

**THE NATURE OF LAND-HOLDING GROUPS IN ABORIGINAL CALIFORNIA**

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Of birds, there were ducks, geese, mudhens, and other waterfowl; the California valley and mountain quail, which are really small partridges; and a great variety of other species.

For some desert tribes in the south, tortoises and lizards furnished a substantial addition to their diet, although certain other California Indians drew an absolute line at partaking of any reptilian or amphibian food.

The same holds for grasshoppers, caterpillars, and angleworms, all of which are definitely nutritious. In some parts of the state it was customary to gather and eat such small fry, but other tribes felt about them very much as we do.

Land resources other than food.— Their tribal territories also furnished the California Indians their clothing and shelter and most of the materials for their manufactures. The clothing might be of dressed skins or of furs. It might be of the bark of maple or willow or tules or sedge that was shredded out into a sort of hula skirt for the women. Roots, shoots, or fibers of plants were also the basis of all basketry, of course, including the caps or brimless bowl-shaped hats worn by the women in many parts of the state. Baskets constituted the most common utensils, pottery being known only in the southern portions of the state. Wooden bowls were occasionally carved, but not very often. Baskets served for gathering food, for storing it, for cooking it, for serving cooked food, for hats and for seed-beaters as already mentioned, and, when finely worked, as gifts and valuables. In general the basketry art of each tribelet was based on materials which grew in its territory. Only occasionally were colored wefts or feathers or similar material traded from tribelet to tribelet for ornamentation.

In much the same way, the materials for house building, whether these were logs or wedge-split planks or poles or thatch or slabs of bark, could not be transported long distances owing to absence of domestic animals, vehicles, and roads. Consequently, building materials were always of local origin.

When it comes to materials having a degree of rarity, some tribelets were fortunately endowed by possessing outcrops or quarries of minerals, or seashells growing in their community territories. Other tribelets then would obtain these in trade, perhaps by furnishing yew wood for bows in return for seashells for bead money. Furthermore, such receiving tribes might pass on the shells or the raw materials—obsidian or steatite or magnesite—to tribes beyond them.