

Association *for* Environmental Archaeology

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AEA Newsletter 161

December 2023

Welcome to the final newsletter of 2023, written fresh back from a very enjoyable and pleasantly warm AEA conference in Tarragona, Spain, expertly run by the team from Institut Català d'Arqueologia Clàssica. I will come back to the conference shortly, but I will start by reporting from our Annual General Meeting held at the conference.

At the AGM we said farewell to some stalwarts of the AEA Managing Committee. Our illustrious Secretary, Don O'Meara of Historic England, left our ranks after an impressive six-year stint on the committee. Don has kept the good ship AEA on a steady path, and we all wish the very best with his many new ventures. Another steady hand on the AEA's tiller was that of our outgoing Treasurer, Mark McKerrcher of the University of Oxford. Through Mark's diligent work, he is leaving the AEA in a strong and stable financial position. The third member of the committee to be departing at the AGM was Eva Fairnell of the University of York. Eva has managed the AEA's website - envarch.net - for several years. Certainly not the most glamorous of roles but one absolutely essential. Thanks to lots of demanding work, Eva got the website in a happy place. Our final departing member was Holly Young of the University of the Highlands and Islands. Holly has been a fantastic champion of the AEA, and we're all sure she will continue to do great things in environmental archaeology.

The AEA Managing Committee has always been a fun, positive and supportive group, and whilst it is always sad when it is time for individuals to leave the committee, they are all fondly remembered. I am sure they will remain prominent voices promoting environmental archaeology along with the AEA. And so, it is out with the old and in with the new. For the first time in a little while, we have a full committee. This is fantastic news as it means that the responsibilities and the duties can be spread more evenly amongst the team of volunteers.

Our new secretary is Kate Turner of Headland Archaeology. Kate is Headland's environmental manager, and as such has a diverse experience of environmental archaeology that builds on her expertise as an archaeobotanist and mollusc specialist. Alongside Kate, our new Treasurer is Mike Bamforth a freelance waterlogged specialist, well

known for his work on high profile projects such as Star Carr and Must Farm. We also have three new ordinary members: Lara González Carretero, an archaeobotanist at the University of York, James Morris, an archaeozoologist at the University of Central Lancashire, and Aroa García-Suárez a geoarchaeologist with Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas. We also have two new student representatives: Kay Hamilton studying a PhD on the impact of grazing regimes on montane environments at the University of Sheffield, and Ale Kriti studying a PhD in classical archaeology at Universitat Rovira. Welcome to all the new managing committee members, and thanks also to everyone that ran for a position.

As well as these changes to the faces of the managing committee, there were a few notable updates and decisions to relay to those that could not attend virtually or in person. One of the key points is that the AEA is in a very stable financial position, and this is allowing us to increase our support of the membership. This includes a bolstering of the Research Grants funding, including an uplift of the Small Research Grants from £500/€580/US\$620 to £750/€850/US\$900, and also a new venture for the AEA. In 2024 we will be trialing a single larger grant to enable more ambitious environmental archaeology research - details will follow soon - and this will run alongside our existing SRG scheme. At the AGM we also voted to simplify the registration system for new and existing members, which you will find out more about at renewal time next month.

Finally, I was able to confirm to the membership at the AEA the bittersweet news that Dr Lisa Lodwick has made a sizable bequeathal to the Association. Lisa asked that this funding be used to support the mission of the AEA, and specifically the provision of conference bursaries. We will have more news on how Lisa's generosity will be used to strengthen our bursary offer to members ahead of the spring conference.

So we return full circle to the Tarragona conference. It was a thoroughly enjoyable event, and universally praised by the attendees.

A beautiful city, gorgeous weather, a stunning venue, brilliant catering, diverse and stimulating talks and posters, and vibrant and challenging discussions. In this newsletter you will find a report from our student representatives, which is highly recommended reading. The success of the conference was all down to the tremendous hard work of an enthusiastic and energetic team led by Alex Livarda and Maria Ferrer Bonet. Thank you to all those involved. The conference certainly did the Association and the discipline as a whole proud.

And of course, we're keeping the Mediterranean flavour for our next conference in Faro, Portugal in Spring 2024 - more details in the newsletter. Hope to see many of you there.

