

Yurok Tribe by Riley Bokma



LOCATION: The Yurok tribe lived in northern California, on the coast. They lived near the ocean so they could fish.

FOOD: The Yurok people ate a lot of fish, clams, and eel from the ocean. They also ate berries and nuts. They used acorns to make flour.

HOMES: Their homes were about 20 feet tall. They built their homes out of redwood trees. The houses were half underground and had a circle to crawl through to get in and out of.

CLOTHING: The Yurok men wore animal skins, something like a skirt. The women wore deerskin skirts with lots of beading on it. They both wore moccasins on their feet.

MUSIC/DANCE: The Yurok people used their voices with drums and rattles to make music. They sang in fields. They sang love songs and songs about everyday life. They danced to express their beliefs and stories. The dances could last for many days and only men could dance. They performed the “Deerskin Dance” and the “Jump Dance.”

LIFE: Yuroks lived near the coast on land that was filled with sea lions, fish, deer. Men did the hunting and women stayed home cooking. They used long smooth shells as money. They sold their handmade canoes and baskets.

FISHING: Yurok fishermen used spears, nets, and wooden fish traps.

CHILDREN: Children had a lot of chores, but they went to school. The boys hunted and fished with their fathers. The girls played with dolls. Only men and boys could play a game with sticks called “Stick Game.”

GATHERING/TRADING: They gathered and traded nuts, berries, and acorns. They traded with other people for the shells that they used for money. They also traded for blades, woodpecker scalps, and deer skins.

WOMEN: Women worked with the medicine. The medicine included magic formulas to cure sickness and herbs, roots, and sticks. They ground this into powder form. The formula was used only by women giving them a source of wealth. Only women could be doctors.

ART: Yurok people made baskets, head-dresses with beads, carvings. They made canoes from redwood trees. Yuroks were known for weaving and storytelling.