

The Seminole

Of the Southeast

SS4H1 The student will describe how early Native American cultures developed in North America.

- a. Locate where Native Americans settled
- b. Describe how Native Americans used their environment to obtain food, clothing, and shelter.

**How did the Seminole adapt
to their environment?**

**How did they use their environment
for food, shelter, and clothing?**

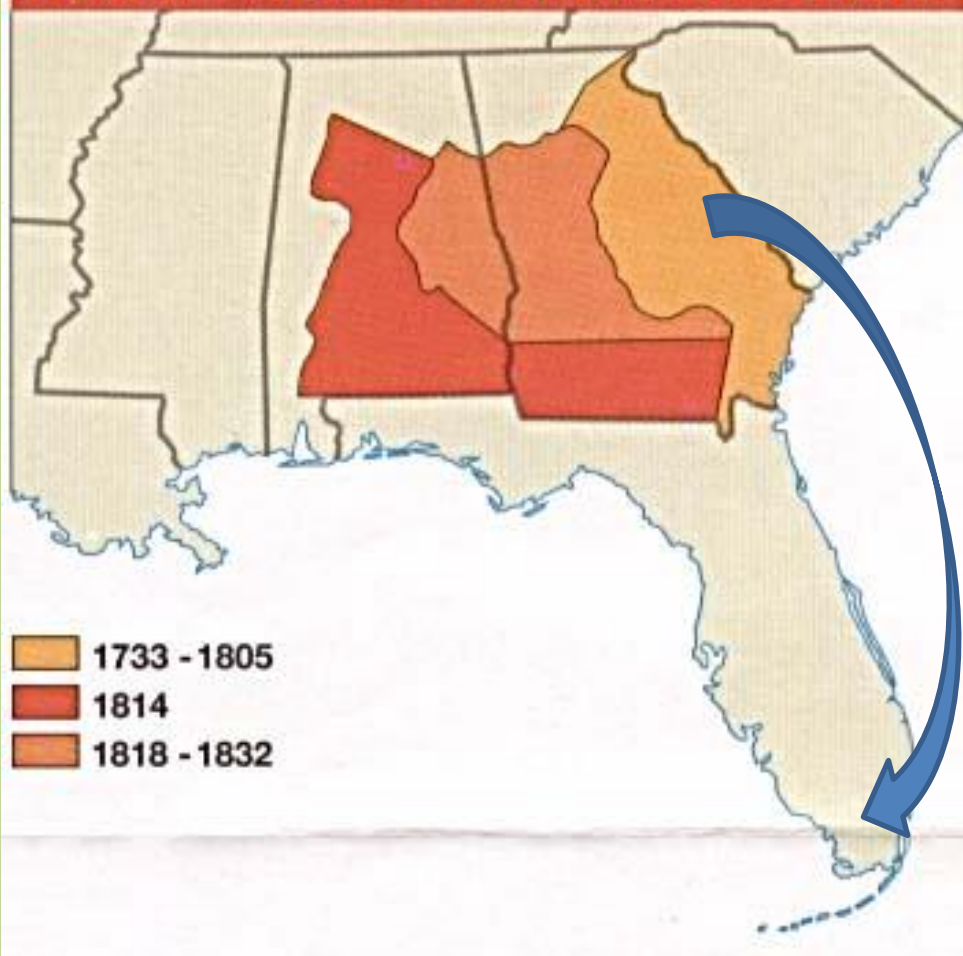
The Seminole lived in the swamp, or wetlands, located at the southern tip of what is now the state of Florida. This area is called the Everglades.



Everglades National Park

0 50 100 Km

Creek Land Cessions, 1733-1832



The Seminole were originally part of the Creek Indian Nation. When European settlers forced the Creeks from their homes, some groups moved south into Florida rather than being forced west. These tribes banded together to form a new tribe, the Seminole.

They adapted their homes and way of life to fit the marshlands of the Everglades because at that time, European settlers did not see the marshlands as desirable lands.



The Everglades is a swamp so it is almost always covered with water.



After heavy rains, even more of the land is covered by water. Most of the rainfall occurs in the summer.





During the summer, the Everglades is extremely hot, and wet.
Due to the wet, humid climate, mosquitoes were a significant problem in the summer.

