

# 4 - Hunting

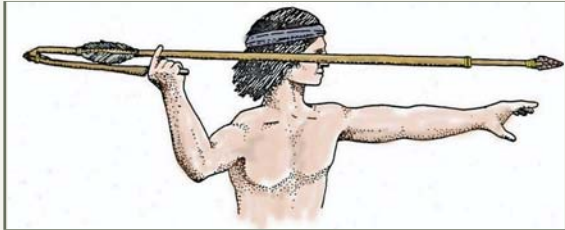
## Hunters - Their Weapons and Their Game



### Paleo-Indian Atlatl

Big-game animals such as the giant sloth, mammoth and saber-tooth cats are known to have been in the Verde Valley by the presence of fossilized footprints. A mastodon lower jaw and tusks were found near Clarkdale. These findings indicate that large mammals were plentiful.

Paleo-Indian hunters used a characteristically-fluted projectile point referred to as a *Clovis Point* named for the Clovis (New Mexico) culture, considered to be the first widespread cultural group in the American Southwest.



Paleo-Indians used **atlatls** to propel flexible, pointed shafts — called darts, rather than arrows — at high speeds across long distances. Essentially, they were stick-like tools that contained a hook or spur at one end to hold a dart. By swinging the spear-thrower overhead and forward, hunters could launch their darts with greater force than if they were to throw them like javelins.

### Sinagua Bows

The Archaic culture that followed the Paleo-Indian big-game hunters adapted to the extinction of the big-game by hunting with atlatls for smaller animals such as deer, elk and bear, as well as rabbit, rodents, squirrel and beaver. The Sinagua used bows and arrows for the larger game. Bows and arrows are represented in rock art.



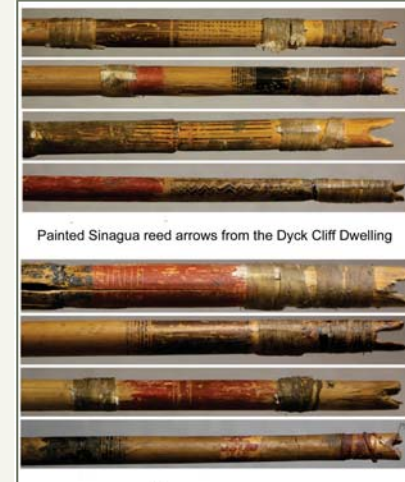
### Rabbit Sticks

The rabbit stick, or throwing stick, is a simple piece of curved wood about 1½ to 2 feet in length. Although it looks similar to the Australian boomerang, the rabbit stick was not designed to come back after it was thrown. Hunters would hurl the throwing stick at the animal or just use it as a club.



### Sinagua Arrows

Dr. Todd Bostwick, Director of Archaeology of the Verde Valley Archaeology Center, analyzed 74 arrow shafts and 43 wooden foreshafts collected between 1962 and 1972 from the Sinagua cliff dwelling on the Dyck Ranch in Rimrock. Decorations in a variety of colors and designs were painted on the shafts in the area of fletching where feathers were attached with sinew wrappings. Sinagua arrows were made of three basic parts — a reed arrow shaft inserted with a wooden foreshaft that was hafted with a sharp point used to penetrate the animal's skin. Large game was hunted with flaked stone-tipped arrows and



Painted Sinagua reed arrows from the Dyck Cliff Dwelling

small game was hunted with arrows tipped with sharpened wood points.

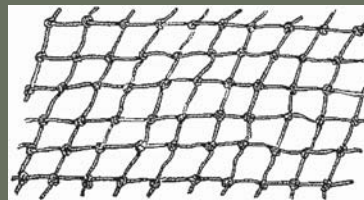
The purpose of painting the arrow shafts was most likely to easily identify the individual hunter during a group hunt.

## Use of Nets and Snares

When hunting small animals, early hunters used a variety of clever weapons and devices to keep from destroying the feathers, skin or fur. While arrows or darts would cut into and bloody the pelts, devices such as rabbit sticks, bunts, deadfalls, traps and snares left the pelts intact. The pelts could be used for making clothing, covering and bags, while the meat provided much needed protein.

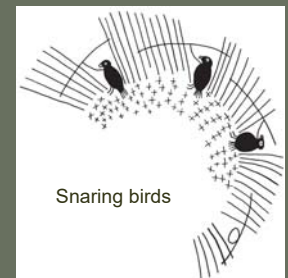
### Nets

One strategy was to stretch nets across narrow spots, such as a stream valley or gully. Then hunters, their families and neighbors would walk through the bushes, making noise to drive their game toward the net. The hunters would then run to the animals and club them.



### Snares

Snares were used to capture a wide variety of small animals, such as cottontail rabbits, prairie dogs, mice, birds and rats. Many devices were complex in design, but were made of very simple materials such as wooden sticks and cords made of fiber.



Snaring birds

This exhibit is sponsored by Dr. F. Dennison and Janet Shaw