

# The tequesta tribe

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The Tequesta was a small, peaceful native American tribe. They were the first tribe in south Florida and they lived in Biscayne bay which is now present day Miami dade county and half of Broward county they also had some small island in the Miami keys. They built many villages at the mouth of the Miami River and along the coastal islands. The chief lived in the main village at the mouth of the Miami River. The Tequesta lived in Huts. like many other tribes in Florida the houses were built with wooden posts, raised floors, and roofs thatched with palmetto leaves. uring the year the main village relocated to barrier islands or to the Florida Keys during mosquito season which lasted about three months. They wore light clothing The men wore a sort of loincloth made from deer hide while the women wore skirts of spainsh or plant fibers hanging from a belt. The Tequesta native American tribe were hunters and gatherers. They relied mainly on fish, shellfish, nuts, and berries for food. The men caught sharks, sailfish, sea cows which is a manatee. The

Tequesta men also consumed cassina known by the black drink which drunk on important rituals. while the women and children gathered clams, conchs, oysters, and turtle eggs in the shallow waters. The manatee was considered a delicacy and served mainly to the chiefs and other important leaders. In the Everglades, they hunted bear, deer, wild boar, and small mammals. The Tequesta used shells and sharks' teeth for a variety of tools. These included hammers, chisels, fishhooks, drinking cups, and spearheads.

Sharks' teeth were used to carve out logs to make canoes The Tequesta language may have been closely related to the language of the calusa of the southwest Florida coast and the Mayamis who lived around lake okeechobee

in the middle of the lower Florida peninsula. The Tequesta were once thought to be related to the Taino, the Arawakin people of the Antilles. The Tequestas had many weird customs such as: when they bury their chiefs, they buried the smallbones with the body and put the large bones in a box for the village people to adore and hold as heir gods. They also stripped the flesh from the bone, burned the flesh and then gave the cleaned bones to the dead chief's relatives, with the larger bones going to the closest person. The miami circle is the site of a known Tequesta village south of the mouth of the Miami River . It has of 24 large holes or basins, and many smaller holes, which have been cut into bedrock. Together these holes form a circle approximately 38 feet in diameter. Other arrangements of holes are apparent as well.

The Circle was discovered during an archeological survey of a site being cleared for construction of a high-rise building. Charcoal samples collected in the circle have been radiocarbon dated to approximately 1, 900 years ago. The tequesta were second in power among the small tribes of Florida's southeast coast. To the northwere the Jeaga and Jobe, and to the west and southwest were the powerful Calusa. According to historians of the early 20th century the chief of the Tequesta was related to the chief of the Calusa.

The first record of European contact with the Tequesta was in 1513, by Juan Ponce de Leon when he discovered florida's coast. During the 1500s, Europeans began arriving in Florida. At first the Tequesta did not welcome these new visitors. But before long, the Europeans won theirfriendshipby bribing them by bringing gifts of colored cloth, knives, and rum. The Tequesta numbered about 800, but they started to die out as a result of

settlement battles, slavery, and disease. By the 1800s the Tequesta tribe had only a few survivors.