



Early Cultures: Pre-European Peoples of Wisconsin

OVERVIEW OF THE PALEO TRADITION

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Tradition Name	Paleo
Lifeways	Big Game Hunters
Time	10,000 - 8,000 B.C.
Climate	It was colder than today. Very similar to present day Alaska or northern Canada.
Environment	Glaciers were present in northern Wisconsin. Southwestern Wisconsin was without glaciers, and is known today as "the Driftless Area." In this area there were many evergreens, such as pines and spruces.
Settlement	Small roving bands of 15-25 people lived in temporary camps. They traveled great distances to follow herds of animals.
Food	Big game such as mastodons, mammoths, elk, caribou, and deer formed the main part of their diet. They ate limited quantities of plant foods, for few plants were available in the climate of Paleo times.
Tools	Spear points were very important for hunting big game. They made endscrapers and modified flakes for dressing hides. They probably used some bone and wooden tools.
Toolkit	Spear points, scrapers, knives, graters, drills, modified flakes, hammerstones
Household	Few artifacts are preserved from this period. They probably used light weight objects made out of skins that were easy to carry.
Religion/Rituals	Unknown
Social/Political	Their social organization was probably based on the family. They participated in co-operative ventures for hunting. They traded or traveled long distances to obtain different kinds of stones for their tools. Some materials came from hundreds of miles away.
How Different From Previous Group	They were the first Wisconsin inhabitants.
Major World Events	9,000 B.C. - Origins of agriculture in the Middle East