

Ancient Egypt



Objective: You will be able to describe how the Nile River influenced Egyptian civilization and the reasons a united government arose along its banks.

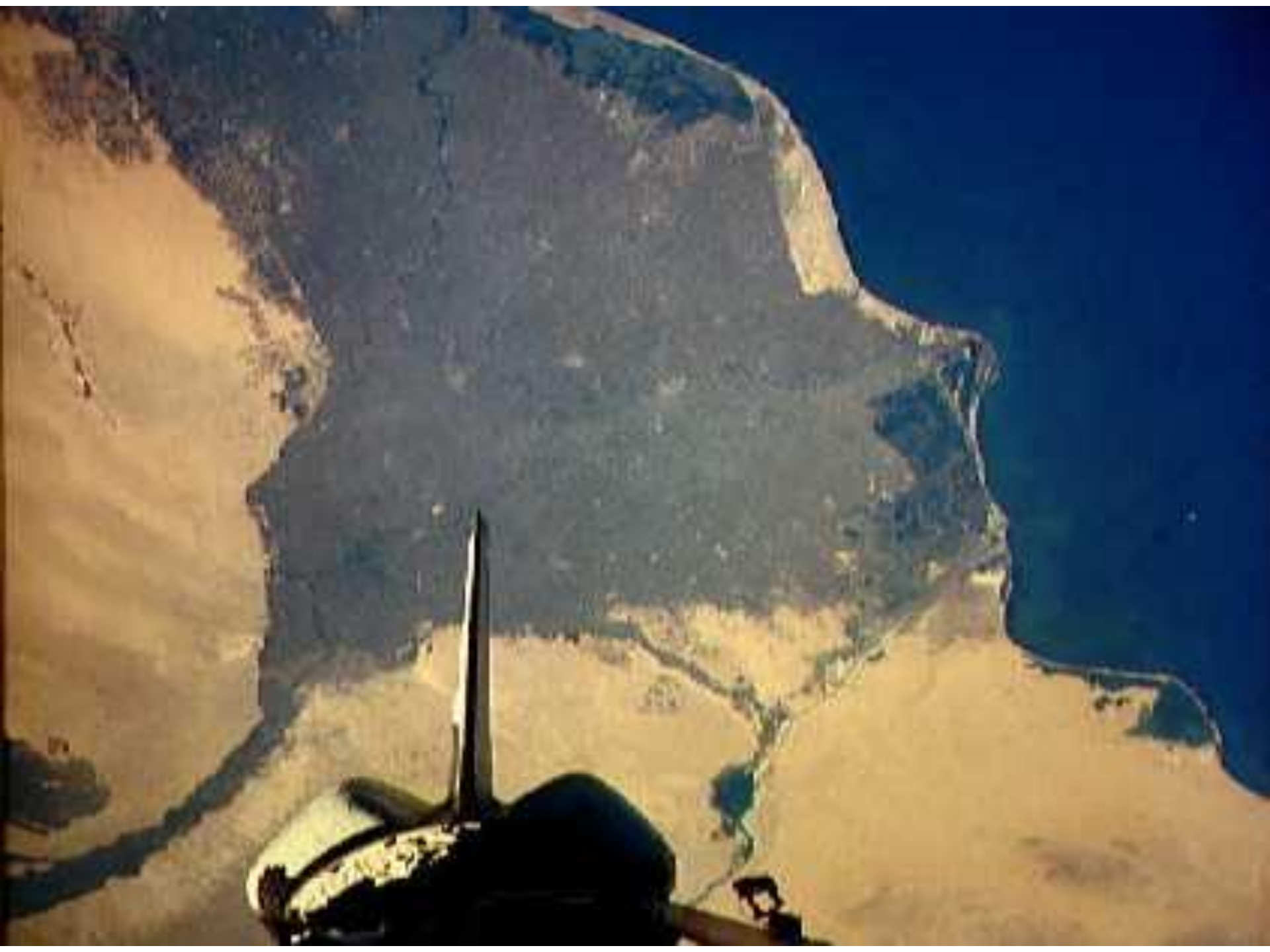
Characteristics of the Nile

With an astounding length of 4,145 miles, the Nile River is the longest river in the world, and the only major river that flows south to north.











