

# **The Ojibwe Nation of Wisconsin**

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Based on *Native People of Wisconsin* by Patti Loew

# Ojibwe Tribal Traditions

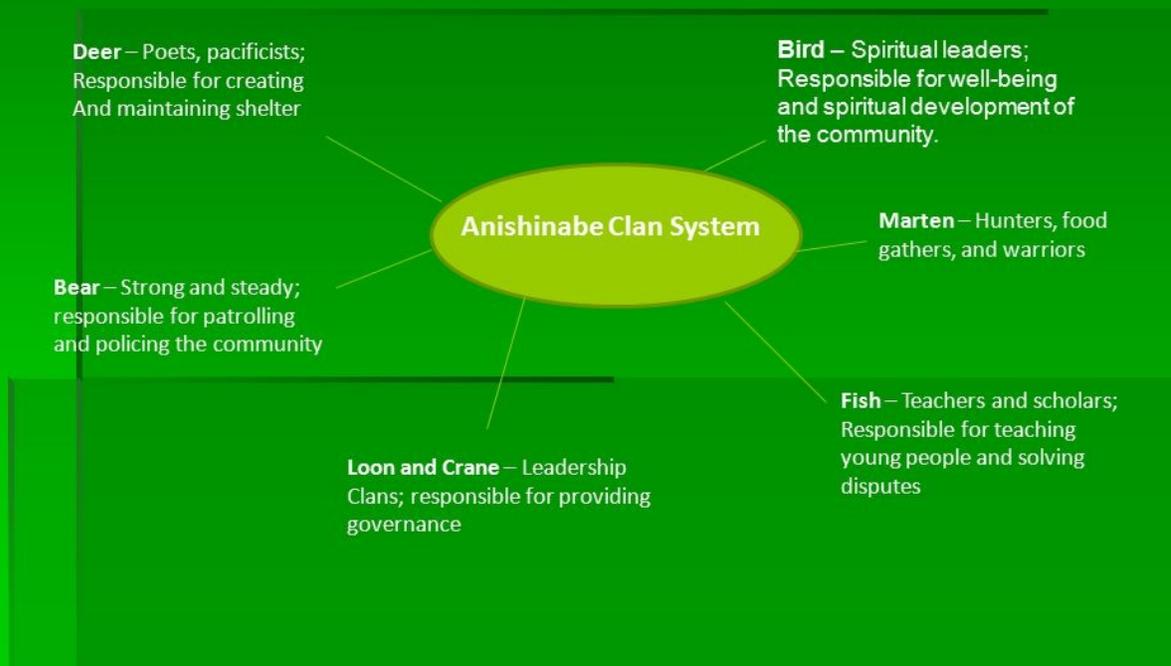


When the Ojibwe returned to the Great Lakes, they settled on the south shore of Lake Superior.

The Sacred Shell led the Ojibwe to wild rice or “Food that Grows on Water.”

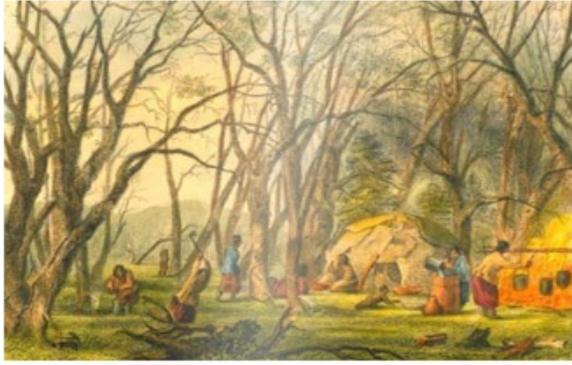
The Ojibwe believe they were created near the Great Lakes. When they fought with each other, they moved near the Atlantic Ocean. In the 1600s, the Creator Gitichi-Manitoo (gih tchee man ih to) told them to follow the Sacred Shell. The Sacred Shell led the Ojibwe to the south shore of Lake Superior, where they found wild rice or “Food that Grows on Water.” Wild rice was an important food they needed to live. It still is important to the Ojibwe.

# Anishinabe – The governing system



Each Ojibwe belonged to a clan with specific responsibilities to help the people. The Ojibwe also called themselves the Anishinabe.

The Ojibwe organized themselves by clans. Each clan had a special responsibility, such as protecting, healing, or leading the people.

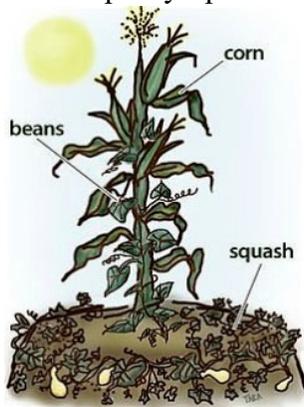


Ojibwe Sugar Camp around 1850

In the spring, the Ojibwe gathered maple sap to make maple syrup and sugar.



In late summer, the Ojibwe gathered wild rice from wetlands.



In summer, Ojibwe women grew food.



In winter, Ojibwe men fished through holes in lake ice.

