



# Takelma

Native Americans of Oregon

4th Grade Social Studies

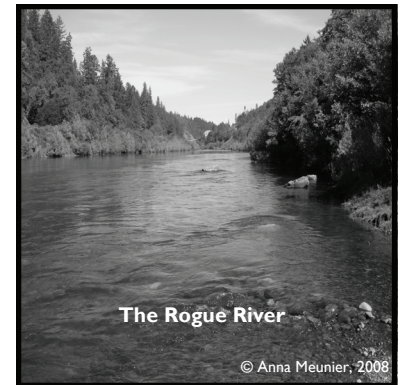
## Climate & Environment

### Special Points of Interest:

- The Takelma were known to be very warlike. They were not known to attack their enemies unless provoked.
- The Takelma snacked on roasted grasshoppers and yellow jacket larvae.
- The Takelma cooked small game by taking out the innards and putting hot rocks in the body cavity. This would cook the meat.
- The Takelma used fire to communicate. A large fire meant an enemy was approaching; a small one meant a hunter had killed an animal.

The Takelma Region was located in Southwestern Oregon. The area was located between the Cascade and Coastal Mountain Ranges. The area is now known as the Rogue Valley. This large valley provided the Takelma with everything they needed to live comfortably.

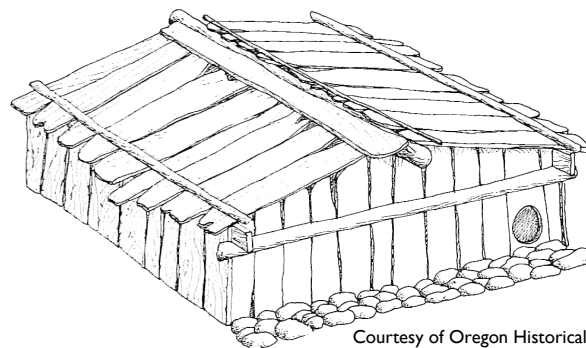
The life blood for the Takelma Native Americans was the Rogue River and its tributaries. The name “Takelma” means “those living along side the river”. The Table Rocks towered 800 feet above the Rogue River. These two important physical features were very special to the Takelma. They held many sacred ceremonies at these sites.



The climate of the Rogue Valley has four distinct seasons. Winters are very wet and cold, and it sometimes snows. The Takelma spent these long winter months indoors living off of the food they had collected and stored from the rest of the year. The spring and fall are mild and wet. This was a time to go outdoors and begin foraging for food again. The summers are very hot and dry. During this time, the Takelma left their permanent villages and lived in temporary camps where they harvested fish, berries, plants, and roots.

## Shelter

The Takelma built their permanent villages next to the Rogue River. Each family lived in their own plank house. The houses were made of sugar pine trees.



**Takelma Plank House**

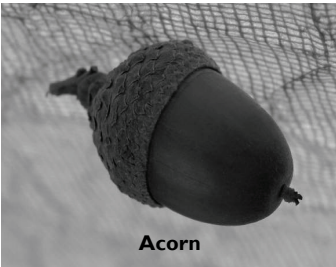
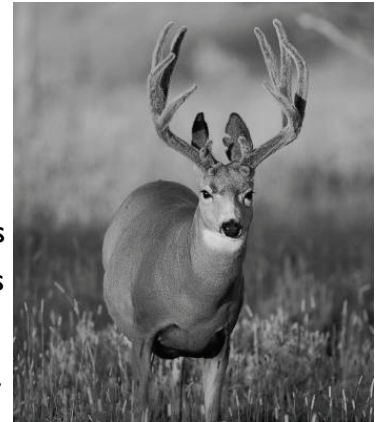
The plank houses were about 12 feet wide and 18 feet long. They were buried into the ground. There was a fire pit in the middle of the house. This was where all of the daily activities took place.

## Food



The Rogue River provided the Takelma with one of their main food sources, fish. The Takelma ate salmon, steelhead, and trout.

Forests and meadows provided the Takelma with large and small game such as deer, elk, antelope, beaver, big horn sheep, squirrel, rabbit, and gopher. They caught these animals using their bow and arrows and by herding the deer into closed pens where they were easily snared.



Acorn

The thick oak tree groves provided the Takelmas with the acorn. The acorn was a staple of the Takelma's diet. They ground it up and used it much like we do flour. It was used to make mush, soup, and acorn cakes.

Plants, roots, and berries rounded out the Takelma diet. The most valuable plant they ate was the camas bulb. The women would go out into the meadows and use a digging stick to dig up the precious root. Other plants that the women collected were skunk cabbage, wocas (lily pad root), Wapato (potato), dandelion, and edible thistle.

In the summer, the Takelma set up temporary camps where they picked berries. The berries that they picked and ate were blackberries, strawberries, Oregon Grape berries, raspberries, and salmonberries.



Lily Pad

## Clothing

The clothing of the Takelma changed with the seasons and the climate. During the summer, the women of the tribe wore a deer-skin shirt and a wrap-around skirt that hung down to their knees. The skirt was made of deer skin, braided grass or woven cedar bark. They wore woven basket caps on their heads and moccasins to cover their feet.

The men wore a loincloth during the hot summers. During the winter, they wore deer-skin hide shirts with animal fur sleeves. They wore deer-skin pants and moccasins. The men wore hats made from the skins of deer heads or bear heads. They left the ears on as decoration. The men and women added fur robes and blankets for added warmth in the winter.

Women wore permanent tattoos on their faces. When the girls were young, they tattooed a line from each corner of their mouth down to their chin. One more line extended from the center of the bottom lip down to their chin. These three vertical lines were made using a needle, charcoal, and plant juice.

The Takelma also pierced their children when they were young. They put a hole through the center nose cartilage and through the ears. They threaded buckskin thongs of hanging shells and bone through the holes.