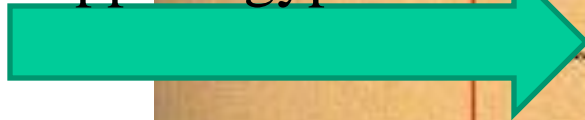


Lower Egypt



SITES AND CITIES
IN
ANCIENT EGYPT

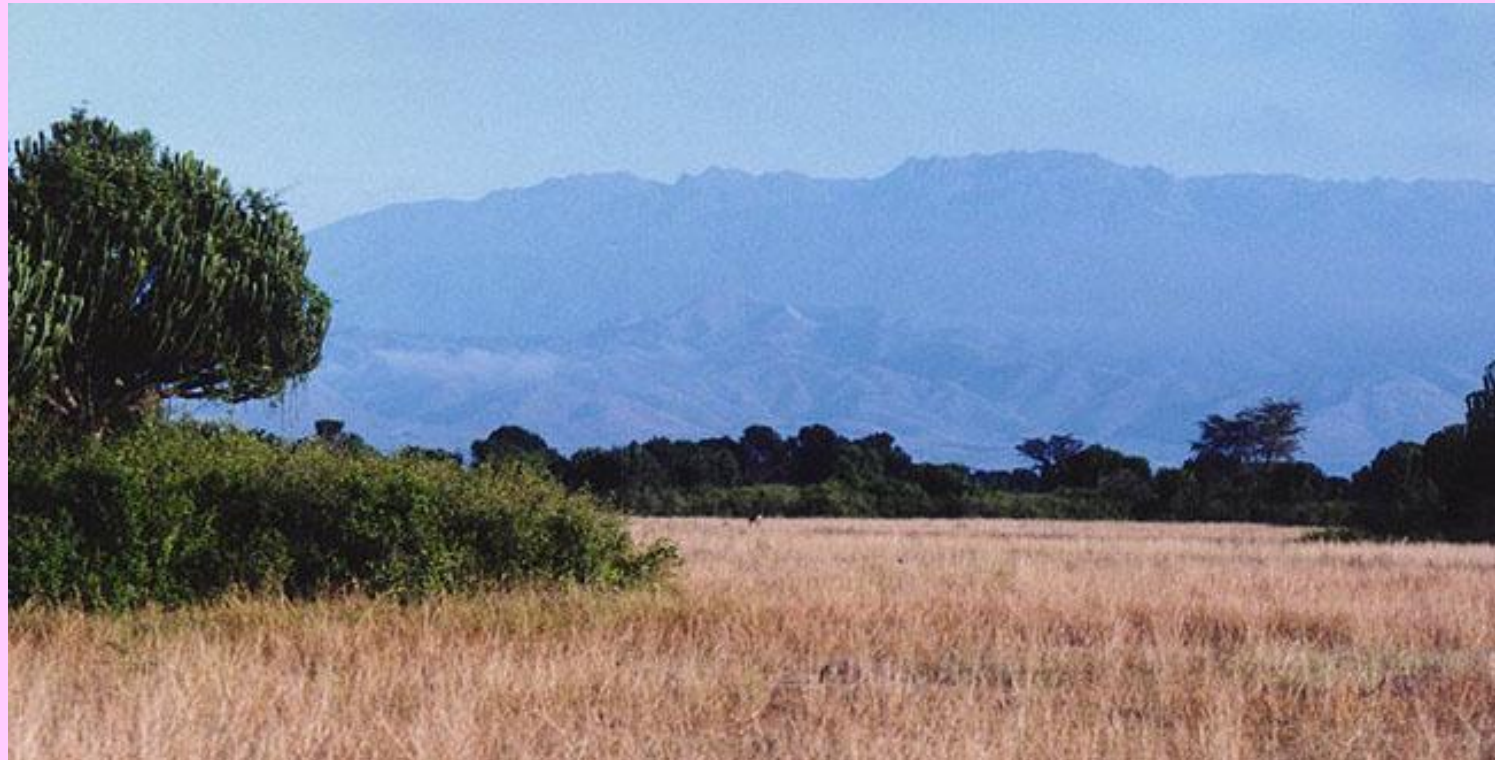
Upper Egypt



The Nile River is often called the “lifeblood” or “The Gift” of Egypt.



The source of the Nile is in the Ruwenzori Mountains. It rains almost every day in these mountains with the rain water feeding into the Blue Nile.



The Blue Nile flows out of the mountains and meets with the White Nile.



