

July 2008

Historical Harvest Bow and Arrow

Prior to the arrival of the Europeans, the Native Americans that lived in this region regularly used a bow and arrow to harvest the animals they used for food, clothing, tools, and other daily needs. The materials that went into the construction of a bow and arrow came from the natural resources around them.

The bow was usually constructed of white ash or hickory and was shaped using stone tools. The bow string was often sinew, or animal tendon, that had been spliced and corded to achieve the desired length and elasticity.



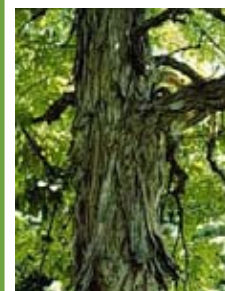
The shaft of a typical arrow was made from red osier dogwood or another slim, straight, and strong wood. Both ends of the shaft were notched. One end would accommodate the arrowhead while the other would rest on the bow string. The arrowhead was usually made from Bayport chert, collected from the Saginaw Bay region. After it was carefully shaped using antler tools, it was attached to the shaft using sinew, pine pitch, and glue derived from animals. Using the same materials, feathers were attached to the opposite end of the shaft to provide a more stable and directed flight.



Natural Resources



The process of shaping a rock into an arrowhead, knife, or other tool is called **flint knapping**. A billet, or large hammer made of antler, was used to break Bayport chert nodules into small pieces with thin edges. The edges were then carefully worked to achieve the desired shape and sharpness.



East Saginaw was originally called **Me-ta-guab-o-kee** by the Native Americans. The name means “a place to get hickory for bows and arrows”. Other local names also referred to the resources or geographical features of the area.

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