Finally, I wish you all the best through the holiday season. I hope you all find your own ways to relax and have a nice time over this period, and to come back in 2024 refreshed and revitalised. Thank you all for being members of the AEA, supporting our work and believing in the good that environmental archaeology does in the world. Until 2024...

Michael Wallace



AEA Winter Conference Review 24th–26th November 2023

Conference of the Association for Environmental Archaeology: Telling Environmental Archaeology Stories

Tarragona, Spain, 24-26th November 2024

**Kay Hamilton (Student Representative; PhD candidate
at the University of Sheffield)**

The Winter Conference has long been seen as the highlight of the year in the AEA events calendar, and the recent symposium was a truly sparkling example of this. The entire conference was generously and expertly organised and facilitated by the hosts, Institut Català d'Arqueologia Clàssica (ICAC), and so it is only appropriate that I begin this review with my deepest thanks to them on behalf of all attendees. I'm sure I don't speak for only myself when I say that we were all wonderfully looked after (and that some of us have had a hard time adjusting back to our typical diets after the genuinely magnificent catering).

ICAC is based in Tarragona, a pretty port city in the heart of Catalonia where the hustle and bustle of modern urban life plays out against a dramatic backdrop of Roman archaeology. I hope that all attendees were able to enjoy at least some of the UNESCO World Heritage Archaeological Ensemble of Tàrraco in our downtime – although, with a fully-packed conference schedule, I can understand how we may all have been a little pressed for time.

I might be biased, but I've always thought that as environmental archaeologists, we really lucked-out with our datasets. We have access to, and understanding of, truly the greatest repositories of information possible for understanding our human past: the actual world that past peoples lived, loved, feasted, famined, worked, farmed, hunted, sickened, recovered, and died in; how they interacted with the various plant and animal communities that existed; and what changes, be they interpersonal, environmental, or climatic, they had to face. Being able to explore this wealth of information, be it from isotopic analyses of human or animal bones, or climate models carefully curated from an

assessment of past vegetation chronologies, brings with it a responsibility to convert said data into definitive narratives of past and place. This year's conference theme – Telling Environmental Archaeology Stories – resulted in a bountiful harvest of expertly curated talks and posters which each brought to life a story from the past – and, in some cases, speculating on stories yet to be told, as we continue to tell the tales uncovered by our research while keeping pace with changing attitudes, technologies, and sciences.

With a programme of nearly sixty talks across three days, and twenty-six fantastically detailed posters, I hope readers will excuse my focussing on just a few for the sake of indicative brevity. The keynote talks in particular were an excellent springboard into the conference theme, opening with an examination of changes in the “cultural landscapes” of traditionally managed littoral and montane regions of the western Mediterranean (Josep Maria Palet; ICAC), and an exploration of environmental interactions in Iberia, told through the story of bones and seeds (Leonor Peña Chocarro and Marta Morena García; CCSH-CSIC).

Subsequent sessions focused on individual and unique research projects united by a theme: notably, transitional periods in agricultural interactions between humans and plants and/or animals; the narratives of landscape use as revealed by geoarchaeological investigations; husbandry, and how it was practiced across changing landscapes, both geographic and temporal; exploration of varying practices of resource management, in terms of both subsistence economies and trade, depending on topography and natural landscape features; and the persistence of the challenges presented by a changing climate, both as it was experienced in the past, how we manage it in the present, and in what ramifications our actions now may have in the future.

The discussions after each session were a strong demonstration of the level of expertise present within the room, from both presenters and audience. Two key themes consistently emerged as recurrent concerns within our current narratives: the rise of both molecular science and generative technology in archaeology (in terms particularly of the relatively recent advances in sedimentary ancient DNA, and of the community's need to respond to and responsibly implement AI-based technologies, as described by Katie Dudgeon in her talk regarding the use of AI to increase the scale of phytolith analyses in ongoing research being undertaken by the Autonomous University of Barcelona. As is a justifiably repeated concern, the discussion turned multiple times to climate change, and how the carbon footprints of all activities – from the food we eat, the way we travel, and perhaps the conferences we choose to attend – needed to be considered more carefully now than ever before.

