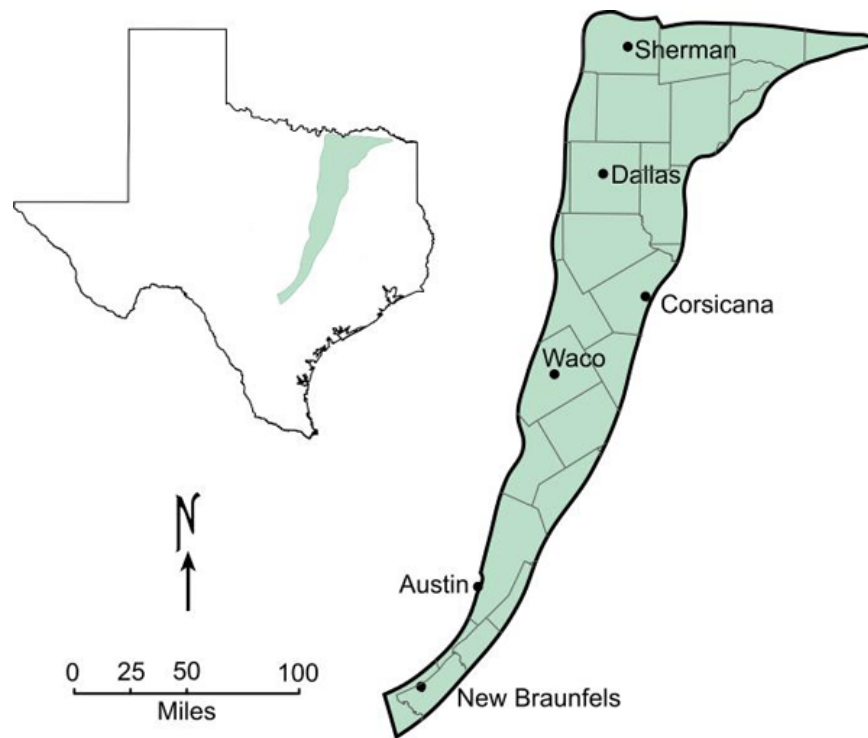


Blackland Prairie Overview



“The Blackland Prairies, sometimes referred to as the "heart of Texas," extend from just south of the Red River south to San Antonio. Dallas, Waco, Austin and San Antonio are all found on the western margins of the Blackland Prairie. Most of the region is underlain by white chalk/limestone material which tends to weather into a thin, black, sticky-when-wet, extremely mineral-rich and fertile soil. While a veritable gumbo when wet, when dry the soils become very hard and can develop cracks that often exceed a foot or more in depth. The terrain tends to be level to very gently rolling. Most of the region lies between 400 and 600 feet elevation. While a number of large streams cross the Blackland, small streams are not common as there are few springs to be found in the area.”

Source: https://www.shsu.edu/~dl_www/bkonline/471online/1.Physical/471.1.GeoRegions/47101.GCP.htm

Blackland Prairie Soils

“The Blackland Prairies consist of about 12.6 million acres of east-central Texas extending southwesterly from the Red River to Bexar County. There are smaller areas to the southeast.

The landscape is undulating with few scattered wooded areas that are mostly in the bottomlands. Surface drainage is moderate to rapid.

Both upland and bottomland soils are deep, dark-gray to black alkaline clays. Some soils in the western part are shallow to moderately deep over chalk. Some soils on the eastern edge are neutral to slightly acid, grayish clays and loams over mottled clay subsoils (sometimes called graylands). Blackland soils are known as “cracking clays” because of the large, deep cracks that form in dry weather. This high shrink-swell property can cause serious damage to foundations, highways, and other structures and is a safety hazard in pits and trenches.

Land use is divided about equally between cropland and grassland. Cotton, grain sorghums, corn, wheat, oats, and hay are grown. Grassland is mostly improved pastures, with native range on the shallower and steeper soils. Water erosion, cotton root rot, soil tilth, and brush control are the major management problems.”