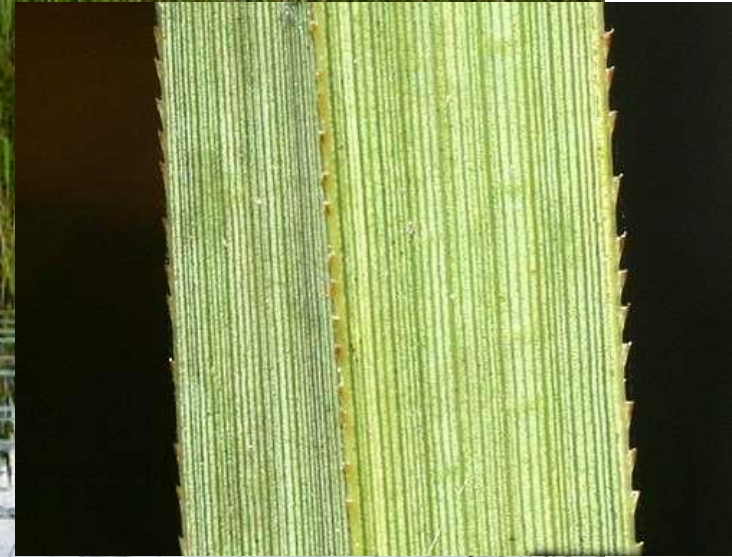


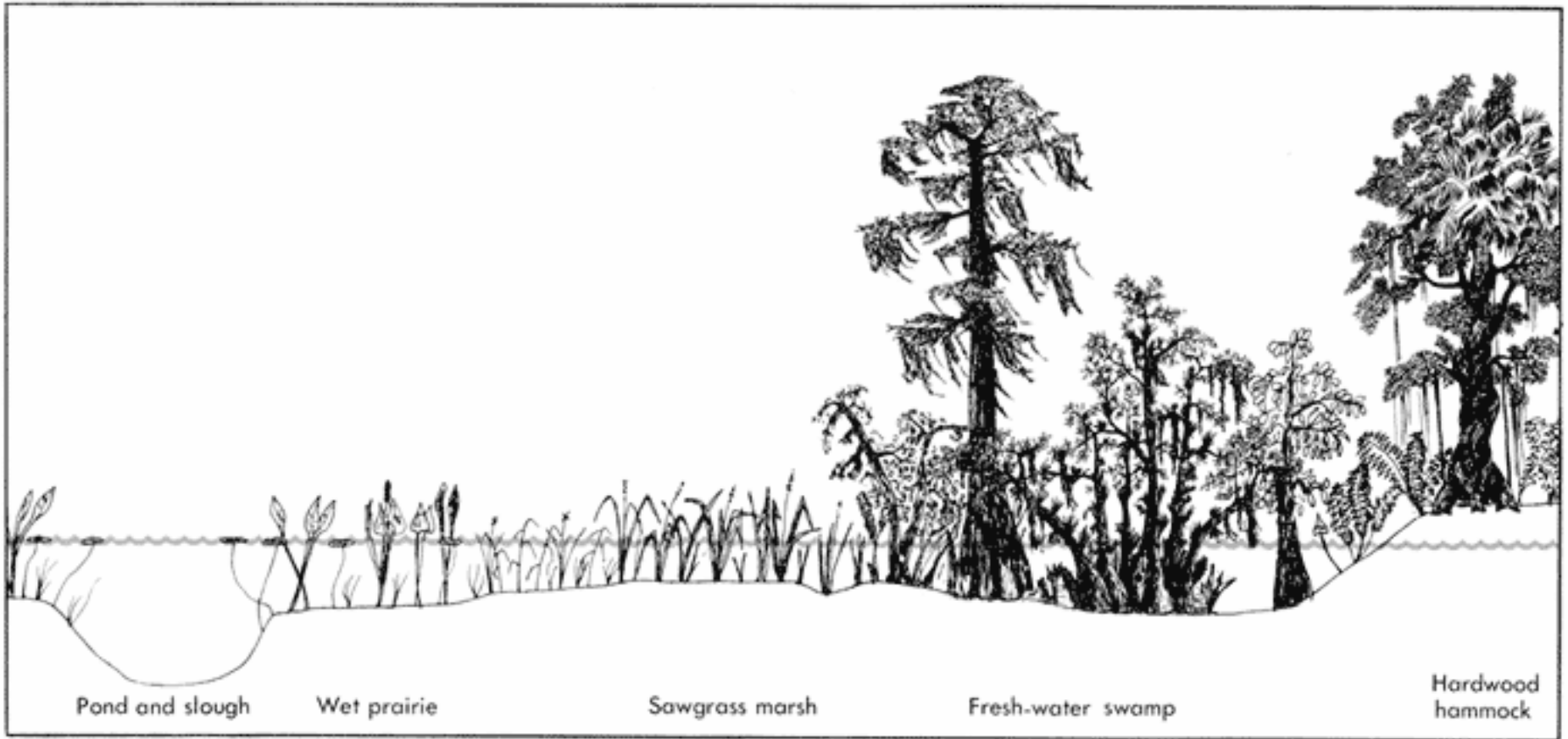
During the winter, the Everglades has mild temperatures with only a few cold fronts. Freezing temperatures are rare. Winters are also very dry.

Water level during the summer.

Water level during the winter.

A large portion of the Everglades is a sawgrass marsh. Sawgrass is a plant that has long narrow leaves with a sharp, serrated edge - like a saw.





For more information about the Everglades, go to
<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/secretary/kids/postcards/everglades.htm>

For shelter, the Seminole built a raised platform with a roof and open sides. Their shelter was called a chickee.

The roof was covered with palm leaves.

The sides were left open so air could flow through the house during the hot summers.

The platform was raised to keep out some animals, and to keep the shelter from flooding when the swamp waters rose.