The Ojibwe gathered different foods each season. In early spring, they speared fish, tapped maple trees to get sap, and boiled the sap to make maple sugar or syrup. In summer, Ojibwe men fished and hunted; women gathered plants and grew corn, squash, beans, and potatoes to eat. In late summer, the Ojibwe gathered wild rice from wetlands. In the winter, Ojibwe men hunted and trapped animals and fished through holes in lake ice.

# Ojibwe Tribal History



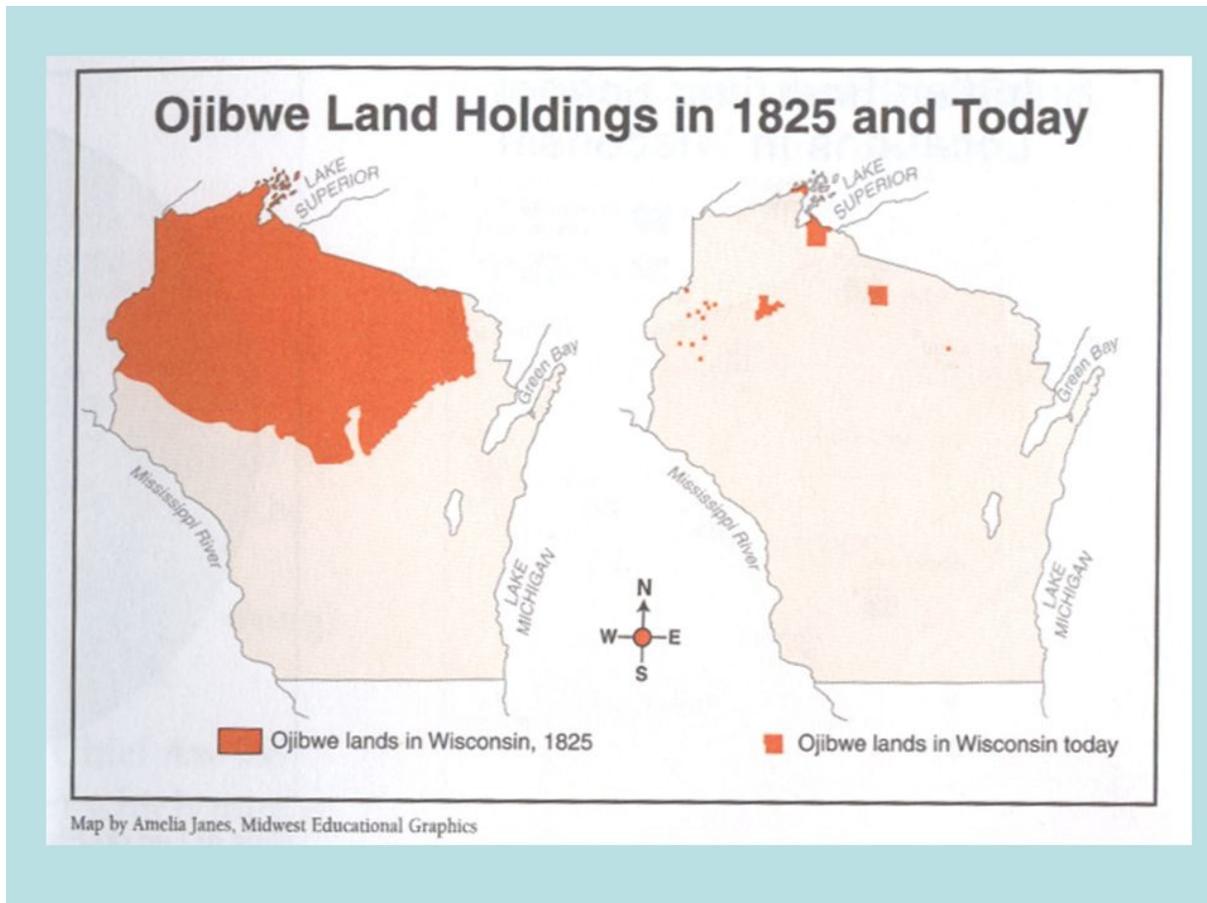
The Ojibwe adopted French fur traders into their families. Ojibwe women married French fur traders.

The Ojibwe liked the French fur traders who came to Wisconsin. They adopted many French fur traders into their families. Ojibwe women married French men. The Ojibwe fought with the French during the French and Indian War.



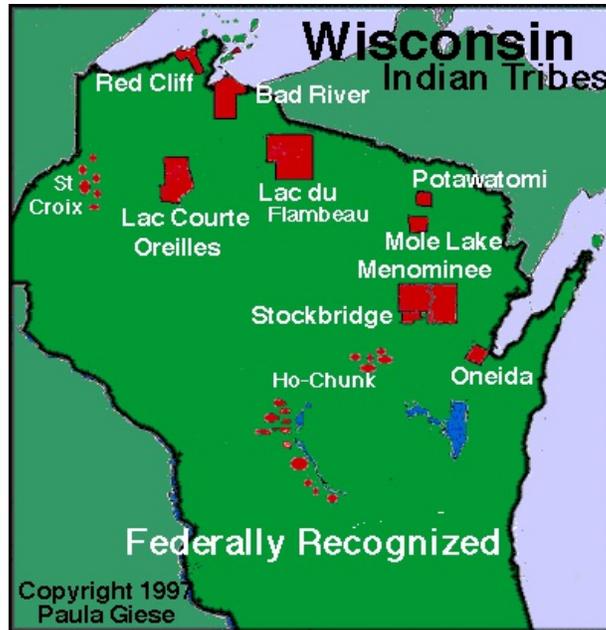
Madeline Island was an important place for the Ojibwe living in Wisconsin.