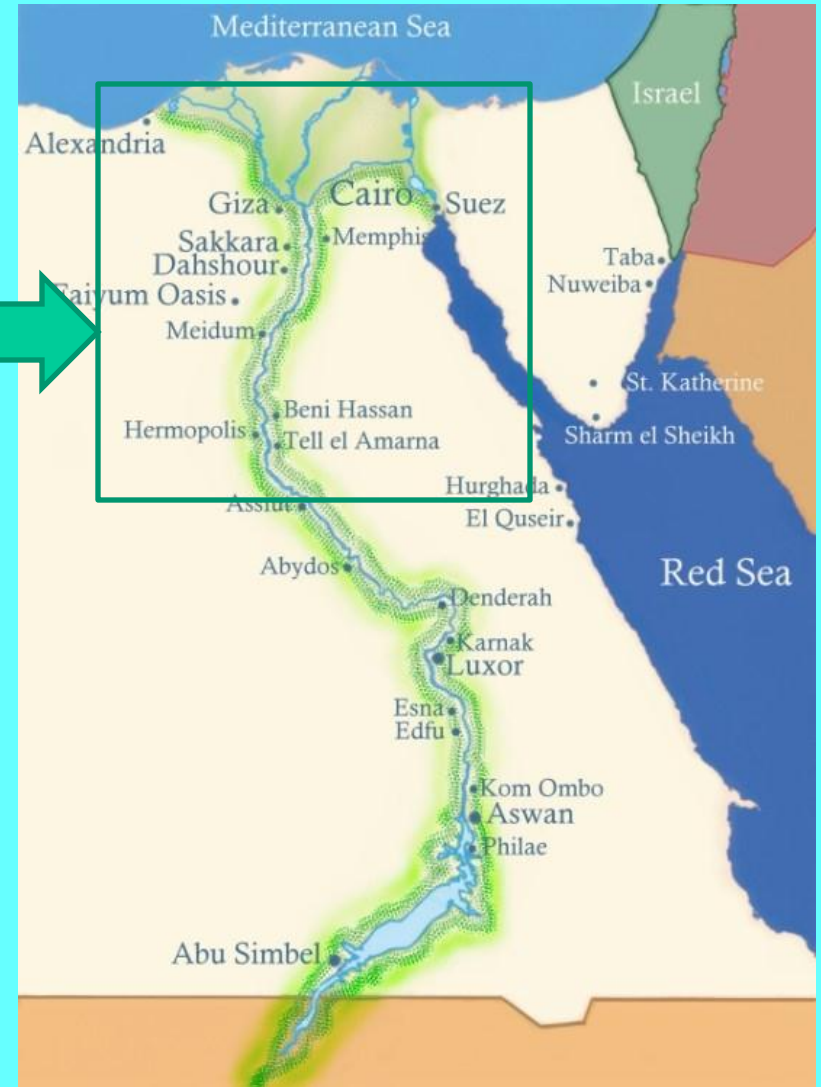
Along the Nile there are locations called cataracts. The cataracts prevented invasions from the South along the Nile River. The rushing and swirling water was too difficult to travel along.





At times, Ancient Egypt included parts of present day Sudan, Israel, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, but

Its heart was the thin strip of land along the Nile River between the first cataract and the Mediterranean Sea.



Harsh deserts surrounded the Nile river. These deserts acted as a natural barrier against invasions.

