

Yokutch Creation Story THE FIRST PEOPLE

Eagle and Mountain Lion told Dove, "Go tell everyone to come. We are going to make people. Everyone must help." Dove told everyone to come together in a big group.

Eagle and Coyote made people by taking the clay from the earth and shaping it like a man and a woman.

Grizzly Bear said, "People should be able to stand on their hind legs like me and they should have no tail."

Deer said, "People need to see and hear as well as I can, so they need eyes and ears that are as good as mine."

Fish said, "People do not need hair or feathers. Without hair or feathers they can swim like me."

The smallest Lizard said, "Give people hands like mine." And he marked his hand on the ground.

Coyote became angry because he had been left out. "No," he said, "They will have paws like mine. My paws are better." Coyote wanted people to live like he did and have to dig for worms to eat.

"You have paws, not hands," said Little Lizard. "People can only dig big holes with paws. They must have five fingers so they can work and hold things like me."

Coyote was very angry and started to go after Little Lizard.

"Wait!" Eagle said. "We will have a race. Both of you will race to the big rock. Whoever touches the big rock first will be the winner. People will have hands like the winner."

Coyote wanted to be first and win the race. He tried to catch Little Lizard. Little Lizard was too quick for him. Little Lizard ran into a crack in a nearby rock.

Coyote was very, very angry. Little Lizard stuck his head out of the crack and whistled at Coyote, then pulled it in quickly. Coyote shook his fist and said, "I'll get you out of there. I'll smoke you out." Coyote started a fire below the crack.

Little Lizard was so fast that he scurried out of the crack and ran to the big rock before Coyote knew what was happening. Little Lizard jumped up and down on top of the big rock laughing, "I won the race, Ha! Ha!" Little Lizard was the first one to place his hand on the big rock.

"Now," Eagle said, "People will have hands like Lizard. With hands, people can make clothes from deer skin to keep warm during the cold winter. They can make baskets to cook their acorn mush."

Eagle and Coyote made six men and six women. They sent them out two by two in different directions to become the first people of different tribes.

The End