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ZOOM in on america

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Walkers cross the five-mile-long Mackinac Bridge during the Labor Day walk in 2014. Photo AP Images



Michigan's commemorative "Spectacular Peninsulas" license plate design in 2006. Photo AP Images

In this issue: The State of Michigan

Zoom in on America

History of Michigan



The first inhabitants of Michigan were Native Americans, including the Fox, Sauk, Kickapoo, Menominee, Miami, Ojibwe, and Potawatomi tribes. The name "Michigan" comes from an Ojibwe word meaning "great water". Native Americans first came into contact with French missionaries and fur traders in the early 17th century. Friendly relations with Native Americans were vital for the survival of early settlers in Michigan, especially through the establishment of trade networks. It is estimated that between 15,000 - 60,000 Native Americans lived in the area of Michigan when the first Europeans settled there.

The first European to explore Michigan was a Frenchman named Étienne Brûlé in 1620. He was the first European explorer to journey beyond the St. Lawrence River. The first permanent European settlement in Michigan was founded in 1668 at Sault Ste. Marie by the French missionary Jacques Marquette. Sault Ste. Marie is now known as the oldest city in the American Midwest. In 1701, the French settlement of Fort Pontchartrain du Détroit was founded by Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac. Today it is known simply as Detroit. In 1763, Michigan changed from French to British territory after France lost to Britain in the Seven Years War. During the American Revolutionary War, from 1775 to 1783, many settlers in Michigan fought on the side of the American patriots. Most of the people in Michigan were tired of living under British rule, and they decided to fight for independence. In 1783, the Americans defeated the British and Michigan became property of the newly created United States of America. Michigan then spent more than 50 years as a territory, slowly gaining a larger population as many settlers came to work as farmers, lumbermen, shipbuilders, and merchants. Michigan officially became the 26th state of the United States of America on January 26, 1837. More than a century later, on November 1, 1957

the Mackinac Bridge was completed and the Upper and Lower Peninsulas of Michigan became connected for the first time.



Moses Gibson and his wife, Hattie, of Detroit, Michigan, both native born Michigan Ottawa Indians. Photo, 2010, AP Images

Michigan Symbols

*State Flower:
Apple Blossom*



*State Bird:
American Robin*

*State Tree:
Eastern White
Pine*



*State Nickname:
Great Lake State*



*State Fish:
Brook Trout*



Every state in the United States has their own particular symbols that represent the unique nature and beauty of that state. Michigan's state symbols reflect its expansive forests and its many lakes. Each of the animals and plants that symbolize Michigan are native to the state and play an important role in its ecosystems. Michigan also has a specific state mushroom (morel), gemstone (Isle Royale Greenstone), reptile (painted turtle), soil (Kalkaska soil), and even its own particular type of fossil (mastodon). Perhaps the most unique of Michigan's state symbols is its official state stone – the Petoskey stone – which is a type of stone that can only be found in northern Michigan near the city of Petoskey.

ed by four of the five Great Lakes: Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, Lake Erie, and Lake Superior. The geography of Michigan is quite unique; Michigan is the only state to be split into two separate peninsulas. The state of Michigan is almost entirely surrounded by the Great Lakes, and thus it is nearly an island. Michigan's unique "mitten" shape can be attributed to the movement of glaciers in the last Ice Age, which formed the massive Great Lakes thousands of years ago. Michigan shares borders with Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin, and Ontario. Michigan has the largest freshwater coastline in the United States and the second largest coastline in the U.S. after the state of Alaska.

