

Archaeological Society

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARKS AND SITES

When prehistoric cultures mysteriously disappeared from the Southwest in the mid 1400's they left behind numerous archaeological sites and ruins that can still be seen today. Some of these sites are considered to be among the best preserved ruins in North America.

Listed below are a few of the local Indian ruins and sites located within a couple of hours driving distance from Apache Junction.

Various information comes from brochures on these archaeological parks and sites, and give a description of the ruins themselves, as well as information on how to reach these sites, hours of operation, and were to call for additional information.

BESH-BA-GOWAH ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK

Besh-Ba-Gowah is an ancient ruin unlike the others. Here you are encouraged to walk within the rooms of this 700 year old pueblo, climb ladders into the upper stories, and see the utensils, pottery and furnishings that was part of life in pre-Columbian times.

Besh-Ba-Gowah comes from the Western Apache phrase meaning "place of metal" or "place of hard rock", originally employed by the Apache Indians to refer to Globe, Arizona which was a major copper mining town. Local miners took this Apache name of Globe and gave it to the ruin of BESH-BA-GOWAH



BESH-BA-GOWAH

The pueblo was built in stories. Many of the ground floor rooms were used for storage as upper stories were for living areas. Several of these rooms have been almost completely restored and contain the types of tools and pottery which were excavated at the site.

It is believed that the earliest residents of the site were the Hohokam (ho-ho-KAHM), who established a PIT-HOUSE



PIT-HOUSE

settlement here around A.D. 900 and abandoned it around A.D. 1100. At approximately A.D. 1225, the Salado Indians began construction of the pueblo that still stands today. Shortly after A.D. 1400, the pueblo was abandoned and the Salado people are believed to have migrated to different area's of the Southwest. It is believed that this is linked to climatic changes that caused a shortage of water which may have resulted in an increase of warfare. The area apparently remained uninhabited for centuries until the Apache people made it their homeland sometime after A.D. 1600.

The Besh-Ba-Gowah Museum displays a variety of the artifacts that were excavated from the site. The museum houses one of the largest single collection of Salado pottery as well as tools, clothing and other artifacts. A ethnobotanical garden on the grounds illustrates how native plants were used by the Salado in their daily life.

LOCATION: From Apache Junction take U.S. Highway 60 through Globe by following the signs to the Broad Street exit. Make a right turn onto Jess Hayes Road. Besh-Ba-Gowah is on the right on Jess Hayes Rd.

THINGS TO DO: The ruins and museum are open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Special programs are offered periodically on excavation and history of the site. For more information, call the Greater Globe-Miami Chamber of Commerce, (520) 425-4495, or contact the museum at (520) 425-0320.

A picnic area and parking is within 100 feet of the pueblo entrance, and the site is almost entirely wheelchair accessible.

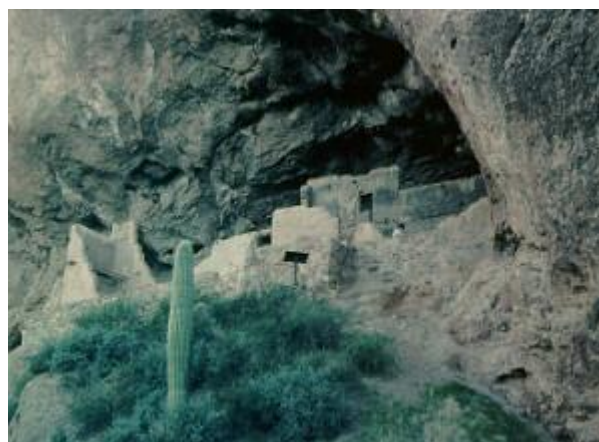
TONTO NATIONAL MONUMENT GILA COUNTY

Inhabiting the Tonto Basin for a relatively short period between A.D. 1150 and around A.D. 1450 were the Salado. The Tonto Basin and Globe, Miami, Superior, and San Carlos areas have traditionally been considered the Salado heartland. The Salado Indians occupied these areas for three centuries, they made their living from what nature provided in their mountainous terrain. Making pots of wonderful beauty such as the TONTO POLYCHROME jars, which are considered Salado artistry at it's peak.



Archaeological study continues to reveal aspects of this culture. Even so, we have only a vague notion of who the Salado were. Like most of the prehistoric cultures that were here in the Southwest, the Salado people left no written record of their existence, no chronology of events that shaped their society. The most vivid signs of life are in their pottery, in remnants of fabric, abandoned ruins, stone and bone tools—all reminders that humans once led rich and productive lives here in by the Salt River.