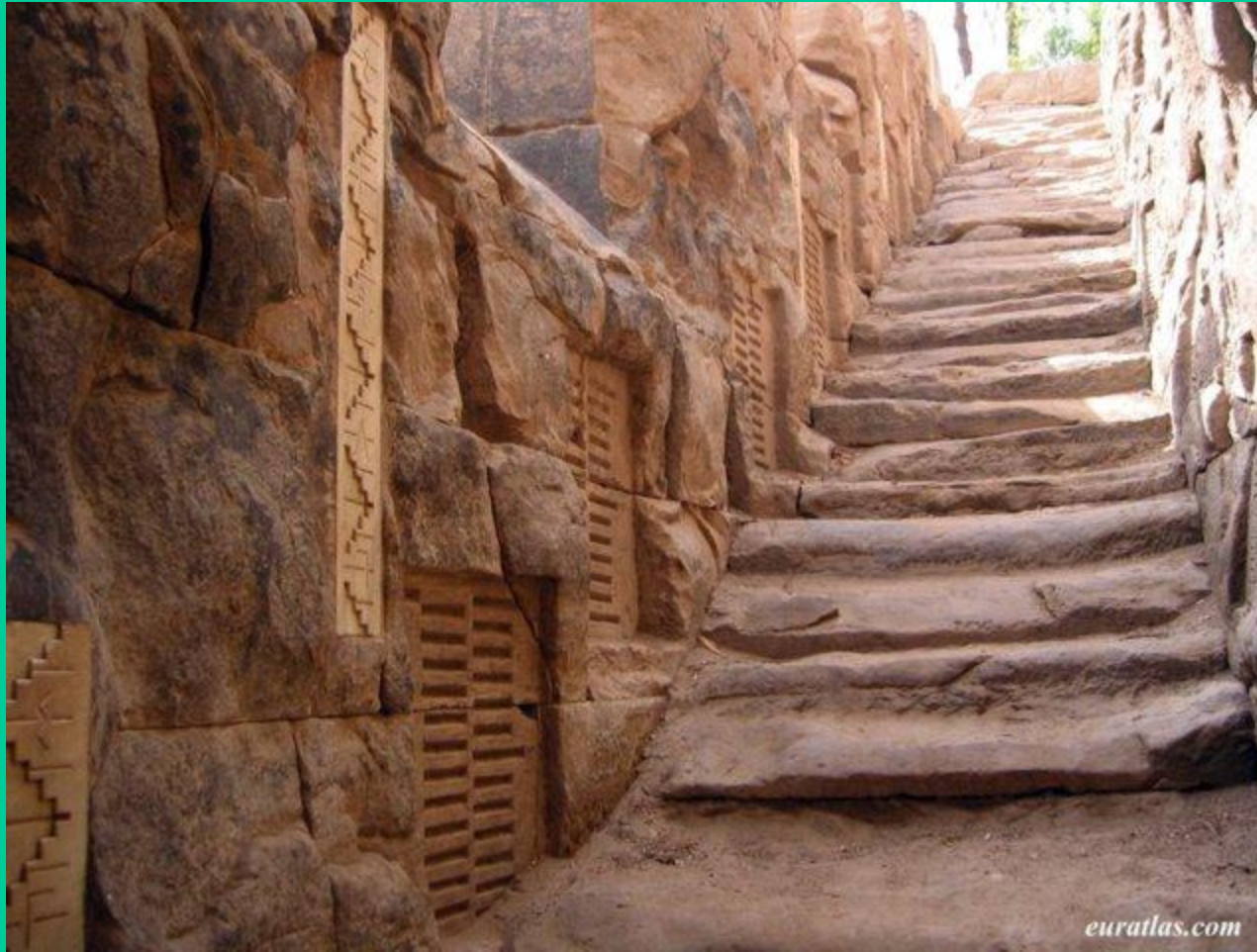


The Nile River
flooded each
year to create a
long narrow
corridor about
12 miles wide
of very fertile
soil.



The height of the floodwaters determined whether it was feast or famine for the Egyptians. If the floodwaters were too high it meant ruined homes and drowned villages. A “low” Nile meant drought and famine for the Egyptians.

The Egyptians were so concerned with the height of the flood that they devised a nilometer to measure the floodwaters.



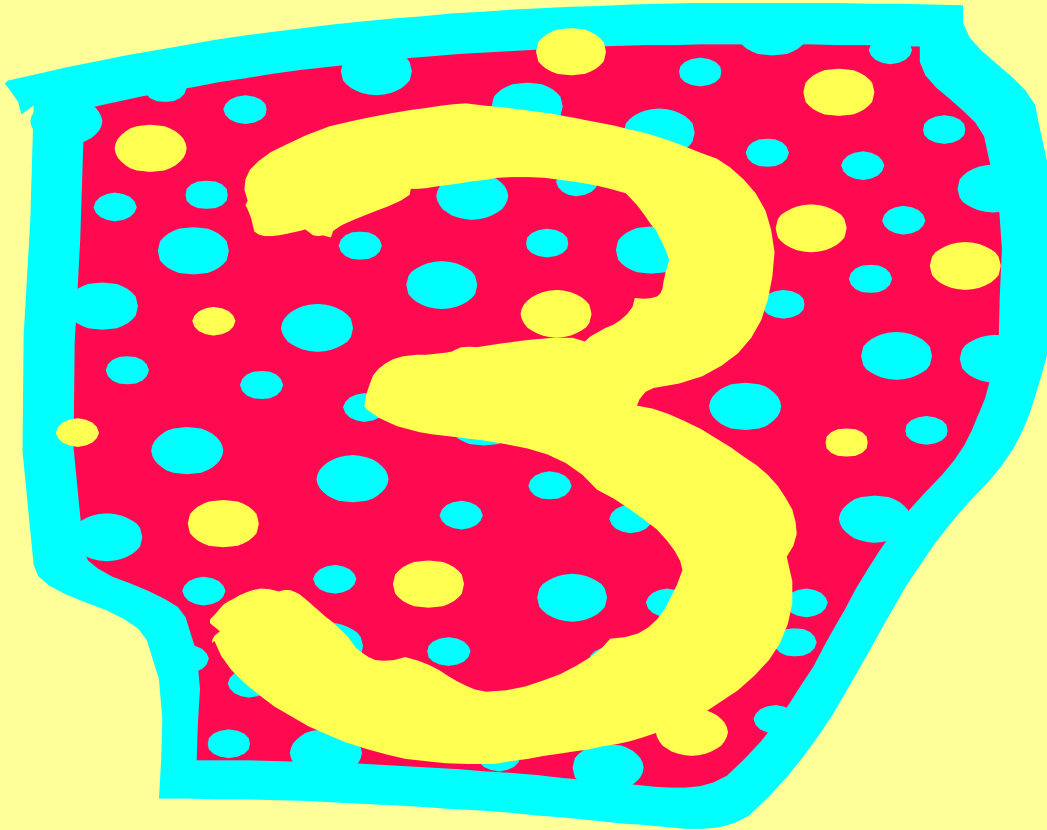
Early
Nilometer at
Elephantine.
You can see
how the level
of the water
could be
tracked.



Later
Nilometer
near Cairo.
Water would
fill the
structure and
be measured
with the tall
pole like
device.

Seasons of the Nile

The Egyptians divided their year into three seasons based on the behavior of the Nile.



The “Inundation” was the time from June to September. This was the time of the flood. During this time, Egyptians were paid to work for the Pharaoh on building projects.