One of Michigan's nicknames is the "Great Lake State". This nickname reflects the fact that Michigan is surround-

Detroit

Detroit is the largest and most populous city in Michigan. Its original inhabitants were Huron, Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Iroquois Indians. The city was first founded as a European settlement by Frenchmen in 1701, and it was later the capital city of Michigan from 1801 to 1847. Since 1847, however, the new capital of Michigan has been in Lansing. The population of Detroit is nearly 675,000 people, which makes Detroit the 23rd most populous city in the United States. Detroit is home to a diverse range of citizens. Many migrants came to the city throughout the 20th century, including African Americans from the southern part of the United States, Mexicans, Poles, Greeks, and Middle Eastern immigrants. Detroit is located in southeastern Michigan and is situated on the Detroit River. Across the river from Detroit is Windsor, Canada; the Ambassador Bridge between the two countries is the second busiest international border crossing in North America. Trade and business with Canada have always been important aspects of Detroit's economy. Detroit is best known for its impressive contributions to the automotive industry and its unique style of music, known as Motown music. The three largest car producers in the United States – Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler – are all headquartered in Detroit. Henry Ford began making cars in Detroit in 1903, and the city has been making

thousands of Ford cars ever since. Detroit is also known for its many beautiful buildings. In 2015, it was the first city in the United States to be named a UNESCO “City of Design”. It is also home to the second largest theater district in the United States after New York City. Detroit faced trouble in the 1960's due to riots and strife between its white and black populations, and the city was consequently plunged into a period of decline. Recently, the city of Detroit has made large progress in revitalization efforts, including the renovation of historic buildings and the introduction of new industries. Detroit is now moving beyond its turbulent past to become a growing center of tourism, industry, and business.



Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan

Ann Arbor is one of the most populous cities in the state of Michigan. It was founded in 1824 and became the home of the University of Michigan in 1837. It is best known for its many museums, libraries, and academic atmosphere. Ann Arbor is also known for its many trees. The campus of the University of Michigan is spread throughout Ann Arbor, and many of the city's most beautiful buildings belong to the school. The University of Michigan (also called simply U of M) has been rated as the #1 public university in the United States and is known for its excellent programs in humanities, engineering, medicine, and more. Student life at U of M revolves around difficult schoolwork and rowdy football games. Ann Arbor is home to Michigan Stadium - the football stadium for the University of Michigan - which is the largest stadium in America. Attending football games on Saturdays in the autumn is a tradition for students. The school mascot is the wolverine, and the school colors are maize (gold) and blue. Students show their support of U of M by wearing lots of maize and blue and singing along loudly to the school's official song. The University of Michigan's campus has won many rankings as one of the best college towns in America. The students at U of M come from all 50 states and more than 90 countries around the world, which makes it a very unique and diverse university.

Ann Arbor is located on the Huron River, and it has many beautiful parks and nature areas. Many residents of Ann Arbor love to engage in outdoor activities, such as kayaking, riding bicycles, and jogging on the city's sidewalks

and trails. Ann Arbor provides a diverse atmosphere and exciting cultural experiences; it is home to many small theaters and art galleries. Ann Arbor's Main Street is its most bustling area, with many delicious restaurants and independent shops. One of the Ann Arbor's most famous restaurants is a deli that even President Barack Obama once visited for a sandwich. In 2010, Ann Arbor was voted by Forbes as one of the most “liveable” cities in the United States. The architecture of Ann Arbor is a mix of 19th century university buildings, Victorian style homes, and even a few skyscrapers. Although it's a small city, Ann Arbor has many interesting things to experience and see, and it is home to a world-class university.



The Great Lakes

Superior, Michigan, Huron, Erie and Ontario are the Great Lakes from west to east. They span 1,200 km from west to east. Together, they cover an area of 244,100 square kilometers. The lakes are shared between the United States and Canada. It would be hard to overestimate the role of this vast freshwater basin as it plays an essential part in providing transportation, recreation, power and most of all supplies drinking water.

On the world scale, the Great Lakes contain 1/5th of all fresh water on the planet. For North America this fraction rises to 3/4th.

The Great Lakes Basin is a densely populated region with about 30 million people living in the 10 states and provinces that they touch. The states and provinces include: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Ontario, Pennsylvania, Quebec, and Wisconsin.

It is naturally of great interest how the lakes compare with one another. Lake Superior - as its name suggests - is the largest of the lakes with the length of 563 km and breadth of 257 km. Its shoreline length is 4,393 km including islands. Just imagine how long it would take to drive such a distance.

