

# Artifact of the Month

Tribal Historic Preservation Office

September 2018

Found on the Big Cypress reservation in 1997, this sandstone scraper is a very good example of a south Florida stone tool. Chert, flint, or obsidian are popular materials that stone tools are made of, as they fracture easily and are extremely sharp. But, south Florida is unique because those materials are not at all plentiful. Due to the low number of chert sources in south Florida, high quality stone tools tend to be sparse. More often, tools are made of thick marine shell or bone. Limestone and sandstone, which are plentiful across south Florida, take a large amount of skill to craft into tools and are generally more fragile. Using a softer stone like sandstone is unconventional, and tells us the maker was resourceful when it came to selecting local materials.



Comfortably shaped to fit the hand, the scraper is in fantastic shape. This tool would have been used—to process animal meat or hide, or to cut softer plant material. Can you imagine using this in place of a sharp knife?