Source: <https://texasalmanac.com/index.php?q=topics/environment/soils-texas>

“The soil of the Blackland Prairies, from which the "blackland" gets its name, contains black or deep dark-gray, alkaline clay which is further blackened by char from wildfires and controlled burns. "Black gumbo" and "black velvet" are local names for this soil.”

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas_blackland_prairies

Blackland Prairie Plants

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas_blackland_prairies

Little Bluestem:



Source: http://www.soilcropandmore.info/crops/Grasses/Little_bluestem/Little-bluestem-Schizachyrium-scoparium.htm

Yellow Indiangrass:



Source: <http://speakingfromtheranch.blogspot.com/2010/08/southern-blacklandfayette-prairie.html>

Big Bluestem:



Source: <https://rangeplants.tamu.edu/plant/big-bluestem/>

Tall Dropseed:



Source: http://www.phytoimages.siu.edu/imgs/paraman1/r/Poaceae_Sporobolus_compositus_107231.html

Gayfeathers (also known as “Blazing star”):



Source: <https://portraitsofwildflowers.wordpress.com/2015/09/23/a-liatris-colony-on-the-blackland-prairie/>

Asters:



Source: <https://portraitsofwildflowers.wordpress.com/2012/07/08/white-on-the-blackland-prairie/>

Maximilian sunflower:



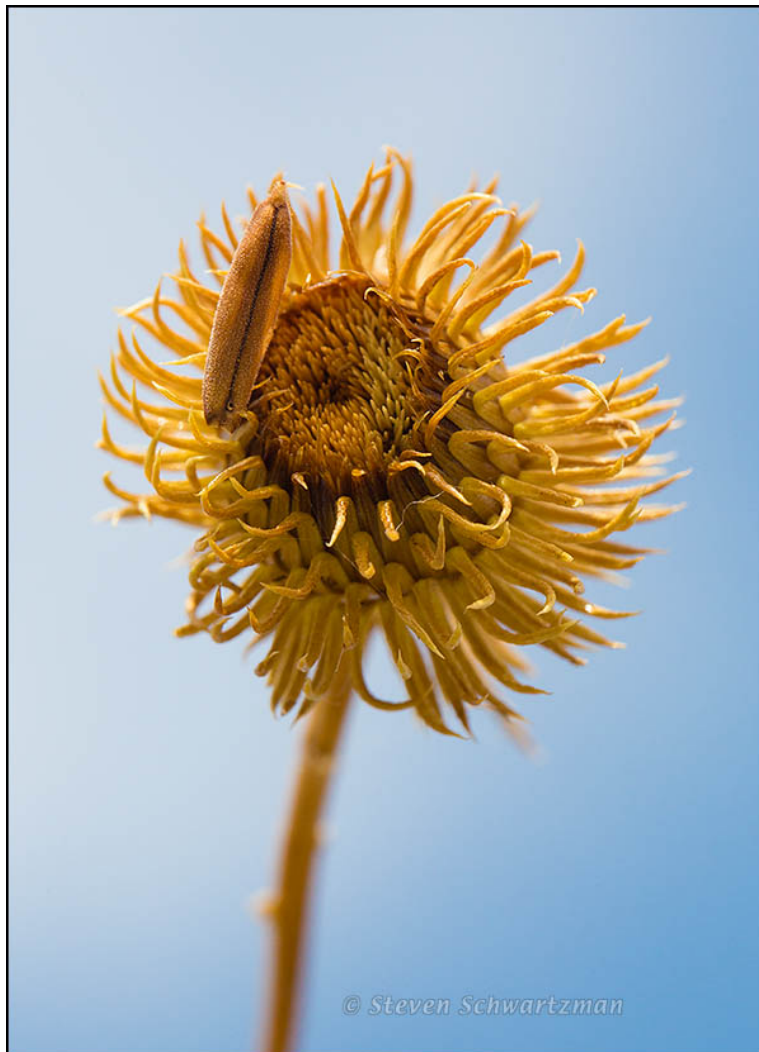
Source: <https://portraitsofwildflowers.wordpress.com/2017/07/26/and-heres-a-look-at-those-maximilian-sunflowers-in-their-own-right/>

