

CHAPTER FOUR

Man Puts in an Appearance

When did man first appear in this area? Was he here in the pre-glacial era? Was he here during the centuries the land lay frigid in the icy grip of the thousands of square feet of ice? He would hardly attempt to migrate during the post-glacial period when the land was submerged in Lake Agassiz—covered in areas to a depth of six hundred feet of water. Remember, man needs game animals and vegetation to survive and these were not present at that time.

According to a survey conducted in the park in 1970, “beaches were beginning to form along the glacial lake about 13,000 years ago.” It is questionable whether early man may have moved gingerly into the area at that time.

“Following deglaciation a spruce forest covered the region, creeping in from the south.” This type of fodder is not conducive to a game animal diet, hence the stage was not yet set for man.

“Then a treeless type of vegetation emerged to mix with the spruce and this included grasses, willows and juniper. Then about 10,000 years ago, as a result of warmer, drier climate, a growth including shrubs and herblike goosefoot, ragweed, lambsquarters and wormweed appeared.”

Now we have food suitable to game animals and we can begin to look for man’s presence.

“About 6,000 years ago the above chenopod growth decreased, making room for a *Corylus* growth of hazel and filbert shrub along with other shrubs and small trees. About 2,500 years ago coniferous trees immigrated.” Now our present-day vegetation in its natural stage is complete.