

Late Prehistoric Cultural Materials from the Jenkins Site (41AT287), Atascosa County, Texas

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Sand pit mining in recent years at the Jenkins site (41AT287) in Atascosa County, in South Texas (Figure 1), has resulted in the recovery of a substantial assemblage of Late Prehistoric material culture remains, including arrow points of various types, distinctive Gahagan and beveled bifaces, and 393 ceramic vessel sherds (Perttula 2019a-c, 2020). The ceramic sherds are consistent with a post-A.D. 1250 occupation, one that is likely affiliated with the Late Prehistoric Toyah phase and its bone-tempered ceramic tradition (Kenmotsu and Boyd 2012:12 and Figure 1.6). Sherds with other tempers and pastes in the assemblage, as well as different incised and brushed decorative elements, evidence contact and interaction of the Jenkins site aboriginal inhabitants with coastal Rockport-Karankawan groups and East Texas Caddo groups. The stone tools at the site suggests a lengthier Late Prehistoric occupation, one starting at approximately A.D. 700 (cf. Lohse et al. 2014) with the appearance of Scallorn points.

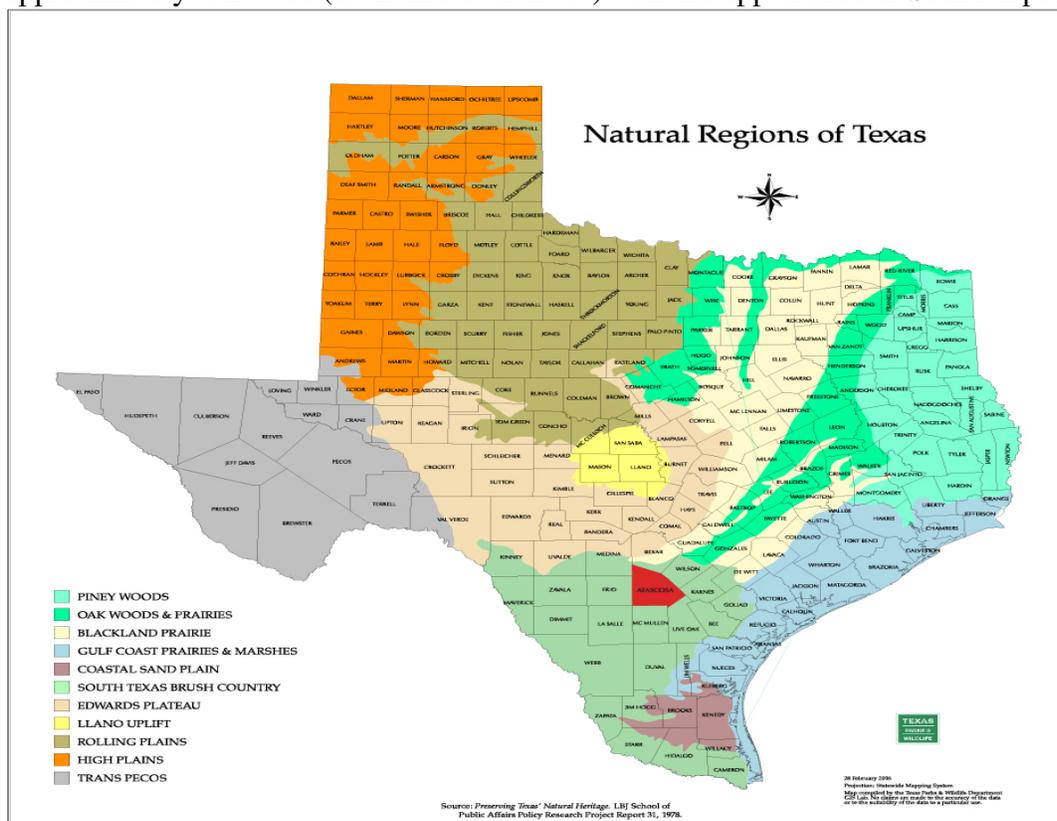


Figure 1. Atascosa County in South Texas.

In this article, I discuss the lithic artifacts of Late Prehistoric age at the site. The typological identification of the arrow points and bifaces relied upon Turner et al. (2011). In addition to the typological identification of lithic tools of Late Prehistoric age, two calibrated radiocarbon dates have been obtained from Late Prehistoric archaeological deposits at the site. The first, cal. A.D. 1044-1232, comes from a organically-rich pit feature; the calibrated median probability of this date is A.D. 1177. The second calibrated date is on organic residue taken from the exterior surface of a Rockport Incised vessel rim sherd (Perttula 2019a:12). The residue has a 2 sigma age range of cal. A.D. 1475-1638, with a calibrated median probability of A.D. 1560 (Figure 2).