Tonto National Monument is unique due to the fact that it offers visitors a chance to visit two cliff dwellings located about 350 feet from one another. The pueblo now called the LOWER RUIN



LOWER RUIN

consists of 16 ground floor rooms, three of which had a second story. Next to this was the 12-room annex. The Upper Ruin, located within a similar shelter on a nearby ridge, was much larger - 32 ground floor rooms, eight with a second story.

The Salado (People of the Salt River) lived in the Tonto basin for around 300 years. Sometime between 1400 and 1450 they left. No one knows why, though the Salado were not the only ones to depart their homelands in the southern mountains of the Southwest around this time. The cliff dwellings, less than 150 years old, were abandoned to the sun and wind.

LOCATION: Tonto National Monument is about 77 miles (about a 2 hour drive) N. East of Apache Junction, AZ and 5 miles west of Roosevelt Dam. Possible routes: Ariz. 88 west from Globe; Ariz. 188 south from Ariz.87 (Beeline Highway); or Ariz. 88 (Apache Trail) beginning at Apache Junction. The northeastern 22-mile section of this road is unpaved and mountainous, but maintained and very scenic.

THINGS TO DO: The park is open daily except December 25, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Begin your tour at the visitor center, located one mile off Ariz. 88. Inside are exhibits on the culture and crafts of the Salado people, and an audiovisual program introducing the park. The visitor center is accessible to persons in wheelchairs. Ask at the visitor center about the guided tours to the Upper Ruin. For more information on the ruins contact the visitor center at (520) 467-2241.

FACILITIES: A picnic area is located half a mile from the visitor center. No camping is permitted in the park. Camp sites are plentiful at Roosevelt Lake.

CASA GRANDE RUINS NATIONAL MONUMENT PINAL COUNTY

Casa Grande Ruins National Monument preserves the remains of an ancient Hohokam farming village as well as the enigmatic GREAT HOUSE

GREAT HOUSE

named by early Spanish explorers. Four stories high and 60 feet long, its one of the largest structures known to exist in Hohokam times. The Pima word Hohokam is translated as "those who have gone" or "those who have vanished". Archaeologist Emil Haury who studied the Hohokam provides a more literal translation of "all used up".



The mysterious Great House, completed prior to A.D. 1350 dates from the late Classic Period. Its presence tells us that this village was more important than most. This and other platform ruins such as Pueblo Grande, Mesa Grande, and Los Muertos are thought to be regional centers which may have played a key role in the control of irrigation, trade, and exchange.

The Hohokam are best known for their sophisticated agriculture. They were the first southwestern farmers to use irrigation, digging gravity fed canals along the Gila and Salt Rivers. More than 300 miles of canals have been discovered carrying water from the Salt River to fields as far as 20 miles away.

Who were these desert farmers? Their origins lay with the Archaic hunter-gathers who lived in Arizona for several thousand years, but the Hohokam also drew from Mesoamerican civilization. By A.D. 300 a distinct Hohokam culture was in place along the Gila and Salt Rivers and their tributaries. The Hohokam's RANGE extended from the area of South central Arizona and even as far South as the Mexican border. The Hohokam sequence was divided into five stages, Pioneer, Colonial, Sedentary, Classic and Polvoron Periods.

HOHOKAM CHRONOLOGIES

Pioneer Period A.D. 1 to A.D. 700

Colonial Period A.D. 700 to A.D. 900

Sedentary Period A.D. 900 to A.D. 1150

Classic Period A.D.1150 to A.D. 1350/1400

Polvoron (Post Classic) A.D.1350/1400 to A.D. 1500

LOCATION: The park is in Coolidge, Arizona, about an hour Southeast of Phoenix. From I-10 take Coolidge exits and follow the signs to the parks entrance off Ariz. Rte. 87/287. From Apache Junction take U.S. 60/89 to Florence Junction, then Ariz. Rte 287 to the Coolidge turn off , Ariz. Rte 87, follow signs to the ruins. (about a 45 min drive from Apache Junction). For more information call the visitors center at (520) 723-3172.

ACTIVITIES: The park is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, closed December 25. Inside the visitors center are exhibits of village life during Hohokam times. Outside, trails lead through the

ruins of what was once the largest compound in the prehistoric village. Check with park staff about guided tours. Signs are posted so that you may tour the park on your own. Additional areas are visible from the deck in the picnic area.

FACILITIES: There are restrooms, drinking fountains, and picnic tables in the park.

