

Beads



**Captain John Smith
Chesapeake National
Historic Trail**



Beads

Beads in the Chesapeake were typically made from materials such as stones, shells, or copper. Tribes like the Nanticoke on the Eastern Shore traded valuable shell beads, known as "wampum," to inland tribes. The artifact on the front of this card is "Powhatan's Mantle," a piece of clothing that showcases Virginia Indian shell beadwork from the contact period. Sometimes archeologists find beads in the Chesapeake that come from all over the world. This includes countries like Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Angola, and possibly as far as India. Bead collections tell the story of how American Indian, European, African, and other global cultures intersected here in the late 1500s and early 1600s.