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Shannon Tushingam: Archaeology, Ethnography, and Tolowa Heritage at Red Elderberry Place, Ch̄n-su'lh-d̄n, Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park

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illustrated chapters are organized by function, ranging from hunting and gathering equipment (Chapter 5), food preparation and other household items (Chapter 6), ceremonial regalia (Chapter 7), and musical instruments and basketry (Chapter 8). Hudson and Bates offer detailed observations about each item they were able to observe, discussing manufacturing techniques, materials, and other attributes. Because the objects largely lack meaningful provenience, much attention is paid to determining the ethnolinguistic origin of particular pieces through comparison with the ethnographic record, other museum collections, and archaeological specimens. Ultimately, few items can be securely attributed to a particular historically or ethnographically known group, but the discussion is enhanced by the authors' encyclopedic knowledge of Native Californian material culture and ethnography. Among the highlights are photographs and descriptions of a number of hafted arrows, flicker-quill headbands, a condor-skin cloak, beaded necklaces, and more than two dozen baskets. Many of these items are exceedingly rare among the world's ethnographic collections from Native California. While I doubt many readers will need to be convinced of the significance of the materials presented in *Treasures from Native California*, the final chapter takes on this topic as do the foreword by Stephen Watrous and the timely afterword by Glenn Farris.

It should be noted that this book has been a long time in coming: Hudson wrote the bulk of the original text in the mid-1980s, and the book has seen nearly

as many peregrinations as the collections themselves. Perhaps unavoidably, then, *Treasures from Native California* has some frustrating lacunae. Many objects at Moscow State University, for example, could not be analyzed or even photographed at the time of the original study, and several pieces from the Russian collections were missing at the time of the authors' visits in 1983 (by Hudson) and 1998 (by Bates). It remains unclear whether such objects have surfaced or have become available to foreign researchers in the intervening years. A larger disappointment is the only cursory nod, in the book's final paragraphs, toward the importance of these collections for contemporary Native Californian groups. Several Native Californian delegations have visited St. Petersburg as part of cultural exchanges and to view the *Kunstkamera* collections, providing the opportunity for tribal members to examine items that in some cases have no remaining material equivalent in California. These modern connections, linking the colonial era to today, warrant further reflection.

On the whole, *Treasures from Native California* offers a fascinating window into the material world of Native California during the first half of the nineteenth century. This deeply researched book will have wide appeal among anthropologists, archaeologists, native people, and others. It is a testament to the vision of Travis Hudson, and the dedication of Craig Bates, Thomas Blackburn, and John Johnson, that this book is finally available more than three decades after its original inception.



***Archaeology, Ethnography,  
and Tolowa Heritage at  
Red Elderberry Place,  
Chon-su'lh-don, Jedediah  
Smith Redwoods State Park***

Shannon Tushingham  
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**Reviewed by Rick Minor**

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Since its publication in 1966, *Archaeology of the Point St. George Site, and Tolowa Prehistory* by Richard A. Gould has been the primary source of information on the prehistory of the northern California coastal region. Gould's research was distinguished by a major effort to enlist the aid of Tolowa elders in interpreting the archaeological record at the Point St. George shell midden (Point St. George II). An earlier component

(Point St. George I) was characterized by a non-shell-bearing sand deposit that contained chipped stone projectile points of a distinctly different style from those in the shell midden. For a long time a single radiocarbon date of  $2,260 \pm 210$  yr B.P. from Point St. George I was the earliest radiocarbon date from this region, leading to speculation that the north coast may have been the last part of California to be settled by Native Americans.

In *Archaeology, Ethnography, and Tolowa Heritage at Red Elderberry Place*, Shannon Tushingham provides an overview of archaeological research conducted under her direction about nine miles inland from the coast, in Jedediah Smith Redwood State Park and the Hiouchi Flat area of Redwood National and State Park. This is the traditional territory of the Upriver or *Ge-Deeni'* Tolowa. Following in Gould's footsteps, Tushingham employed a similar collaborative approach to connect the living communities in the Elk Valley and Smith River Rancherias to the archaeological record in the Smith River Basin. At the time her study began, only a small portion of one site had been previously recorded, the ethnographic village of *Chon-su'lh-don*, Athabascan for Red Elderberry Place (CA-DNO-26). As the first large-scale investigation at any interior site in northwestern California, Tushingham's research addressed two questions: how did intensive foraging systems and the Pacific Northwest pattern develop in the region (abruptly or gradually?), and when did use of the two most important dietary staples of ethnographic groups (salmon and acorns) intensify?