PUEBLO GRANDE RUIN AND MUSEUM
MARICOPA COUNTY
Spanish words for "Large Town,"



PUEBLO GRANDE is a large village site dominated by a platform mound. This is the only platform mound to have survived today out of 25 such mounds scattered along the Salt River approximately every 3 miles. The total extent of the Pueblo Grande village site is approximately 500 acres or a mile square. This village was occupied for a thousand years from A.D. 450 to A.D. 1450 and had a population of approximately 1500 people. Besides the platform mound the site also contains three ballcourts and a "Big House" similar to that at Casa Grande in Coolidge, AZ. Unfortunately, the "Big House" and the largest ball court have been destroyed since the settlement of Phoenix. In addition to the larger more impressive features of the site, there were at least 121 pithouses, 3 trash mounds (middens), several HORNOS (ovens), and numerous pits possibly used for storage.



These desert farmers are admired for their lengthy occupation of the desert (A.D. 1 to 1450), their impressive cultural accomplishments including complex irrigation systems and adobe architecture, and their ornate craft items such as jewelry made of carved marine shell and imported stone. In addition the Hohokam were active in trade networks with other prehistoric cultures that stretched across the entire Southwest, from New Mexico to California and northern Arizona to northern Mexico. For reasons still unclear, the Hohokam culture collapsed during the 15th century, just before Columbus arrived in the New World. The Pima, Tohono O'Odham (Papago), and Hopi Indians claim the Hohokam as their ancestors.

LOCATION: Pueblo Grande Museum and cultural park are located in Phoenix,Arizona at 4619 East Washington Street. For information call (602) 495-0901

HOURS: Monday - Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4:45 p.m Sunday, 1 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. (Sundays are Free)

TOURS: Pueblo Grande Museum offers tours of the platform mound and museum exhibits, as well as other places of archaeological interest in the salt River Valley and the state. Tours may be arranged in advance by calling the Museum. Visitors may also experience the site on there own.

WORKSHOPS: The Museums' Auxiliary group sponsors workshops throughout the year. These workshops feature "Hands-on-" educational activities such as pottery making, crafting bows and arrows, and Archaeology for Kids. Please call the Museum for information on these workshops.

HIEROGLYPHIC CANYON PINAL COUNTY

Hieroglyphic Canyon is located in the Superstition Mountain Wilderness area east of Apache Junction. The hike is rated easy, 5.4 miles round trip. At the end of the trail, hikers will see a variety of pictures pecked into the rock surface. In territorial days, early miners and cowboys

erroneously called these markings hieroglyphics. Archaeologists now refer to these designs as petroglyphs. They are by far the most common form of "rock art". In this canyon, you will see
IMAGES



Petroglyphs
of sheep, lizards, deer, cougars, hunting scenes, fertility miracles, religious rituals and
CEREMONIAL ACTIVITIES.



CEREMONIAL ACTIVITIES

The rock art in this canyon is estimated to range from the Archaic era to approximately 1400

A.D. " What do these glyphs mean? " A few associations have been made to symbols still in use by modern day Indians, but each site has its own story and the truth is, no one knows for sure. We must remember that we view these images with a completely different set of perspectives and from a Eurocentric point of view. The glyphs do not represent a language as was once thought, but that does not take away from their ability to communicate information to the trained archaeologists about the lifestyle of the people who made them.

LOCATION: There is no official trailhead for Hieroglyphic Trail. To get there, drive East from Apache Junction on U.S. Highway 60 to King's Ranch Road. Follow King's Ranch Road to Baseline. From there, you will need to cross private land, although future access will be legitimate on the new Goldmine Trailway, which is projected to be completed in 1997. According to "Hikers Guide to the Superstition Wilderness" written by Jack Carlson and Elizabeth Stewart, access to the canyon is as follows: Park on the southwest corner of King's Ranch Road and Baseline Avenue before the cattle guard, then walk east along the south side of the fence. Follow the dirt track east across private property for 0.5 miles to the State Trust Land fence. You must crawl through the fence, then turn left (north) and follow the well-worn trail, again keeping the fence on your left until you reach the wooden gate at the Wilderness boundary.

Visitors are advised to wear sturdy shoes and comfortable clothing on the hike. A canteen with a minimum of one quart of water is also recommended.

PROTECT OUR PAST FOR THE FUTURE

Archaeological sites unlock the past, and the opportunities they provide are to be cherished. Federal and State laws prohibit unauthorized artifact collecting and digging at archaeological sites. Sites and their artifacts are nonrenewable resources that, if destroyed, reduce our ability to learn about the past.