

NC 0002
Kawaiisu Basket

...Although this note says that the basket came from the Kaweah River in 1910, I still don't think that it could have been made there. I believe that the Kawaiisu name for this type of basket, wikikadi, had been confused with the Yokuts tribe, Wikchamni (or Wukchumne).

While Latta collected a lot of information, and many, many baskets and other artifacts, I don't know how much he really understood about basketry. In Latta's collection there were a few other baskets which I believe were mislabeled. One was a pitch-covered basket, which, on the basis of technology and materials, must have been made by the Navajo or a neighboring group. Latta claimed that it came from a group near the Yokuts. With errors such as these, I don't find it hard to believe that Latta erred in placing the manufacture of your bottleneck basket on the Kaweah River. Additionally, the materials in your basket—willow and Joshua Tree root—were not used on the Kaweah River.

As I believe you are aware, your basket was formerly a part of our collection. We de-accessioned the basket as part of an exchange to obtain a Yosemite Field Day basket, something more important to our scope of collection. While the basket was in our collection, I attempted to locate other baskets of this type and found about 23 others in various museums. I believe that your basket is the largest of its type in existence...

Craig D. Bates
Curator of Ethnography
Yosemite National Park

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