Wild indigos:



Source: <https://rangeplants.tamu.edu/plant/wild-indigo/>

Compass plant (also known as prairie compass plant, pilotweed, polar plant, gum weed, cut-leaf silphium, and turpentine plant):



Source: <https://portraitsowildflowers.wordpress.com/2013/08/06/gumweed-gone-to-seed-and-drying-out/>

Blackland Prairie Animals

“The prairie was formerly home to animals such as American bison, wolves, and jaguars before overhunting and the destruction of most tallgrass ecosystems.”

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas_blackland_prairies

American Bison:



Texas Grey Wolf:



Jaguar:



Gray Fox:



[Texas Horned Lizard](#) (official state reptile):



[Prairie Rattlesnake](#):



Opossum:



Coyote:



White-tailed deer:



Striped skunk:



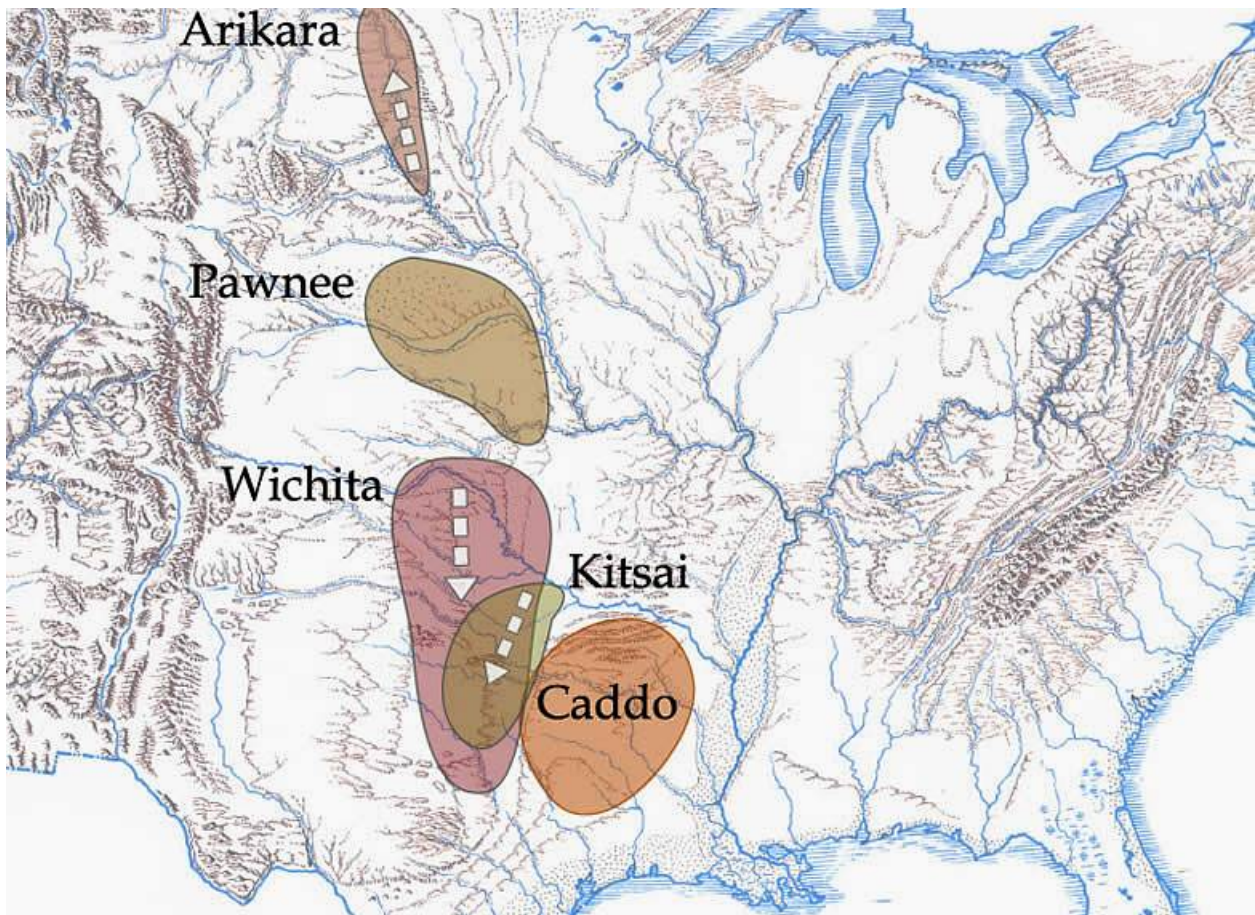
Blackland Prairie Tribes

“Hunter-gatherers contributed to the formation and expansion of the prairie through controlled burns to make more land suitable for hunting bison and other game.

Hunter-gatherers continually inhabited the prairie since pre-Clovis times over 15,000 years ago. In historic times, they included the Wichita, Waco, Tonkawa, and Comanche [tribes], each of whom were gradually replaced by settled agrarian society.”