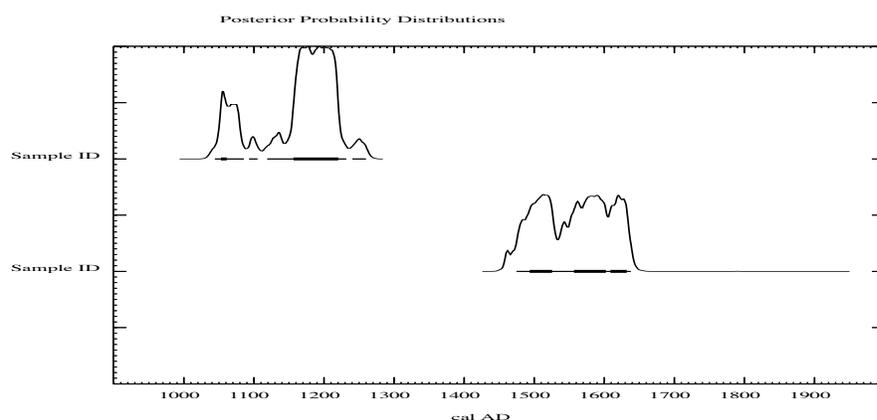


Figure 2. Probability distribution of the two C14 calibrated dates from the Jenkins site (41AT287).

Arrow Points

Twenty-four arrow points from the Jenkins site have been identified to six defined type, and two arrow point fragments cannot be typologically identified. These types date to four time periods from as early as ca. A.D. 700 to as late as ca. 18th century age.

ca. A.D 700-1200 types

Scallorn

There are six corner-notched Scallorn arrow points in the Late Prehistoric assemblage (Figure 3a-b) from the Jenkins site. Along with the one Moran point (see below, and see Turner et al. 2011:204), they are the earliest arrow point forms at the site. One of the Scallorn points is

made on a tan Edwards chert, and the other five are made from brown, dark brown, and gray Uvalde gravel cherts; these fluoresce orange. The Scallorn points range in length from 35-53 mm in length, 17-23 mm in width, and 3-6 mm in thickness.

