

NATIVE AMERICANS

First Inhabitants of the Patapsco Valley



The **Late Archaic** (8000 to 1000 B.C.) and the **Woodland Indians** (1000 B.C. to A.D. 1600) found the vast forests along the Patapsco abundant with black bear, panther, elk, buffalo, beaver, bobcat, turkey, game birds, rabbit, squirrel and deer. The river churned with plentiful schools of herring, shad and rockfish. The tidal portion of the river provided clams, oysters, shrimp and crabs.

Susquehannocks fought **Piscataways** to claim these rich hunting, fishing and gathering lands.

Since the valley never belonged to any one tribe's territory, no permanent villages were established here. The river's landmarks guided them for trading and seasonal hunting. Many campsites have been found along the Patapsco River.

The Susquehannocks are a giant-like people & thus appeared

Explorer's sketch of a Susquehannock Indian, a nation of tall, well-built people.

The word "Patapsco" (1666) is from the Algonquin tongue and means "backwater" or "tide covered with froth." It also means "rocky point" referring to white limestone rocks in the river near Rock Creek and the Chesapeake Bay.



Native Americans fished with dugout canoes and fish traps in the Patapsco River.

CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH - 1608

First to map the Chesapeake Bay and the Patapsco River

Captain John Smith made two expeditions up the Chesapeake Bay in a small sailboat with oars. His map identifies the Patapsco River as "Bolus Flu" for the earthen masses of reddish clay along its shores (evidence of iron ore). In describing his discovery, he wrote, "Heaven and earth never agreed better to frame a place for man's habitation."

The wealth of woodlands and fields, the fertile soil, plentiful wildlife, and the bounty of the waters held great promise for a land of pleasant living.

Sketch from *The Discovery of the Chesapeake Bay* by Frances d'A. Collings
Illustrations by Leonard Vosburgh



Captain John Smith's map of Virginia. The Patapsco River, or as he named it, "Bolus Flu" is highlighted to show location.