

# EASTERN SHAWNEE TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA

Tribal Headquarters: Seneca, MO



## A brief history

The Shawnee were the southern most branch of the Algonquian Indians who had a loose confederacy of four divisions covering territory in Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee and as far south as Georgia and the Gulf. During fierce opposition of early French, British and American encroachments the tribe's four divisions were often separated for generations.

Their great leader, Tecumseh, began a Pan Indian movement to thwart the Americans and sided with the British during the War of 1812. Following the American victory over the British many Shawnee returned to the Ohio Basin and in 1817 three groups reserved separate reservations in Ohio. In the 1830s two of these groups were removed to the Kansas Reservation where Cape Girardeau Shawnee were already located. The remaining Ohio group signed a separate treaty with their Seneca allies in 1831 and moved directly to Indian Territory. They were known as the Seneca-Shawnees.

An 1867 treaty provided for the separation of the Seneca-Shawnee into two separate tribes and territories. This group of Shawnee became the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma.

## **About the Flag**

The flag of the Eastern Shawnee consists of the tribal emblem, a warrior's shield centered on a dark red field. Horizontally crossing the center is a black spear. Two black and white eagle feathers hang from the near point. Over the spear is a springing black panther, an animal which roamed free in the traditional homelands of the Shawnee in the East.

The name Tecumseh appropriately means "panther," for the animal recalls the skill, ferocity and cleverness demonstrated by the great warrior. Under the shield is a white swan outlined in black representing peace and beauty. From the bottom of the shield hang four black and white eagle feathers, signifying the four primary directions.

## **Educational Activity**

Both the Eastern Shawnee and the Absentee Shawnee tribes of Oklahoma feature their legendary leader Tecumseh. Compare the two flags and describe how they represent Tecumseh. How do they differ? How do you think they are the same?