It is interesting to consider how far the practice of archaeology has come in the half-century since Gould's excavations at Point St. George. Tushingham's investigations reflect the current state of the art in surface survey, systematic auger testing for site discovery and boundary definition, tightly controlled small-unit excavations, and flotation analysis of soil samples from features and column samples to recover even very small remains. The resulting archaeological data, mostly recovered from CA-DNO-26 but with small samples from five other sites, was interpreted with the aid of 28 AMS radiocarbon dates (3 from geomorphic contexts), 382 obsidian source determinations, and hydration rim measurements on 374 obsidian tools and debitage. Cultural components distinguished at the six sites were grouped into four chronological periods.

In a region where it has been difficult to find sites with much time depth, evidence was found of a long occupational history in the Smith River Basin. Four sites were used as temporary camps during the Early Period (9,000-5,000 cal B.P.), as determined by five calibrated radiocarbon dates greater than 5,000 years, including two dates of more than 8,000 years which are among the earliest archaeological radiocarbon dates reported from northwest California. The Middle Period (5,000-1,500 cal B.P.), represented at three sites with deposits radiocarbon dated to between 3,100 and 1,500 B.P., reflects increasing residential stability. Components dating to this period produced the earliest ground stone, acorns, and features, including a packed floor with hearth dating to 3,098 cal B.P.

The Late Period (1,500 cal B.P.-A.D. 1850), represented at four sites, is distinguished by four semi-subterranean redwood plank houses (three at CA-DNO-26, and one at CA-DNO-332) closely resembling those described in ethnographic accounts. The earliest excavated plank house in northwestern California, House 1 at Red Elderberry Place, has a mean pooled radiocarbon age of 1,267 B.P. There was a significant increase in salmon bone, suggesting salmon intensification or storage by 1,250 B.P., consistent with the first evidence of specialized fishing gear such as net weights and concave-based harpoon tips. The first pinniped and marine shellfish remains also occur in Late Period components.

The Contact Period (A.D. 1850-1902), limited to a small area at CA-DNO-26, is mainly represented by a heavily burned semi-subterranean sweathouse dating from AD 1850-1890. The associated assemblage is like that of the Late Period, but with the addition of historically available materials such as square nails, shotgun shells, flaked glass tools and modified flakes, and items of personal adornment including buttons. Building on the discovery of the sweathouse, Tushingham interviewed Tolowa elders about place names, subsistence practices, and the Tolowa experience during the Contact Period. As most ethnographic research has focused on groups that lived along the coast, the substantial ethnographic information and history for the Upriver or *Ge-Deeni'* Tolowa presented by Tushingham represents a significant contribution in its own right.

Tushingam interprets the archaeological data as favoring the gradual *in situ* model of north coast subsistence-settlement development. This interpretation is supported by obsidian sourcing and distribution data, with obsidian from a variety of southern Oregon (45%) and northern California sources accounting for 83% to 61%, of debitage in Early and Middle Period components, while obsidian accounts for much less debitage (39%) and is mostly (84%) from California sources in Late Period components. This pattern is seen as a further indication “of the developing insularity of social groups and increased sedentism characteristic of the Late Prehistoric” (p. 145).

Tushingam’s study in the Smith River Basin both complements Richard Gould’s approach to archaeological research through engagement with the Tolowa, and complements his earlier work at Point St. George by recovering archaeological and ethnographic information about the Upriver or *Ge-Deeni’* Tolowa living inland from the coast. The research reported in this volume represents a major contribution to our knowledge of the Tolowa peoples and their ancestors, and the archaeological data and interpretations presented will undoubtedly influence future archaeological research in northwest California for some time to come.