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas_blackland_prairies

Language groups in the Blackland Prairie area:



Source: <https://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/tejas/fundamentals/languages.html>

Wichita :

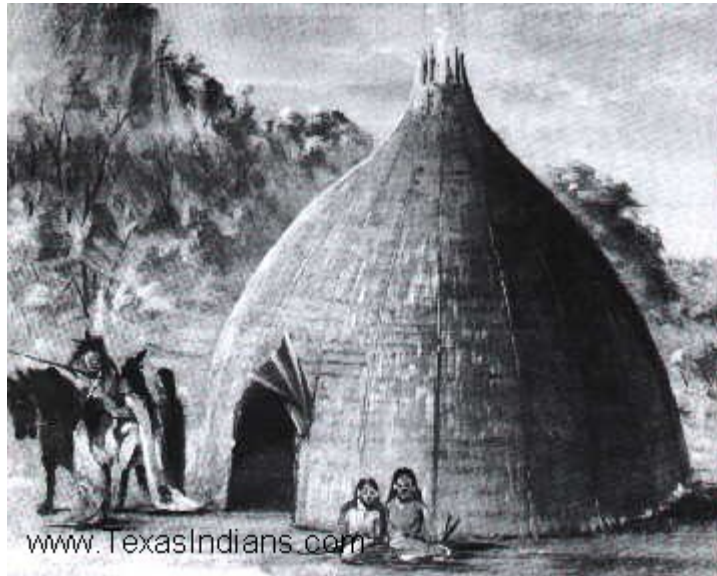
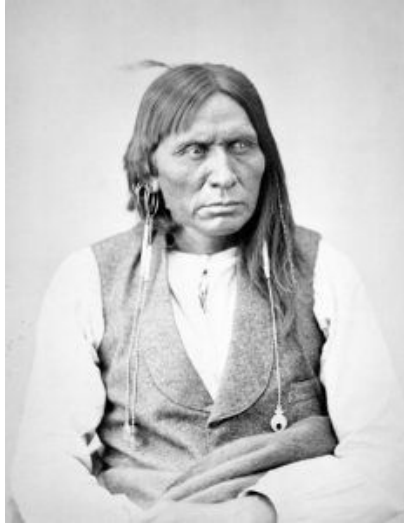


Photo source: <http://www.texasindians.com/wichita.htm>

"The Wichita are **Native Americans of the United States** who speak Wichita, a Caddoan language. They were known as the "Tattooed Faces" or "Raccoon-eyed" people because of the tattoos encircling their eyes. The Wichita formed a loose confederation on the Southern Plains, including the Wichita **tribe** proper and several independent bands, such as the Tawakonis, Kichais, and **Wacos**. They were most populous in the Southwestern United States where they ranged as far south as San Antonio, Texas, to as far north as Great Bend, Kansas. They occupied northern **Texas** in the early 1700s and were involved in trade with other Southern **Plains Indians** on both sides of the Red River and as far south as Waco."