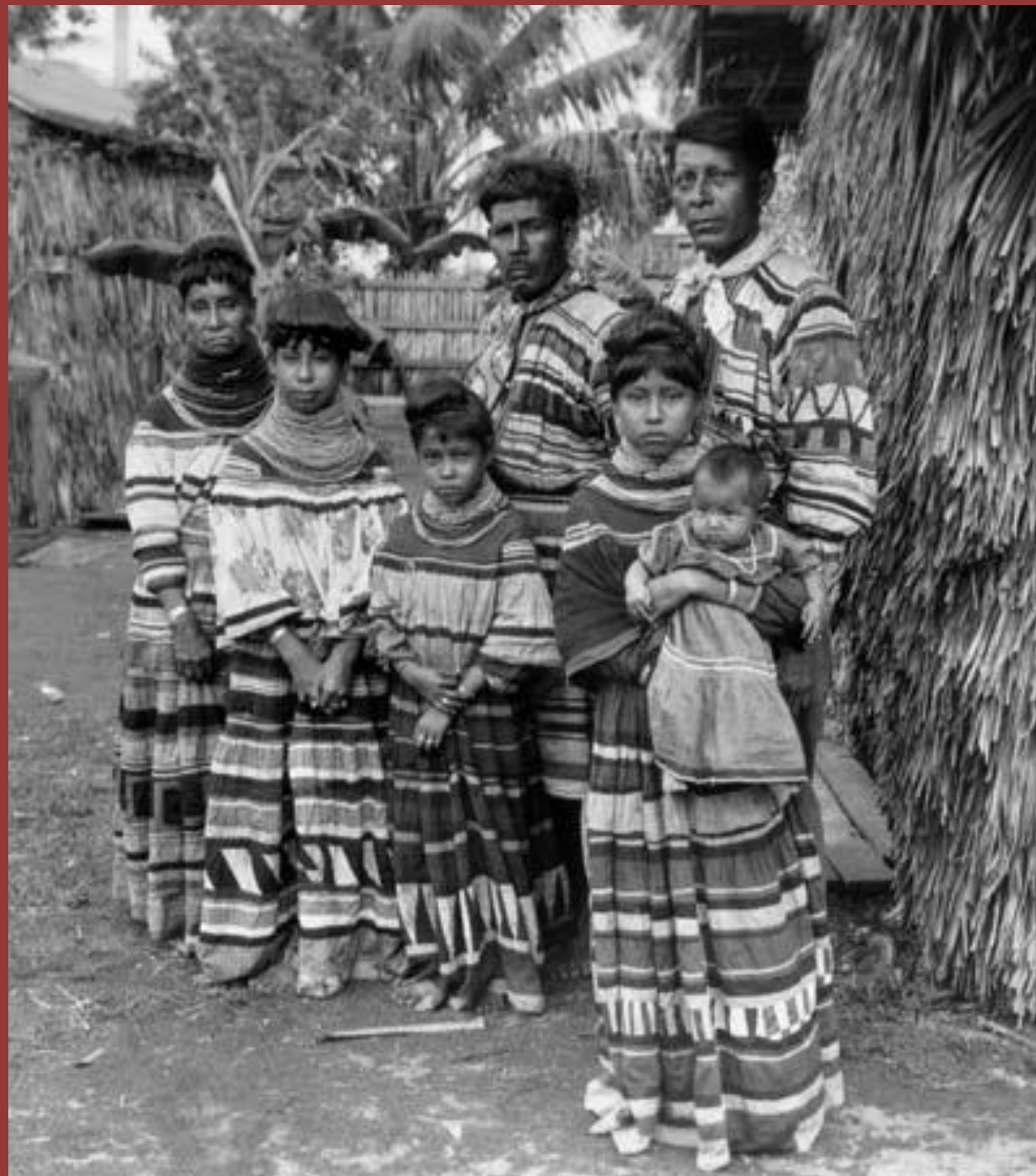


One reason for the raised platform.

Even though the climate was extremely hot and humid, the Seminole dressed for the swamp environment.

They wore leggings made from animal skins, or cloth clothing that covered their body.

These clothes protected them from the mosquitoes and the razor sharp blades of sawgrass.







The Seminole had a large selection of food resources. They hunted deer, bears, rabbits, squirrel, and many different types of birds.

They ate fish, turtles, and oysters.

The Seminole also gathered roots, berries, and nuts.

Animals of the Florida Everglades





The Seminole were also farmers. They grew corn, pumpkins, melons, and sweet potatoes. The subtropical climate allowed the Seminole to grow and hunt foods almost year round.



Corn was the most important crop to the Seminole. They believed the Corn Mother was the goddess of farming.

Every summer the Seminole held a Green Corn Festival to celebrate the ripened corn and to thank the Corn Goddess. This ceremony took place during the full moon after the corn had ripened.





The Seminole wore a large quantity of beaded necklaces.

A woman would receive a necklace every year until she was 40 years old.

After age 40, women removed one necklace each year.

They would keep at least one necklace as women did not go in public without their beads.

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<http://www.nps.gov/history/worldheritage/images/EVER1.jpg>

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