

# ARTIFACT OF THE MONTH

There are several features that archaeologists look at when analyzing pottery sherds, such as temper, distribution, and decoration. Decoration can be especially helpful in determining pottery types. Examples include incisions, holes, tick marks, impressions, and images etched onto the surface of pottery, as well as any paint that might have been applied. By looking at the decoration on pottery sherds, archaeologists can figure out which pottery type a style of decoration is associated with.



*Microscopic image showing closeup of incision marks*



We applied these pottery analysis techniques when looking at this month's artifact, pictured above. Although it may be difficult to see, these sandy gray pottery sherds have some decoration on them. If you look closely, you might be able to see incisions, or linear markings, cut into the surfaces of the sherds. This style of decoration, along with the sand temper and location where they were found, might suggest that these sherds could be from Surfside Incised pottery.

This type of pottery is associated with the Glades IIIa cultural period, which spans from 1200 CE to 1400 CE (FLMNH). It is characterized by one or more incised lines under the rim of the vessel, and it is found throughout south Florida (Peach State Archaeological Society). As the sherds from our collection were found on the Big Cypress Reservation, it is quite possible that they are Surfside Incised.



**Surfside Incised Pottery (Florida Museum of Natural History)**



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To learn more about all the incredible artifacts within our collection, please visit the THPO website at [www.stofthpo.com](http://www.stofthpo.com).

#### Works Cited

Florida Museum of Natural History (n.d.). Ceramic Technology Lab, Surfside Incised. <https://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/ceramiclab/pottery-types-gallery/surfside-incised/>

Peach State Archaeological Society (n.d.). Florida Pottery Types, Incised Types O-Z. <https://peachstatearchaeologysociety.org/artifact-identification/pottery/florida-pottery/incised-types-o-z/>