The Ojibwe went to Madeline Island for their Grand Medicine Lodge ceremonies. These ceremonies taught the Ojibwe how to behave. Some Jesuit missionaries on Madeline Island wanted the Ojibwe to become Christian. Some Ojibwe chose to become Christian; others kept their traditional beliefs. This difference divided the people. Some left Madeline Island while some stayed.



The Ojibwe gave up a great deal of land in treaties with the United States government.

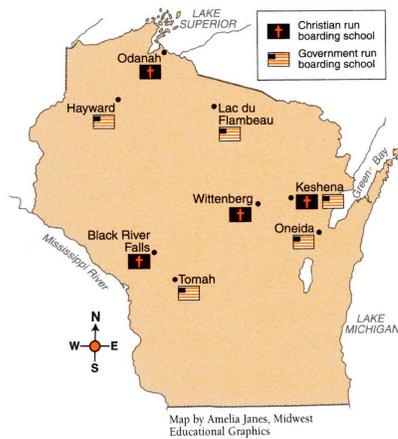
The United States government wanted the Ojibwe land for the trees and the iron ore. The government pressured the Ojibwe to give up almost two-thirds of northern Wisconsin in the 1837 and 1842 treaties. The government promised to give the Ojibwe a little money and trade goods for their land. The Ojibwe believed they were letting the government use their land to cut timber, but not selling it.



Six Ojibwe bands have a reservation in Wisconsin: Red Cliff, Bad River, St. Croix, Lac Courte Oreilles, Lac du Flambeau, and Mole Lake.

The Ojibwe wanted to keep their land's resources even if they signed the treaties. They kept their treaty rights to hunt, fish, and gather plants and wood from the land they were "giving" to the United States government. The Ojibwe also insisted that the government create reservations on the lands they were giving up. The Ojibwe lived in six different bands and each band had a reservation: Bad River, Lac Courte Orielles (lah coo duh ray), Lac du Flambeau (lack du flam bo), Mole Lake, Red Cliff, and St. Croix. They still live on these reservations.

## Indian Boarding School Locations in Wisconsin



There were Christian and government boarding schools for Native children to attend in Wisconsin.



*Bethany  
Indian Mission*  
Wittenberg, Wisconsin

Native children were not allowed to speak their native language or dress in traditional clothing at boarding schools.

The United States government tried to make the Ojibwe more like European Americans. The government took Ojibwe children from their homes and placed them in boarding schools. The children lived at school all the time. The schools discouraged children from speaking their native language and practicing their religions and customs. These schools did not provide a good education for Ojibwe children. Some schools required the students to work for little pay, which kept them from returning home in the summer.



Ojibwe brothers using their treaty rights to fish on lakes. The lakes originally belonged to the Ojibwe, but they were given to the United States government in treaties.

In 1974, two Ojibwe brothers fished on lakes the Ojibwe gave to the United States government in their treaties. The brothers were arrested because they were fishing on lakes off their reservation. However, the brothers said they were using their treaty rights to fish on lakes that originally belonged to the Ojibwe. Finally, in 1999, the United States Supreme Court said the Ojibwe had the right to hunt, fish, and gather on lands they gave to United States government in treaties.



The Ojibwe bands put wild rice seeds in wild rice beds so wild rice can continue to grow.



The Ojibwe bands have fish hatcheries to raise fish to put into lakes where they fish using treaty rights.

The Ojibwe created the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission to protect wild rice beds and the fish population. They reseed wild rice beds to make sure there is plenty of wild rice to gather each late summer. They created fish hatcheries to grow fish and put them into lakes for future fishing.

# Lake Superior Ojibwe Bands Today



Casino on the Lac du Flambeau reservation. The casino makes money for the Lac du Flambeau band of Ojibwe.

Each Ojibwe band opened a casino on their reservation to raise money for their people. Some casinos made a lot of money, but some did not make much money. The Ojibwe used money from their casinos to build new schools, create new jobs, improve the water on the reservation, and buy back some of the land they were pressured to give to the United States government.



Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Ojibwe Community College



## Mole Lake Sokaogon Chippewa Community



Mole Lake Clinic near Crandon, WI

Mole Lake Band of Ojibwe Health Clinic

Each Ojibwe band offers education and health services for the people on their reservation.



The George W. Brown, Jr. Ojibwe Museum and Cultural Center on the Lac du Flambeau reservation



Bad River Band of Ojibwe Health and Wellness Center



Red Cliff Band of Ojibwe Community Health Center



St. Croix Band of Ojibwe Tribal Health Clinic