

Anthropic Epipedon

A thick horizon that formed in human-altered or human-transported material

Concept and Background Information

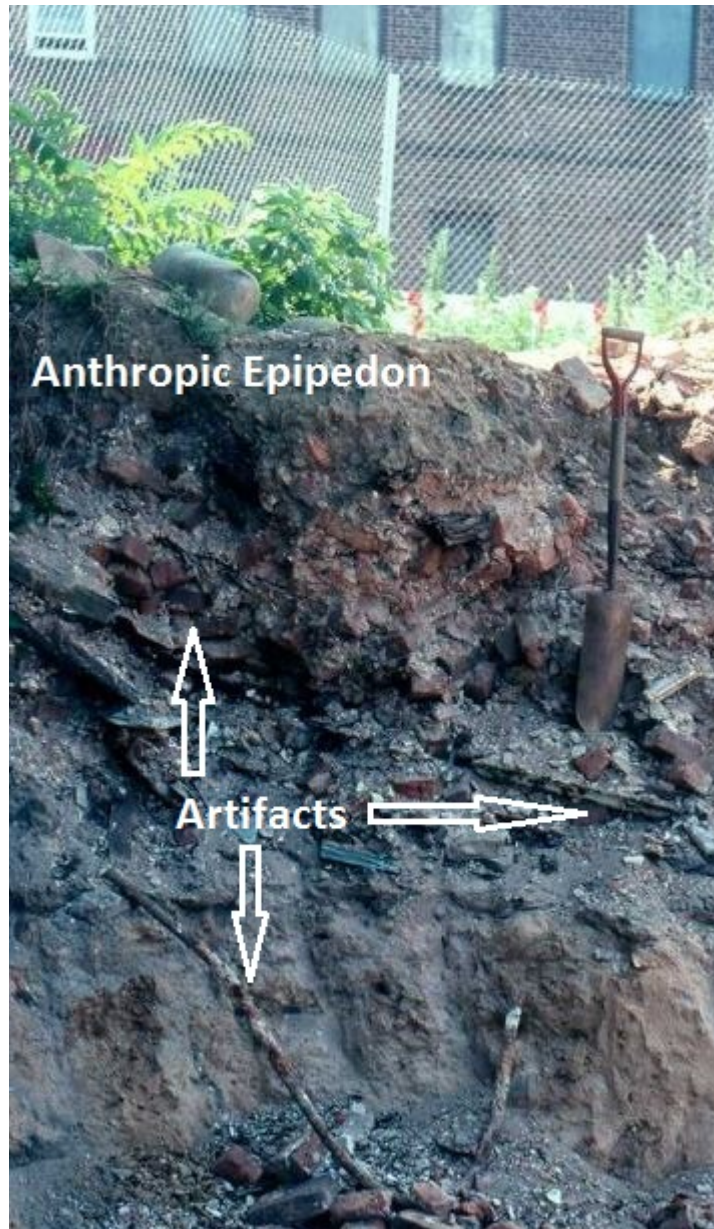
The [anthropic epipedon](#) is a thick horizon that formed in human-altered or human-transported material. The key feature is that it formed as the result of intentional human alteration (but not simply by the common agricultural practices of plowing and amending the soil with fertilizers). Its landscape setting (such as a raised surface due to filling) and/or presence of human artifacts are key characteristics.

Generalized Characteristics

- 1) When dry, horizon has structural units < 30 cm in size.
- 2) The original rock structure, including fine stratification, has been mostly obliterated.
- 3) Horizon consists of human-altered or human-transported material.
- 4) Soil is on an anthropogenic landform, contains artifacts or kitchen-middens, or has been compacted to impede drainage (as in paddy cultivation).
- 5) Minimum thickness is 25 cm.
- 6) When moist, horizon is not fluid.

Common Horizon Nomenclature

Commonly used horizon nomenclature includes master horizon A, which may be in combination with a preceding caret symbol (^) and with suffix p or u. Examples include: ^Ap, ^Au, and Ap.



This soil in New York City formed in human-transported material with human artifacts in the profile, such as brick, glass, and metal. The surface layer is an anthropic epipedon.

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