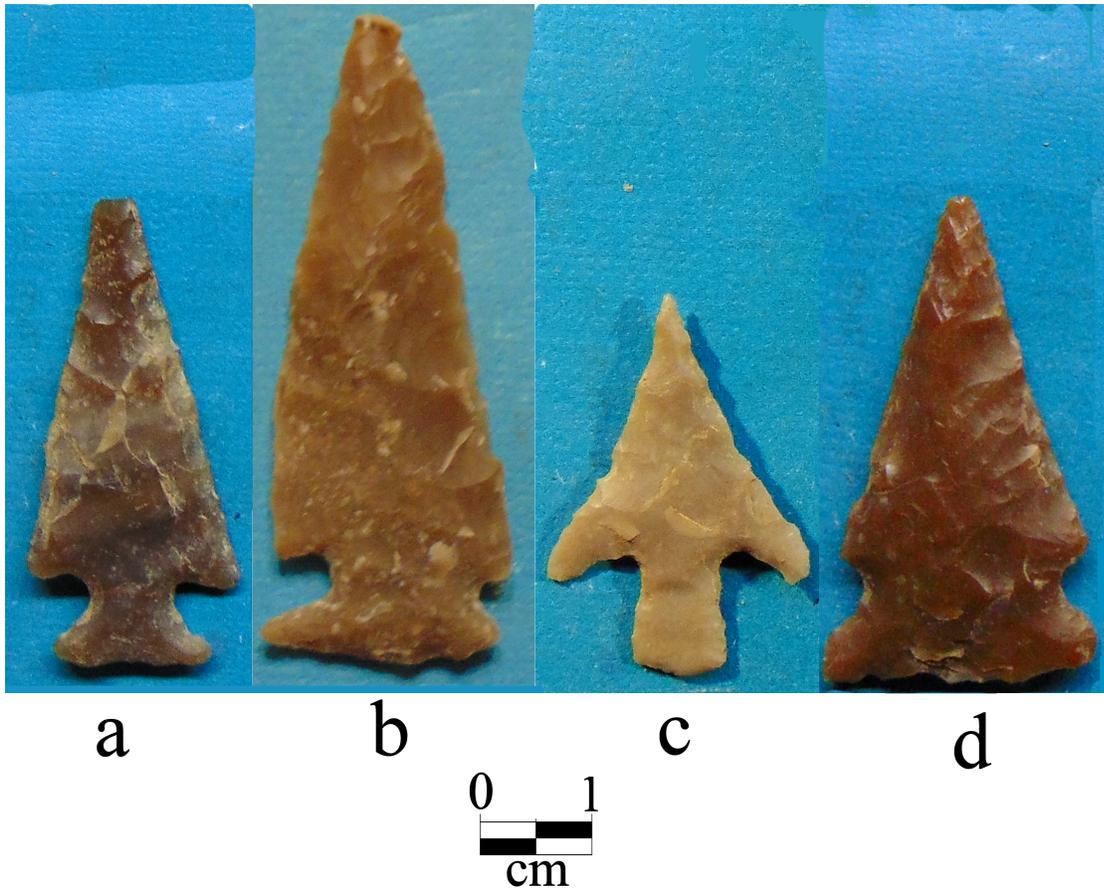


Figure 3. Ca. A.D. 700-1200 and ca. A.D. 1000-1400 arrow points in the Jenkins site collection: a, Scallorn, No. 543; b, Scallorn, No. 315; c, Moran, No. 529; d, Caracara, No. 547.

Edwards

Turner et al. (2011:190) consider Edwards arrow points to “be the earliest form in south and central Texas,” and they estimate its age as 10th-11th centuries A.D. Edwards points have well-barbed shoulders with an expanding stem, prominent corner notches, and a deeply recurved base (Figure 4a-c). The seven Edwards points from the Jenkins site are primarily made of dark brown, white, and tan Edwards chert, but two are tan to dark brown Uvalde gravel chert. The points range from 35-39 mm in length, 16-23 mm in width, and 3-6 mm in thickness; stem widths range from 6-9 mm.

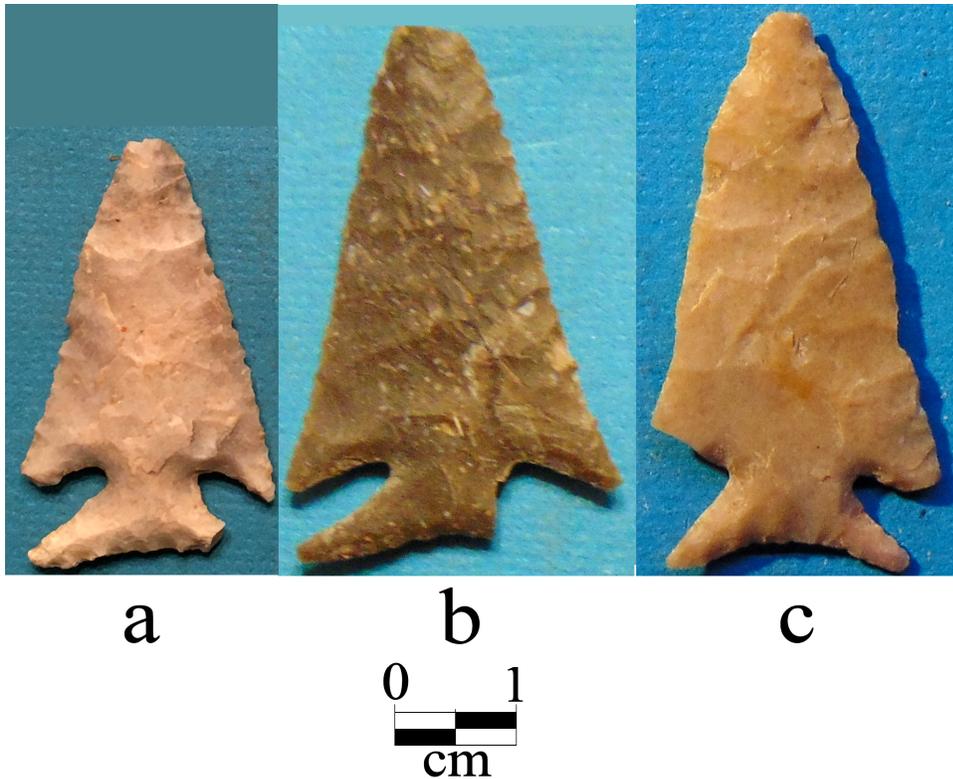


Figure 4. Edwards arrow points: a, No. 257; b, No. 316; c, No. 520.