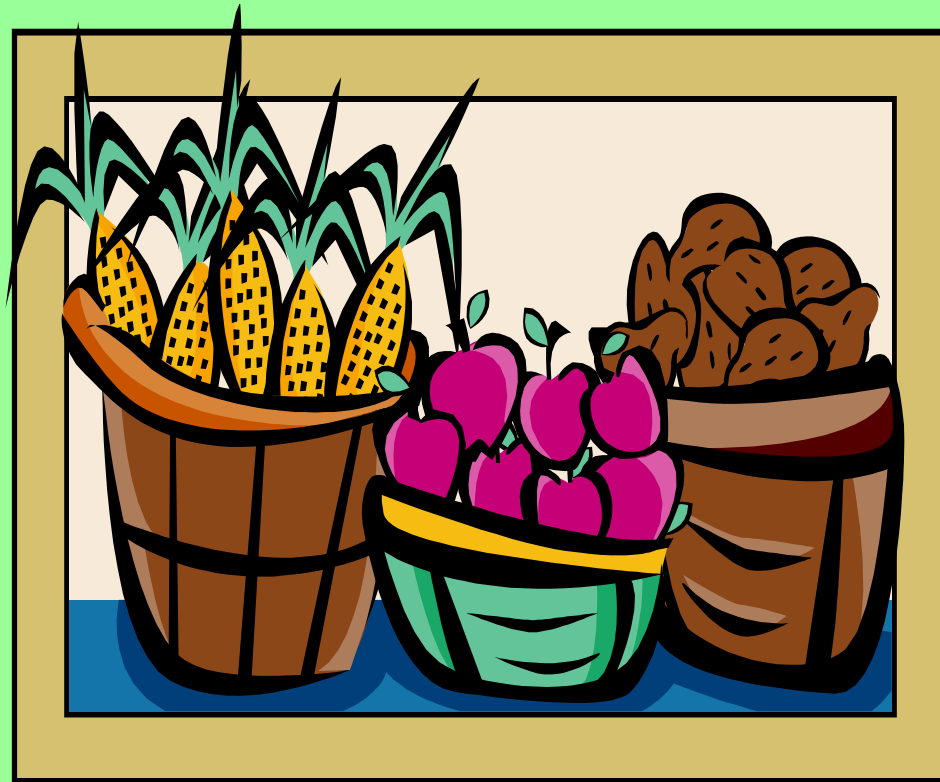


The “Emergence” of the land from the water covering was from October to February.

During this time, Egyptians planted and captured as much water as possible in irrigation ditches.



The last of the three seasons was the “drought” season. During the drought, the harvest took place.



**PLANTS AND
ANIMALS ON THE
NILE**

**The Nile River
and delta were
home to a wide
variety of
plants and
wildlife.**

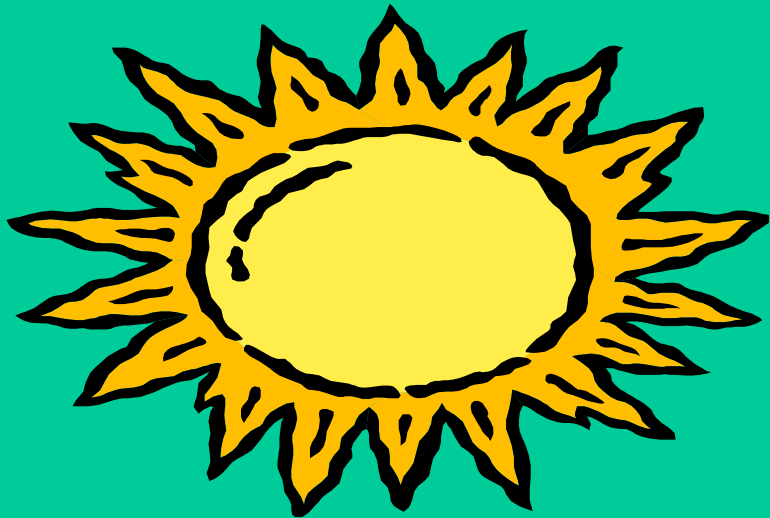
Papyrus was one of the most versatile plants growing along the Nile. The plant was used to make paper, sandals, boats, ropes, and even paintbrushes.



The white lily and the blue lily grew along Nile. The blue lily was a sacred plant and was usually shown in art and sculpture.



Water lilies were associated with the sun. At night they closed and sank below the water. In the morning, they opened and rose above the water, like the sun rising.



Hippopotami:

