

## **The Natchez-Kussoe Indians**

Edisto Natchez-Kussoe Tribe - The Kussoe Indians (more historically accurate, "Cusabo") are native to the South Carolina Lowcountry and are documented in history from the time of the founding of Charles Town in 1670. Around 1700 the Kussoes were granted land near the Edisto River (called Pon-Pon by the Indians), also known as the Spoons, referred to as Osborne by the locals. The ancestors of the tribe descended both from the Cusabo and from the Natchez Indians that lived in the lower Mississippi valley. The Natchez were forced to migrate from the Mississippi region by the colonizing French. Many of them sought refuge among the Cherokees of North Carolina. In 1734 the first group of Natchez Indians left the Cherokee and came to Charleston seeking the protection of the English. In 1747, another group came from Cherokee country and the governor of SC granted them land near the Edisto River. They became known as the Edisto Indians. The name "Edisto" was officially adopted by the tribe in 1970 due to the fact that they had lived along the Edisto River for so long. Between 1840 and 1850 their ancestors started settling two communities known as "Creeltown" and "Four Holes." This is where the core members of the tribe live today, although they are still very near the Edisto River.

Additional info: European diseases killed half of the Low Country Indians in the first one hundred years. Remaining Indians were herded into smaller and smaller land areas (settlements). By 1774, Lt. Governor reports to the UK that there are no viable Indian groups in the Low Country.