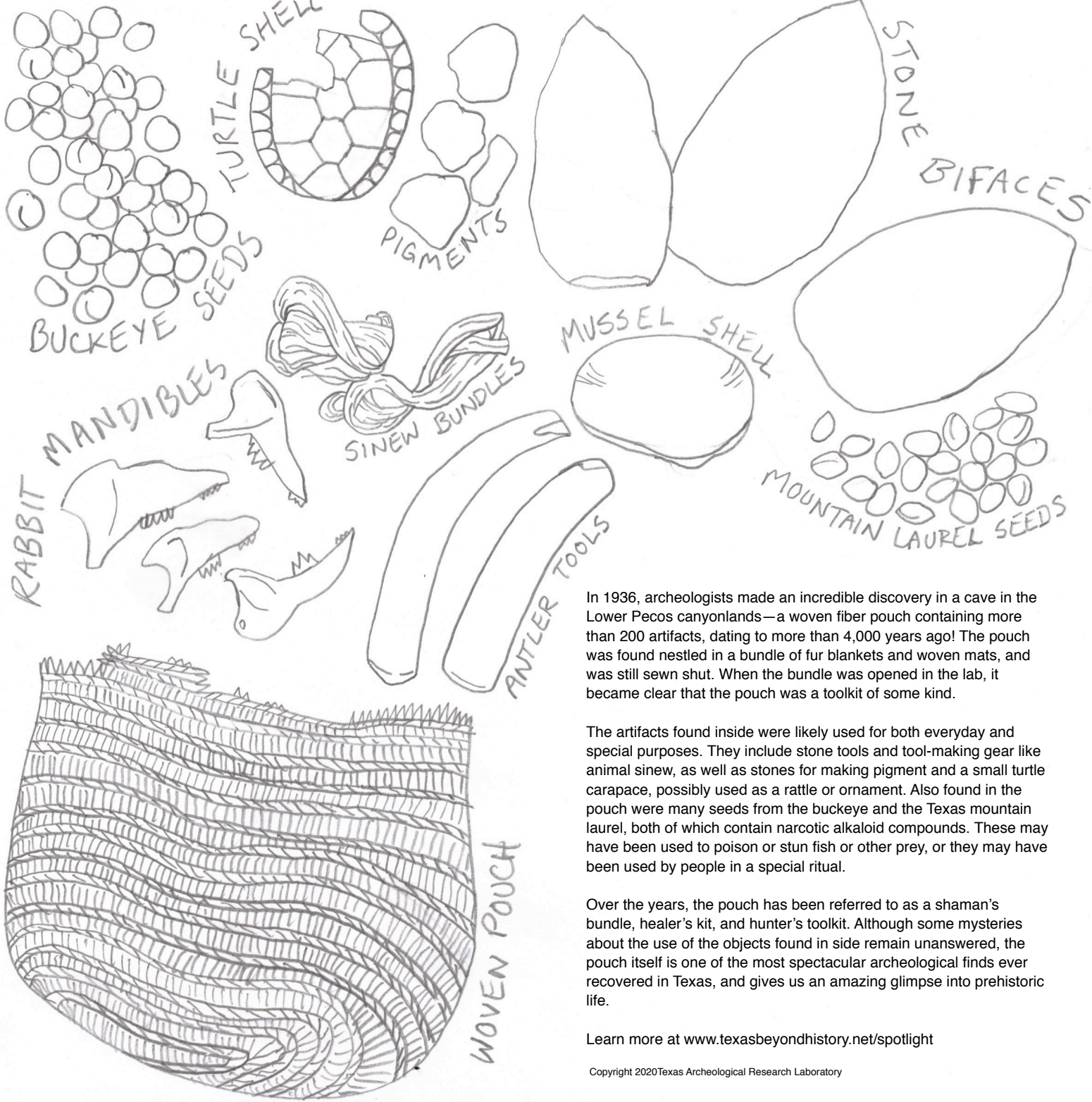


"HUNTER'S POUCH" FROM HORSESHOE RANCH CAVE



In 1936, archeologists made an incredible discovery in a cave in the Lower Pecos canyonlands—a woven fiber pouch containing more than 200 artifacts, dating to more than 4,000 years ago! The pouch was found nestled in a bundle of fur blankets and woven mats, and was still sewn shut. When the bundle was opened in the lab, it became clear that the pouch was a toolkit of some kind.

The artifacts found inside were likely used for both everyday and special purposes. They include stone tools and tool-making gear like animal sinew, as well as stones for making pigment and a small turtle carapace, possibly used as a rattle or ornament. Also found in the pouch were many seeds from the buckeye and the Texas mountain laurel, both of which contain narcotic alkaloid compounds. These may have been used to poison or stun fish or other prey, or they may have been used by people in a special ritual.

Over the years, the pouch has been referred to as a shaman's bundle, healer's kit, and hunter's toolkit. Although some mysteries about the use of the objects found in side remain unanswered, the pouch itself is one of the most spectacular archeological finds ever recovered in Texas, and gives us an amazing glimpse into prehistoric life.

Learn more at www.texasbeyondhistory.net/spotlight