



Northern Paiute

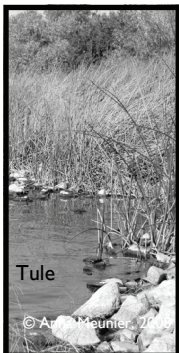
Native Americans of Oregon

4th Grade Social Studies

Climate & Environment

Special Points of Interest:

- The Northern Paiute built sweat houses. A big fire was built in the middle and the door was closed until the temperature was too hot to handle. Then the men ran out and plunged into cold water.
- Tule is a marsh plant that was dried and used for many items.



The Northern Paiute lived in the Great Basin area. The climate of the Great Basin is harsh. Winters are cold with abundant snow. Summers can be extremely hot. The landscape is made of vast open desert and high

ridges. The Northern Paiute had to learn to live with little water. They were semi-nomadic. This means they moved from place to place as the seasons changed. They used up the food supply at each stop and had to move on again. Of all the Native American groups in Oregon, the Northern Paiute lived in the harshest climate with the least amount of resources.



Shelter

Since food was scarce, the Northern Paiute did not have permanent homes. They built homes that were easy to move. They traveled on foot or by water and carried their belongings in baskets on their backs.

Willow-Framed House



Courtesy of Oregon Historical Society

Willow-framed houses were used in summer and winter. Willow poles were bent together and fastened at the top with strips of sage bark. A hole was left in the top to let smoke out. Reeds and bunches of tule (“too-lee”) covered the house. These shelters were so tightly covered that they were wind and water-proof.

Food

The Northern Paiute relied on game and certain plants for food. These resources were scattered all over the region. The Northern Paiute knew exactly when certain plants would ripen and when animals would be the fattest. They knew when fish would spawn. The Northern Paiute moved with the seasons and worked constantly.

Women collected onion roots, spring greens and camas bulbs. Insects were considered part of the Northern Paiute's regular diet. Crickets came out in swarms during the summer and women collected them in handfuls from the grass. They also collected ants and insect larvae, which were dried and ground into flour. Seed gathering time was the most important season of all. The entire family went to harvest pine nuts. Pine cones were roasted or dried in the sun and then hit to knock the seeds out.



Rabbit



Antelope

Men did most of their hunting in the winter. They placed nooses and traps where they knew rabbits and birds would be. Large game like deer and antelope were so important that ceremonies were held before a hunt began. Fish were caught in nets or scooped up with baskets.



Cricket

Clothing

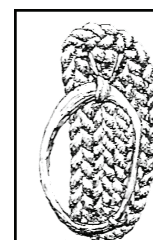
Burden Basket worn with basket hat.



Courtesy of Oregon Historical Society

Men wore a buckskin breechcloth. Women wore sage-bark fringe skirts. The Northern Paiute traveled a lot so they had to wear something on their feet. Sandals were made of tule and sage bark. Both men and women wore their hair in two long braids tied together in the back. Women wore a basket hat to protect their foreheads from the burden basket strap. Men wore fur caps.

Women tattooed their chins with up-and-down marks. This was considered beautiful.



Tule Sandal



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