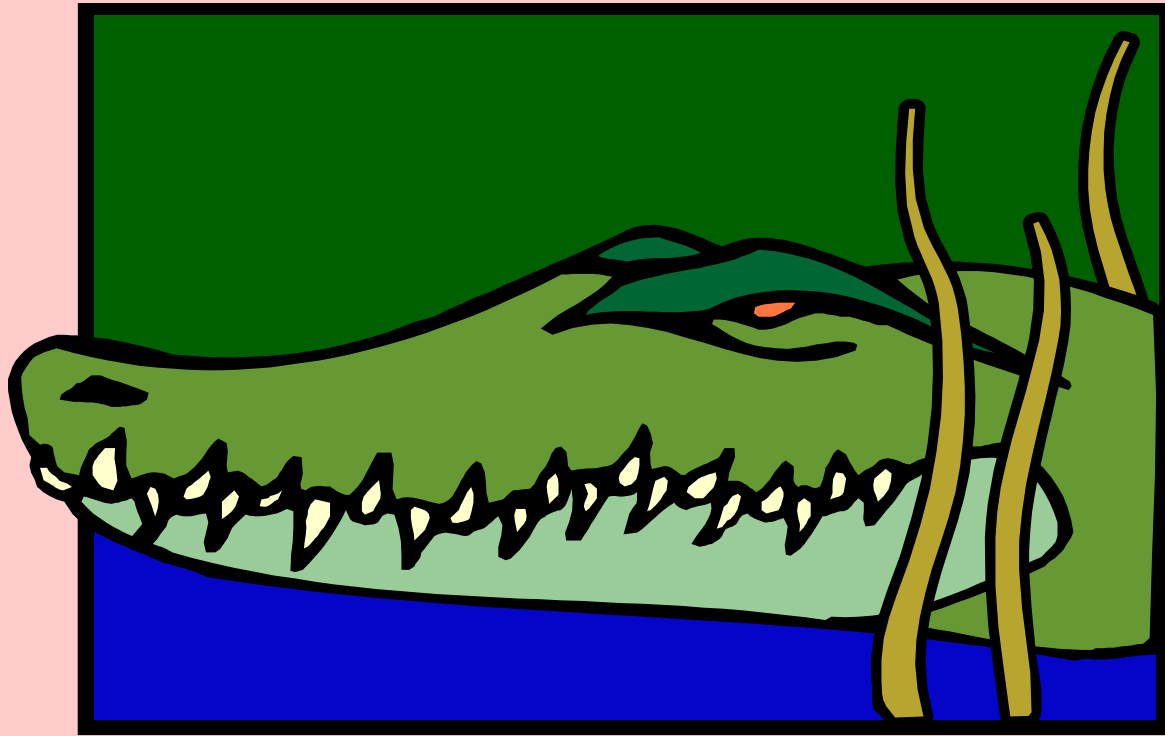
Huge herds of these large animals swam in the Nile. They were often underwater running across the bottom on their toes.



Farmers hated Hippos because they would come ashore and eat an entire crop. Boatmen did not like them much either. An enraged Hippo could overturn a boat on the river.



Crocodiles lived in the marshy areas along the banks of the Nile.



Crocodiles could easily attack people who worked along or in the Nile.

**"I LOVE
LAUNDRY
DAY!"**



Crocodiles were honored as the
god Sobek and were often
mummified after their deaths.



**“I am
a
god!”**

The cobra or asp lived throughout the Nile delta. This sacred animal was the symbol of all of lower Egypt and of the Pharaoh.

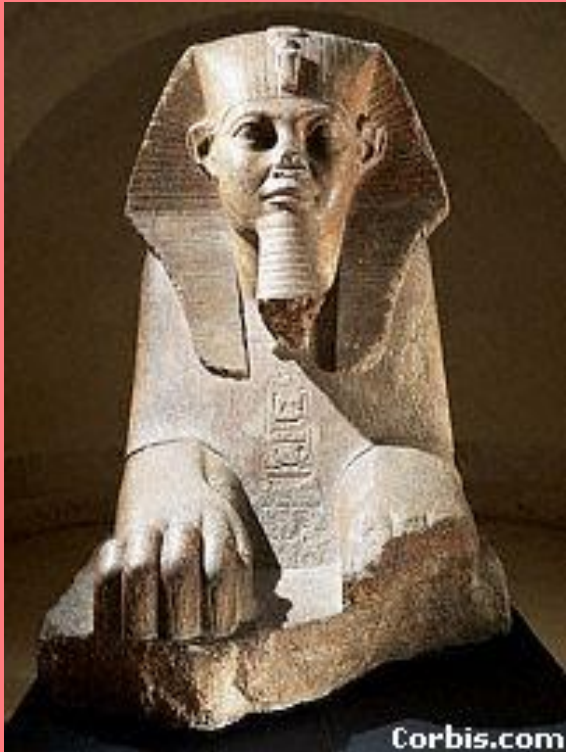


Geese, ducks, storks, ibis, pelicans and herons all lived along the Nile. They ate the abundant fish that lived in the Nile. Egyptian people also ate fish from the river, but the Pharaoh never ate fish because it was considered “unclean” from the Nile waters.

Vultures, jackals, lions, gazelles and antelopes also lived around the Nile and in the deserts. The jackal often was depicted as Anubis the guardian of the afterlife.



