

## CHAPTER 6 WEEDEN ISLAND AND THE GLADES TRADITION

The ceramic arts of the Weeden Island culture represent the second major artistic trajectory borne out of the Hopewellian horizon described in Chapter 2. Similarities between the Weeden Island and the Glades tradition include a like corpus of animals from which symbolic expression is drawn, as well as a corporate aspect to much of the art. Weeden Island potters designed some effigy vessels to be exhibited on posts like the wood carvings of Fort Center. Differences between the two artistic traditions include primary reliance on distinct media--Weeden Island art is ceramic, while Glades tradition art is of antler, bone and wood. Lacking from Weeden Island contexts is the personal element of Glades art known from the small bone carvings described in Chapter 4, as well as the type of ceremonial paraphernalia like that known from Key Marco. One additional difference on an iconographic level is a Weeden Island interest in human imagery, since the human form is virtually absent from Glades tradition art. The general correspondences, with some major differences, make comparison of the Weeden Island and Glades arts of interest.

The goal of this chapter is to document the common origin of the Weeden Island and Glades traditions in the

earlier Hopewellian horizon. Also, the imagery of Weeden Island closely parallels that found in the Glades tradition, suggesting that comparison of motifs, themes and overall art systems may aid in better modelling and interpretation of both art trajectories.

#### Weeden Island Culture

Milanich et al. (1984) have provided some stratigraphic context for the north-central Florida expression of Weeden Island in their study of the McKeithen site (8CO17). The McKeithen site is not only important because of the ceremonial cache of decorated and effigy ceramics, but because one component of the study offers an analysis of the zoomorphic symbolism of Weeden Island (Knight in Milanich et al. 1984). It should be noted that Weeden Island provides a significant contrast to other Late Woodland cultures in the Midwest and Southeast. At a period when major centers disappear and broad-ranging art styles lose prominence, Weeden Island develops and elaborates aspects of the earlier Hopewellian and Adena patterns (Kohler 1991). In Florida, areas with Weeden Island expressions are those that participate in the later, far-reaching cultures and art styles of the Mississippian era (Figure 6-1 illustrates the geographic extent of Weeden Island, as well as those sites discussed in this chapter).

Ceramic Arts

The art styles of Weeden Island could easily be declared the "climax" of Florida art to emphasize the local development and subsequent temporal and regional impacts of the artists of this culture. As with the Hopewellian-influenced styles discussed in the previous chapters, the Weeden Island art has a primarily mortuary or ceremonial context. Like the arts of Yent and Green Point, the ceramics of the Weeden Island complex are often recovered from ceremonial caches made during mound construction. This corporate mortuary art shares similarities with the wooden effigies of Fort Center (see Chapter 3), where the wooden carvings of the mortuary pond are not associated with specific individuals, but with the mortuary area in general. Milanich et al. (1984:99-100) have suggested that the pedestaled ceramic effigies of Weeden Island may have been mounted on posts prior to their interment, much as the wooden effigies of Fort Center. In many ways the arts of Weeden Island exist in articulation with those of the Glades tradition, but also provide a case of parallel development to one another. Weeden Island, like the Glades tradition, has its inspiration in the Hopewellian-related Yent and Green Point complexes. Many of the animals represented in Weeden Island have counterparts in the carvings of bone and wood from Fort Center, Key Marco and other southern Florida sites. Unlike the carvings that best characterize the early