Moran

Turner et al. (2011:194) consider the Moran and Scallorn arrow points to be temporally contemporaneous because of their association with Scallorn points in two burials at the Salt prong site (41SF18). The example from the Jenkins site (see Figure 3c) is made from tan Uvalde gravel chert, and has a narrow, parallel-sided, and a straight stem, with small barbs at the shoulders. The point is 29 mm in length, 20 mm in width, and 4 mm in thickness.

ca. A.D. 1000-1300 type

Caracara

The one Caracara arrow point in the assemblage is side-notched, with a flat but wide stem that extend beyond the width of the shoulders (see Figure 3d). It is made from a dark brown Uvalde gravel chert that fluoresces orange. The point is 35 mm in length, 20 mm in width, and 5 mm in thickness, with a 14 mm stem width. Turner et al. (2011) date the point from A.D. 1025-1292, but suggest it could date as late as A.D. 1437 (Turner et al. 2011:183)

*ca. A.D. 1200-1700 type***Perdiz**

Perdiz points are the most common in the Jenkins site arrow point assemblage, with eight specimens (Figure 5a-c). These have contracting stems and prominent, pointed, barbs. Three of the points have been worked on one side only.

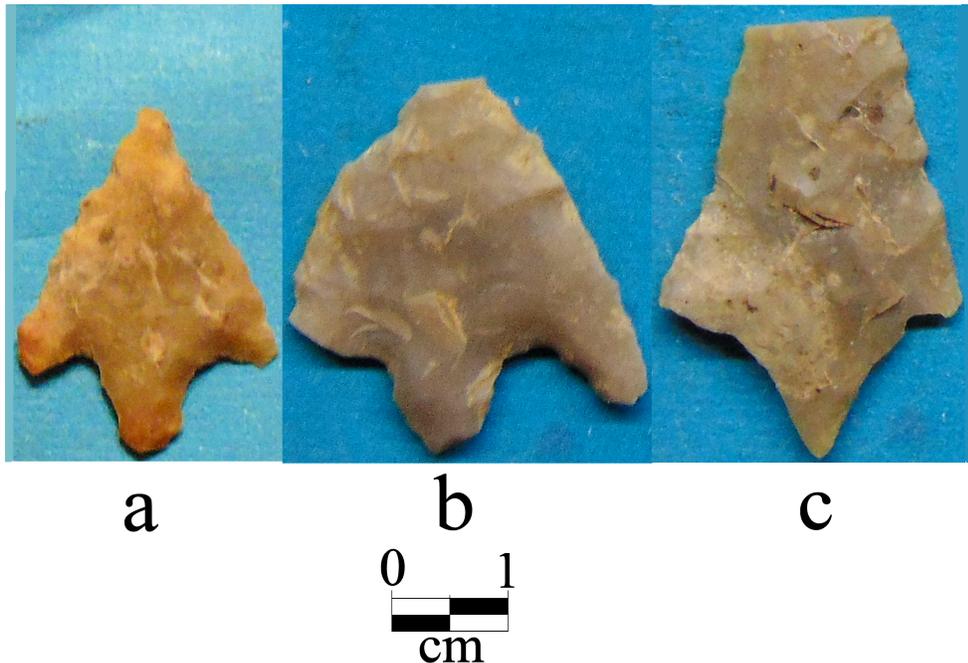


Figure 5. Perdiz arrow points: a, No. 300; b, No. 551; c, No. 552.

Two of the points have been made from brown to tan Edwards chert (see Figure 5a), while the others are made from gray to dark brown Uvalde gravel chert (see Figure 5b-c). The points range from 30-41 mm in length, 12-24 mm in width, and 2-6 mm in thickness. Stem length ranges from 7-12 mm.

*ca. 18th century type***Guerrero**

The one Guerrero arrow point from the Jenkins site is considered a 18th century mission era point, as this type of triangular to lanceolate arrow point has been found on mission sites, ranchos, and Historic Indian sites (Turner et al. 2011:194). It is likely associated with a few 18th century Spanish colonial ceramic sherds found at the site, including Green Glaze I, Mier Plain, and Galera ware (Perttula 2019a:Figure 11). The point is made from a tan Edwards Plateau chert, and is 46 mm in length, 15 mm in thickness, and 6 mm in thickness.

Arrow Point Preforms

Six ovoid-shaped arrow point preforms, probably made for the manufacture of Edwards arrow points, are in the Jenkins site collection (Figure 6a-b). They are all made from Uvalde gravel cherts, ranging from brown, dark brown, to gray in color. Most of these fluoresce orange, to pumpkin orange, and yellow. The preforms range from 36-47 cm in length, 19-25 mm in width, and 3-6 mm in thickness.