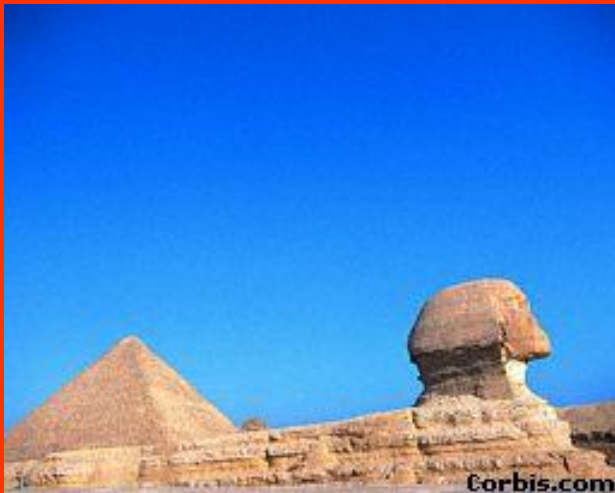
The lion was shown in the sphinx. It was considered to be a noble animal and was often linked to the power of the Pharaoh.



Many mines and quarries along the edges of the Nile provided granite, limestone, and sandstone.

All of the quarries belonged to the pharaoh. The stone was used to construct monuments to the

Pharaoh.



Precious metal mines were also abundant. Gold and copper mines gave the Pharaoh wealth and splendor.



FARMS ON THE NILE

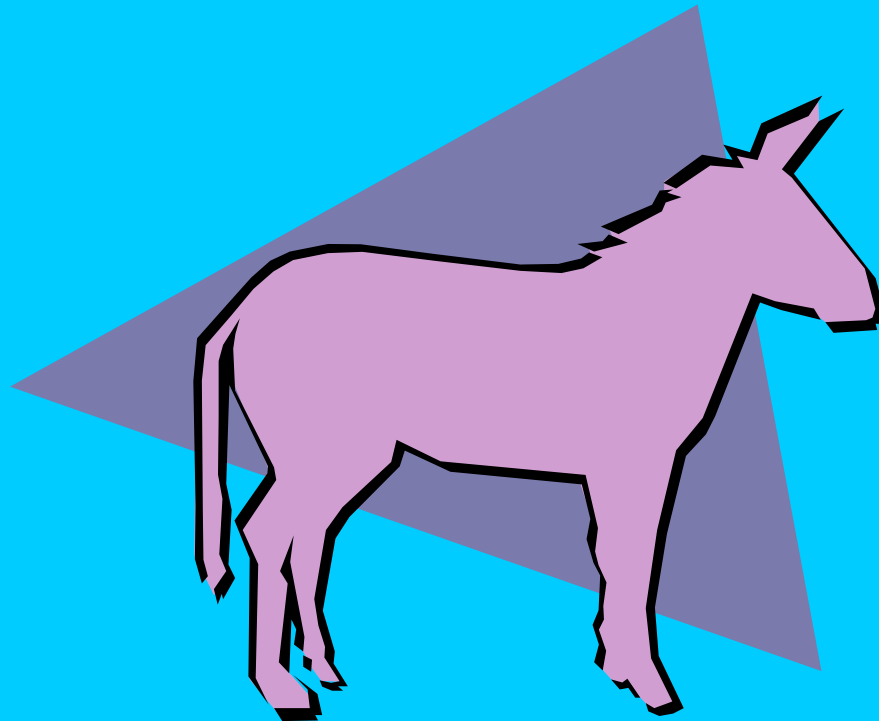
Most Egyptians were farmers.
They lived in mud-brick one
story houses on small rented
plots of land.



Their homes were usually only one room with an outdoor oven to bake bread, which was one of their staple foods.

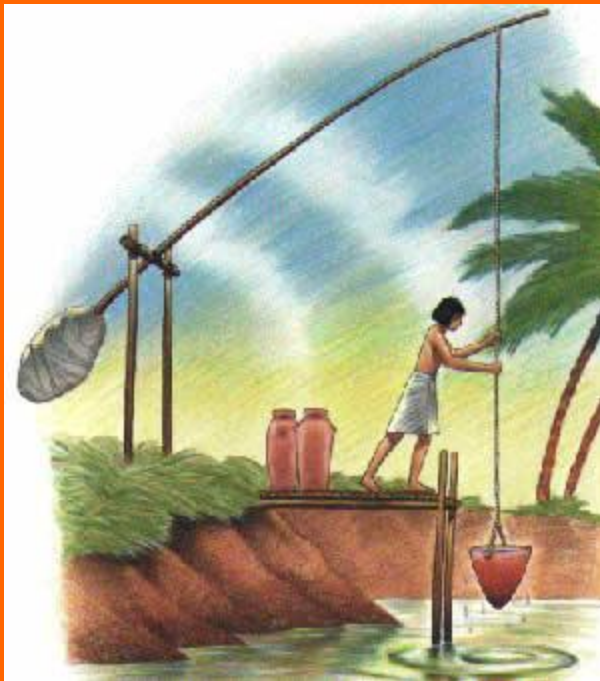


Families worked together to do most of the work. Some animals like oxen and donkeys were used on farms.

