

## **North Carolina's State-Recognized Tribes**

Including primary area of residence, population based on 2000 U.S. Census\*, and Web site, if active. Also see map, page 2 of the fall 2005 *Tar Heel Junior Historian*.

### **Coharie**

Harnett, Sampson, and adjoining counties; 1,095

Descendants of the Neusiok tribe, the Coharie have lived continuously at their present location since around the 1730s. Tribal offices are housed in the former Eastern Carolina Indian School building.

### **Eastern Band of Cherokee**

Cherokee, Graham, Jackson, Swain, and adjoining counties; 6,200\*

[www.nc-choerokee.com](http://www.nc-choerokee.com)

Primarily descendants of Cherokee who remained in the mountains rather than being forced onto the Trail of Tears in the late 1830s, and North Carolina's only federally recognized tribe. Today many members live on the Qualla Boundary, a 56,572-acre site that the federal government holds in trust for the tribe.

### **Haliwa-Saponi**

Halifax, Warren, and adjoining counties; 2,343

[www.haliwa-saponi.com](http://www.haliwa-saponi.com)

Descendants of tribes including Saponi, Tuscarora, Occaneechi, Tutelo, and Nansemond, which largely merged in the late 1700s in an area known as "The Meadows." The name Haliwa, adopted in the 1950s, comes from Halifax and Warren; Saponi ("red earth people") was later added.

### **Lumbee**

Robeson and adjoining counties; 44,812

[www.lumbee-tribe.com](http://www.lumbee-tribe.com)

Descendants of groups including the Cheraw, first observed by Europeans in 1724, and other Siouan speakers. The Lumbee—the name comes from the Lumber River—is today the largest tribe east of the Mississippi River. It has long sought federal recognition; the Lumbee were federally recognized in 1956 in name only.

### **Meherrin**

Hertford, Bertie, Gates, Northampton, and adjoining counties; 284

<http://members.inteliport.net/~meherrin/>

Descended from the same language group as the Cherokee and Tuscarora, and believed to have moved south from Virginia. The name means "People of the Muddy Water." Known history dates to 1650, when an English merchant arrived at a Meherrin village. Reorganized in 1970s.

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### **Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation**

Alamance and adjoining counties; N/A\*\*

[www.occaneechi-saponi.org](http://www.occaneechi-saponi.org)

Descended, it is believed, from a group that moved from the present-day Ohio River valley. Shortly before the American Revolution, Occaneechi began settling in Orange County (now part of Alamance) in a community called Little Texas. Took present name in 1995, after reorganizing in 1984 as Eno-Occaneechi Indian Association.

### **Sappony**

Person and adjoining counties; 159\*\*

[www.sappony.org](http://www.sappony.org)

Descended from a group of Indians who remained in an area along the North Carolina–Virginia border when much of the tribe moved north to join the Iroquois in 1753. For many years, the tribe was known as the Indians of Person County.

### **Waccamaw-Siouan**

Bladen, Columbus, and adjoining counties; 1,465

Descended from the Woccon, a tribe first mentioned in writings in 1712 in the area northeast of Charleston, South Carolina, that later sought refuge from South Carolina officials after a war. Known as the “People of the Fallen Star” because of the legends around the origins of Lake Waccamaw.

\* The 2000 U.S. Census placed the state’s American Indian/Alaskan Native population at 99,551. Figures in this chart reflect the number of people in the group reported as “American Indian” who also identified themselves with one or more tribes. (Figures do not include the 33,046 additional people identifying themselves as American Indian in combination with one or more other races, nor do they reflect tribal rolls.) In the case of the Eastern Band of Cherokee, an additional 6,598 people identified themselves as Indians, and then as simply “Cherokee.” Many others identified themselves with different Cherokee groups or as Cherokee in combination with another race. Other Indians identified themselves with tribes including Apache, Blackfeet, Chippewa, Choctaw, Creek, Navaho, and Tuscarora. By 2004, an estimated 110,198 Indians lived in North Carolina.

\*\* In the 2000 U.S. Census, the group now recognized as Sappony by state statute was identified as Indians of Person County. The Occaneechi Band of Saponi Nation did not gain state recognition until 2002; the census lists only federal- and state-recognized tribes, bands, and clans.

### **Other Recognized Groups (Urban Indian Organizations)**

#### **Cumberland County Association for Indian People**

Fayetteville

#### **Guilford Native American Association**

Greensboro, [www.guilfordnative.org](http://www.guilfordnative.org)

#### **Metrolina Native American Association**

Charlotte

#### **Triangle Native American Society**

Raleigh, [www.tnasweb.org](http://www.tnasweb.org)