

MINOOTEENI PARK AT ACIIPHKAHKIONKI

TRIBES OF THE LOWER WABASH VALLEY

Many indigenous peoples called the area now known as the Lower Wabash Valley home since time immemorial to 1850 CE. The Myaamiaki (Miami), Kiikaapoi (Kickapoo), Shawanwaki (Shawnee), and Peewaalia (Peoria) had important ties to what is now Vigo County to the confluence of the Waapaahšiki (Wabash) River and the Kaanseenseepiwi (Ohio River).

Myaamiaki (Miami)

The word Myaamiaki (Miami) means “downstream people.” The Miami Nation’s homelands once encompassed modern-day Indiana and beyond. The Myaamiaki (Miami people) were historically made up of the Miami, Wea (Ouiatanon), Piankeshaw, and Eel River bands. Around 1750, the Miami tribe primarily referred to the people living around the upper Wabash and Maumee Rivers, around the main village called Kiihkayonki, which is now Fort Wayne.

Shawanwaki (Shawnee)

The name, Shawnee, is derived from the Algonquian word shawanwa, meaning “people of the south.” The Shawnee were originally located as far south as modern-day South Carolina and Tennessee, north through Kentucky and West Virginia. Between 1700 and 1830, they were located in the Ohio River Valley west to Indiana and Missouri. The Shawnee Leader Tecumseh (meaning “Panther Passing Across”) met with General William Henry Harrison at Grouseland in Vincennes to protest unjust US policies that dispossessed Indigenous people of their lands. The Shawnee currently reside in Oklahoma, and are today composed of three independent nations: the Eastern Shawnee, the Shawnee, and the Absentee Shawnee.

Kiikaapoi (Kickapoo)

The name Kickapoo comes from the Algonquian words Kiwegapaw or Kiwigapawa, which roughly translates to “he who moves about, standing now here, now there.” The Kickapoo were originally located in what is now modern-day Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin. After moving south, the Kickapoo people divided into two roughly equal sized groups: the “Kickapoo of the Prairie,” who located in central Illinois on the Sangamon River, and the Wabash Kickapoo (later called the “Kickapoo of the Vermillion”), who located on the western fringe of the Wabash River. The Vermillion band of the Kickapoo aided Tecumseh in his struggle to create a native confederacy. There are three federally recognized Kickapoo Tribes today: the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas, the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma, and the Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas.

Peewaalia (Peoria)

The Peoria were one of 12 tribes of the Illinois Confederacy, which belonged to the Algonquian language family. The Peoria were originally located in present-day Iowa, Wisconsin, and Illinois. Around 1832, the other Illinois tribes merged under the Peoria and Kaskaskia names. In 1854, the Wea and Piankeshaw bands of the Miami consolidated with the Peoria. Today, the Peoria, Wea, Piankeshaw, Kaskaskia, and other Illinois are members of the Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma.



*To learn more about each tribe,
use the QR code to visit its website.*



*To listen to audio recordings of the
signs in the Myaamia and English
languages, use the QR code.*

