

GLOSSARY FOR FLINT RIDGE

Geology Garden:

adzes – Axe-sized tools with a chisel– shaped edge, used for shaping and smoothing wood.

calcium – A hard mineral, which is the main ingredient in bones and shells.

decomposed – Disintegrating, broken down, biodegraded (returned to soil through decay or rotting processes).

erratics - Boulders transported by natural forces from their point of origin to another location, often quite far away.

flint – A type of very hard sedimentary rock composed mainly of silica, often shaped into tools and weapons by prehistoric people.

fossils – Ancient animals or plants, whose bodies have been mineralized, (that is, turned to stone).

glaciated – Covered by ice sheets.

glaciers – Huge, (often very thick) ice sheets which covered thousands of square miles during the Pleistocene.

granite – An igneous rock composed of several different minerals combined together.

hammerstones – Fist-sized, rounded granite pebbles used for pounding or grinding.

Ice Age – One of several periods during the Pleistocene epoch, when temperatures dropped and glaciers formed, followed by warmer periods of thawing and melting.

igneous – Rocks formed by volcanic heat.

limestone – A sedimentary rock containing a lot of calcium and formed from layers of mud from ancient lake or sea bottoms.

mauls – A larger version of a hammerstone, often made of granite, and used to quarry flint or other hard substances.

quartz crystals – The crystallized form of a mineral which is silica- based, like flint.

sandstone – A sedimentary rock composed mainly of ancient sand, compressed together.

sedimentary – A class of rocks formed as layers of material which settle to the bottom of a body of water.

silica – A very hard mineral which is the main ingredient of quartz, flint, sand, and obsidian (volcanic glass), to name only a few examples.

spicules – Small, hard structures composed of silica and which form the “skeleton” of the sponges growing in

weathering – A natural process of breaking down and wearing away stone, bone, or other materials exposed to the elements (wind, rain, ice, etc.).

Museum Exhibits:

archaeologists – Scientists who study the cultures and peoples of the past.

arrowheads – Much smaller stone or bone projectile points mounted on arrow shafts.

artifacts – Anything made, modified, or used by humans.

burial mound – A heap of dirt and/or stones covering the remains of dead people.

core – A chunk of flint with flakes taken off the outside edges and (sometimes) shaped for making tools.

dart tips – Slightly smaller stone or bone projectile points mounted on cane or wooden shafts.

flint quarry pit – A location where people have dug underground to obtain the good quality flint for tools, etc.

flintknappers – People who practice the art of making stone tools using the techniques of ancient peoples.

hardness scale – Geologists' method of ranking minerals from 1 to 10, in terms of relative hardness.

historic period – The period after native peoples came in contact with Europeans, and significant events or observations began to be written down.

impurities – Small traces of minerals included in a rock, in addition to the main ingredients.

millstones – Large grinding stones (“buhrstones”) for processing grain into flour.

obsidian – Volcanic glass, composed mainly of silica (like flint).

spear tips – Stone or bone projectile points mounted on cane or wooden spear shafts.

talc – The softest known mineral (# 1 on the hardness scale).

topographical map – A type of map, which shows the different elevations (mountains, valleys, plains, etc.) in a geographic area.

vanport flint – The geologists' technical name for Flint Ridge flint.

wastage – The leftovers debris (or, debitage) from flintknapping.