The second largest is Lake Huron, with length of 332 km, breadth 295 km and shoreline length 6,164 km.

Lake Michigan comes as the third largest of the Great Lakes with the length of 494 km, breadth, 190 km and shoreline length 2,639 km.

Next in size is Lake Erie, whose length is 388 km, breadth, 92 km and shoreline length, 1,402 km.

The smallest of the five is Lake Ontario with length of 311km, breadth, 85 km and shoreline length 1,146 km.

In the comparison of the lakes it is interesting to see how deep each lake is. It turns out that here the record is held again by Lake Superior. The comparison of average and maximum depth is listed below. The numbers are provided by the NOAA - Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory (<https://www.glerl.noaa.gov/education/ourlakes/lakes.html>)

Superior: 149 m average, 406 m maximum, Michigan: 85 m average, 281 m maximum, Huron: 59 m average, 229 m maximum, Erie: 19 m average, 64 m maximum, Ontario: 86 m average, 244 m maximum.

While the Great Lakes don't all touch one another, they are all part of the same drainage system in the Great Lakes Basin. The ones that are directly connected through the Straits of Mackinac are Lakes Michigan and Huron. Thus they can also be considered as one lake - Lake Michigan-Huron. The Great Lakes are connected to the Atlantic Ocean through the St. Lawrence Seaway, a system of locks, canals, and channels in Canada and the United States, which makes it possible for oceangoing vessels to travel from the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes.



The sun sets over the Mackinac Bridge and the Mackinac Straits as seen from Lake Huron. The bridge is the dividing line between Lake Michigan to the west and Lake Huron to the east. Photo AP Images

Lakes' Names and Lighthouses

The Great Lakes, are collectively referred to as the "inland seas" or the "third coast of the U.S. and Canada." But it is also interesting to learn about the origin of their individual names. Lake Erie was named after the Erie tribe, a shortened form of the Iroquoian word *erielhonan* "long tail". Huron was the name given to the lake after the inhabitants of the area, the Wyandot (or "Hurons"). Lake Michigan comes from the Ojibwa word *mishi-gami* meaning "great water" or "large lake". Lake Ontario was taken from the Wyandot (Huron) word *ontarí'io*, which means "lake of shining waters". Finally, Lake Superior is the English translation of the French term *lac supérieur* "upper lake", referring to its position north of Lake Huron.

The Great Lakes have never been easy to navigate. The fall months, October through December, have frequent storms, with the waves reaching a height of ten meters at times.

That is why the role of lighthouses in the old days was very important. The good purpose lighthouses served by assisting ships in bad weather, guiding them safely to ports, and warning them against shallow waters and treacherous rocks has warmed people's hearts to them for centuries. Lighthouse keepers were always aware of the responsibility they held for the lives of sailors. The keepers, both men

and women, were also in a sense lifeguards who rescued castaways and others from drowning. Many lighthouse keepers saved dozens and even hundreds of lives.

The 20th century, with the development in technology changed the job of the light-house keeper tremendously. Technology produced less of a need for lighthouse keepers, and in 1999 the last manned light station (Boston Harbor Light) was automated.

The keepers' houses and lighthouse towers started to crumble. Neglected, exposed to high winds, waves, and humidity, they soon lost their luster, and years later plans were made to take them down.

But by that time, local people did not want to let them go. They wanted them restored and brought back to their former beauty. Groups of preservationists conducted crusades to save the old lighthouses. Such efforts restored the Charlotte-Genesee Light in Rochester, New York, the Crisp Point Light in Northwest of Paradise, Michigan, the Fire Island Light in New York, and the Holland Harbor Light in Holland, Michigan. The lenses from the deactivated lighthouses were often entrusted to maritime museums.



This is a 1999 photo of the Point Iroquois Lighthouse near Brimley, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The state must take care of many more of its aging lighthouses since the federal government has started to turn over control of the facilities to Michigan.

Photo AP Images



The Little Sable Point Lighthouse in Silver Lake State Park near Mears, Michigan, Photo AP Images