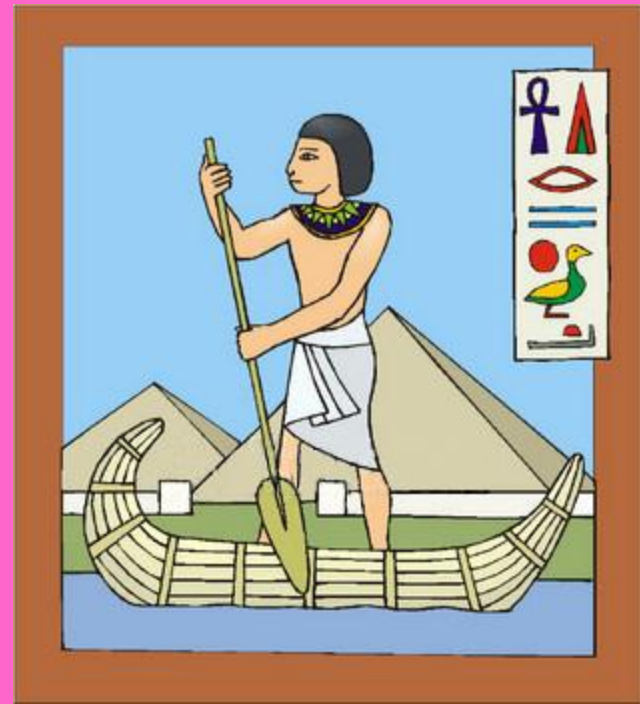


Canals were dug from the Nile to the farms for irrigation.

Egyptians also used a shadoof to get water from the river.



Boats were the most important means of transportation along the “road of Egypt.”



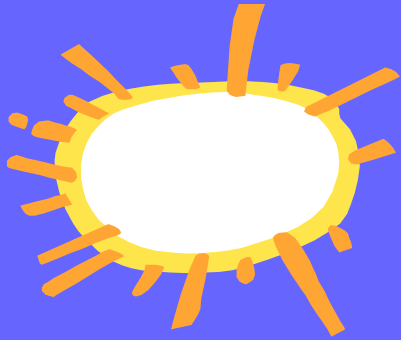
Egyptians thought that boats
were the transportation of the
gods.



They believed that every 24 hours the great sun god Ra made a voyage across the sky as though he were on the waters of the Nile.



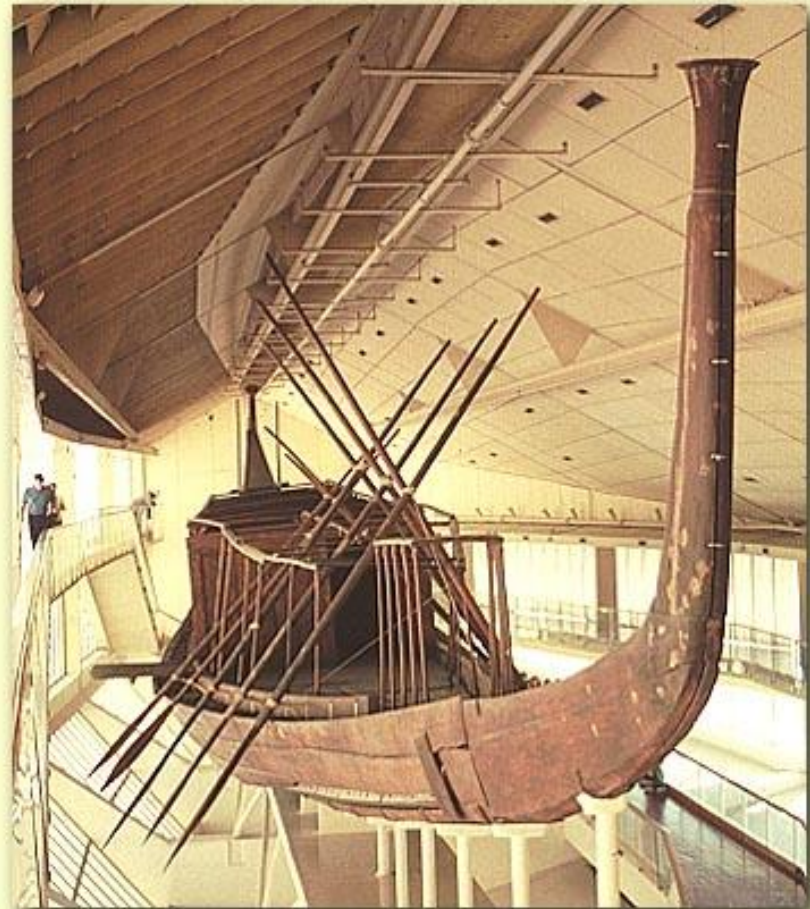
During the day he sailed across
the sky and at night he sailed
through the underworld. When
he emerged from the underworld,
the sun would rise.



Small boats on the Nile were made from papyrus bundles and larger boats were made from wood.



The boat of the Pharaoh was usually elaborately decorated with sculpture and bright colors.



Boats usually were powered by sails made from linen, but men also rowed boats and ships along the Nile.