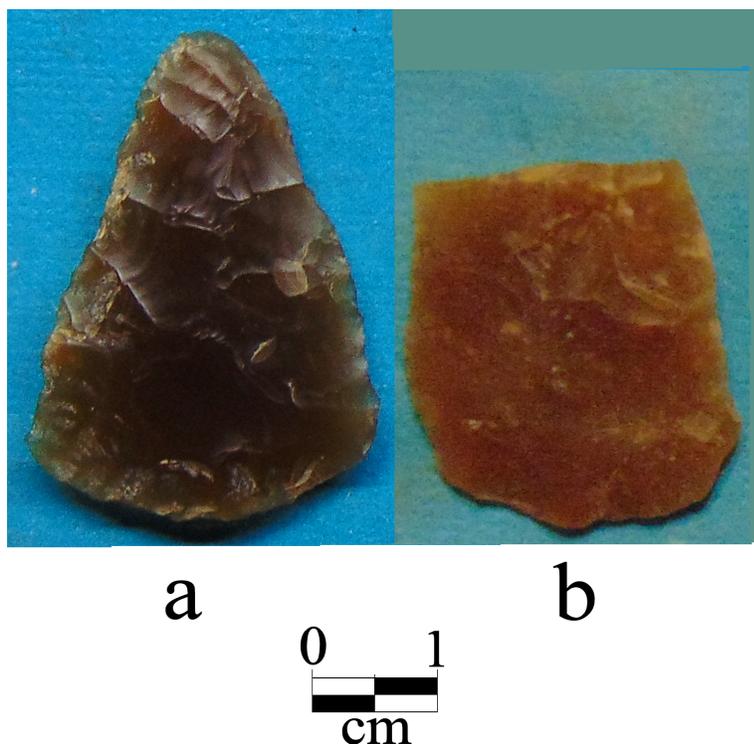


Figure 6. Selected arrow point preforms from the Jenkins site: a, No. 546; b, No. 570.

Unidentified Arrow Points

Two arrow point fragments in the collection cannot be identified to a defined arrow point type. One is made from a chalcedony that fluoresces an emerald green and the other is on Uvalde chert gravel that fluoresces a dark orange.

Gahagan Biface

The one Gahagan biface in the Jenkins site collection is made from a gray Edwards chert. The lateral edges are serrated and unifacially resharpened (Figure 7). Face A has a developed medial ridge created through edge resharpening. The biface is 63 mm in length, 28 mm in width, and 8 mm in thickness; the base width is 28 mm, and the basal concavity is 1 mm.

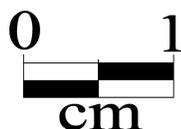


Figure 7. Gahagan biface in the Jenkins site collection, No. 319.

Gahagan bifaces are found in both East Texas Caddo sites dating around A.D. 1000, as well as in Central Texas hunter-gatherer sites (Selden et al. 2018, 2020). Differences in biface morphology and size suggests that Gahagan bifaces from Caddo sites were used primarily for burial accompaniments and ritual ceremonies, while Central Texas Gahagan bifaces were used for everyday activities (Selden et al. 2020).

Beveled Bifaces

There are two ca. A.D. 1250-1450+ beveled bifaces (see Turner et al. 2011:222-223) in the Jenkins site collection. Both are probably associated with the Toyah phase occupation of the site.

The first beveled biface is a four beveled form (Figure 8a) made on a dark brown Edwards chert. The two longest axes of the biface have alternate beveling and resharpenering. The second beveled biface is a two beveled form (Figure 8b) on tan chert that is common on South

Texas Toyah phase sites (Turner et al. 2011:223); Turner et al. (2011:222) considers this form “a regional variant of the better-known four-edged form; the distinctive shape is due to patterned resharpening.



Figure 8. Beveled bifaces from the Jenkins site: a, No. 456; b, No. 420.

Summary

Although it has been reported that many frames of arrow points have been collected from the Jenkins site (41AT287), there is only a modest sample of Late Prehistoric arrow points, preforms, and large bifacial knives that have been fully documented; these tools are discussed and illustrated in this article. Common arrow point types at the site include Perdiz, Edwards, and Scallorn, with single examples of Moran, Caracara, and Guerrero points, and there are also examples of large bifacial knives of the Gahagan type and beveled forms. These tools are made from Uvalde gravel chert sources and Edwards Plateau chert.

The arrow points and knives that have been documented from the Jenkins site, in combination with a substantial aboriginal ceramic assemblage and two radiocarbon dates, suggest that the site was used intermittently by Late Prehistoric mobile hunter-gatherers as early as A.D. 700 to as late as the early 18th century. Projectile point proportions point to more intensive use in the 10th and 11th centuries A.D. (Scallorn, Edwards, and Moran) and after ca. A.D. 1200 (Perdiz points) in the Toyah phase.

Acknowledgments

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