone, in which the California Indians crushed or ground seeds, nuts, and other food.

obsidian A shiny glass-like rock that results from a volcano erupting, and was used by the California Indians to make sharp-edged knives and arrowheads.

olivella A small sea snail whose shell was used by the California Indians as a decoration.

pestle A small stone club used by the California Indians for pounding food in a mortar.

pitched roof A roof that slants downward from a peak.

researcher A person who investigates and studies a subject.

seine net A large fishing net that has weights at the bottom and floats at the top, so that it hangs in the water.

sinew An animal tendon, the tough tissue that connects a muscle to bone.

steatite A soft stone, also known as soapstone, used for carving statues and bowls.

sweathouse A small structure, found in many California Indian villages, in which a fire heated the air so that those inside sweated, thus cleansing their bodies. Used mostly by men and boys as a meeting and sleeping place.

totem The emblem or symbol of a group of people.

tribelet A small group, or small tribe, consisting of several villages or communities.

tule A type of bulrush growing in marshy areas, producing reed-like stalks with hollow centers.

twining A method of making baskets used by the California Indians. Slender branches were placed upright to form the basic shape of the basket. Plant fibers were woven around, in and out of the upright branches.

weir A fence or dam placed across a stream to catch fish.

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