Source: [https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Wichita_\(tribe\)](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Wichita_(tribe))

Waco :



“The Waco Indians were a band of the Wichita culture. Hueco is another spelling of Waco. Most of them lived in a large village on the Brazos river where present day Waco is. Jean Berlandier says they had about 60 permanent houses at this time (about 1830). He reports they would live in the houses during the spring and summer and tend crops in nearby fields.”

Source: <https://nolongerinvisibleblog.wordpress.com/2014/01/03/fyi-waco-tribe/>

(Photo 2 source: <https://wacohistory.org/items/show/46>)\

Tonkawa :



“Their wanderings followed the path of the buffalo, their main source of food, all over central Texas (Newcomb 196). The Tonkawas hunted these animals with spears and arrows and by driving herds over cliffs, such as Tonkawa Bluff, near Georgetown. Like many Native Americans, they used the buffalo for food, clothing, tools and decoration (Scarborough 26). In a letter to the Barron de Ripperda, the governor of Texas, dated July 4, 1772, Athanase de Mezieres wrote:

‘In truth, one cannot exaggerate the inestimable benefits for which these natives are indebted to divine providence. The buffalo alone, besides its flesh, which takes first place among healthful and savory meats, supplies them liberally with what ever they desire in the way of conveniences. The brain they use to soften skins; the horns for spoons and drinking vessels; the shoulder bones to dig and clear off the land; the tendons for thread and for bow strings; the hoof, as glue for arrows; with the mane they

make ropes and girths; from the wool...belts, and various ornaments. The skin furnishes harnesses,...shields, tents, shirts, leggings, shoes, and blankets for protection against the cold—truly valuable treasures, easily acquired, quietly possessed and lightly missed, which liberally supply an infinite number of people, whom we consider poverty-stricken with an excess of those necessities which perpetuate our struggles, anxieties, and discords.'

Source:

<https://www.roundrocktexas.gov/departments/planning-and-development-services/historic-preservation/historic-round-rock-collection/tonkawa-indians/>

Kitsai (or Kichai) :



Nasuteas (Kichai Woman), a Kichai that was part of the Wichita tribe, 1898

“Kichai Indians (from K’itsäsh, their own name). A Caddoan tribe whose language is more closely allied to the Pawnee than to the other Caddoan groups. In common with all

the other tribes they suffered from the introduction of new diseases and from the conflicts incident to the contention of the Spaniards, French, and English for control of the country, and became greatly reduced in numbers. With several other small Texas tribes they were assigned by the United States Government to a reservation on Brazos river in 1855, but on the dispersal of the Indians by the Texans three years later they fled north and joined the Wichita, with whom they have since been associated, and whom they resemble in their agriculture, house-building, and general customs.”

Source: <https://accessgenealogy.com/louisiana/kichai-tribe.htm>

Caddo :



Source: <https://texasbeyondhistory.net/tejas/fundamentals/who.html>

“From the earliest records and from traditions the Caddoan tribes seem to have been cultivators of the soil as well as hunters, and practiced the arts of pottery making, weaving, skin dressing, etc. Tattooing the face and body was common among those of the Southern group. Two distinct types of dwellings were used: the conical straw house

among the Southern group and the earth lodge among the Pawnee and Arikara. Their elaborate religious ceremonies pertained to the quest of long life, health, and food supply, and embodied a recognition of cosmic forces and the heavenly bodies. By their supernatural and social power these ceremonies bound the people together. The tribes were generally loosely confederated; a few stood alone.”

Source: <https://accessgenealogy.com/native/caddoan-indians.htm>