It really is impossible to adequately convey in a couple of pages the sheer depth of information that were brought to this November's conference, and I certainly lack the eloquence of the original presenters to do it all justice. I do know that I came away from it more critically aware than ever before of the importance of the narratives we generate from our research, and how we use them to not only tell the story of our past, but to help write the script for our world going forwards. It will be an incredibly hard act to follow, but I can't wait to see how the Spring conference (on the topic of Environmental Archaeologies of Origins and Transitions in Prehistory", at the University of Algarve; Faro, Portugal) compares. I hope to see you there.

Feliz Navidad everyone.

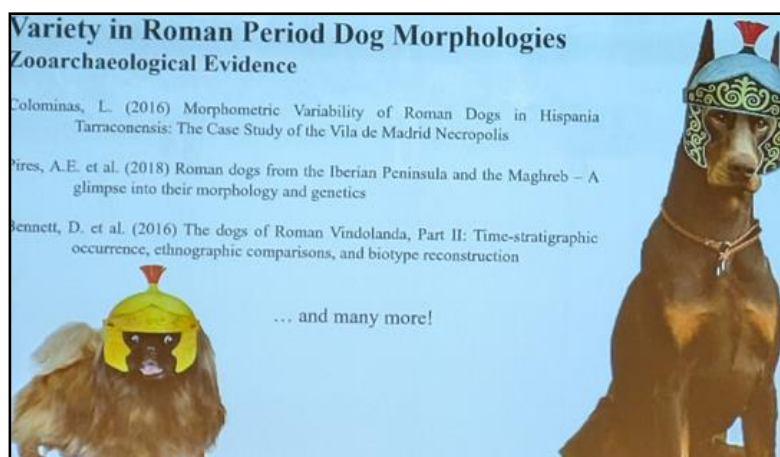
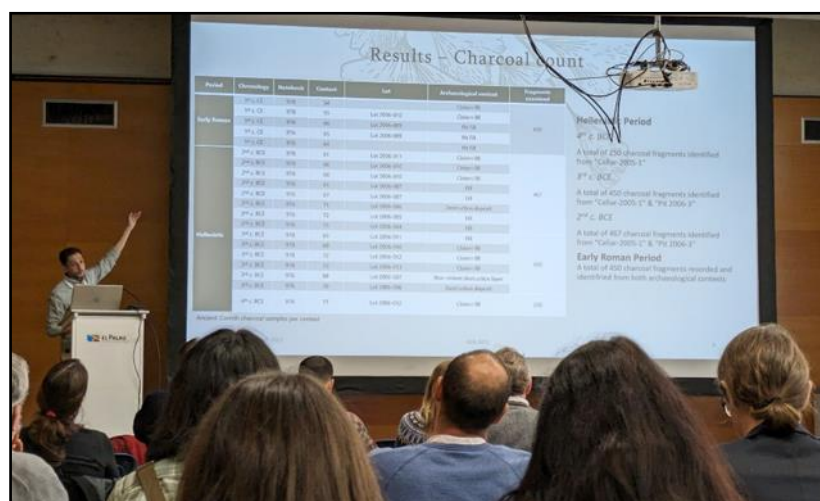


Fig 1: For avoidance of any doubt: the animal populations discussed here are unequivocally Roman. From Felix Sadebeck's talk: The (Re-)Invention of Livestock Breeding – Retelling the story of an 'exclusively modern' phenomenon.

Fig 2: Panagiotis Koullouros (The Cyprus Institute), presenting research on human-woodland interactions from analyses of charcoal from Ancient Corinth. P Koullouros, E. Margaritis, M. Madella, G. Sanders.



1st International Training School in Wood ID Suceava, Romania

Review of the 1st International Training School in Wood Identification, Suceava, Romania

Roisin O'Droma and Marie-Therese Barrett

The first international training school in wood identification took place at the Universitatea Ștefan cel Mare, Suceava, Romania from the 8th–14th October 2023. The training school was organised by renowned experts in the field Alan Crivellaro, Flavio Ruffinatto, Catalin Roibu, Marian Stirbu and Andrei Mursa. Wood identification is the process of assigning a name to an unknown piece of wood. The school involved five intensive days of lectures in both micro- and macroscopic training.

The lectures began by outlining the basics of plant/wood anatomy. Here we looked at how plants work, what cell types are present and what role they play. We learnt the different microscopic characteristics, and how to differentiate between conifers and deciduous trees. This foundation was essential for understanding the following sessions on characteristics and specific wood species.

A large quantity of reference material was provided and hands-on training was given in sampling, preparing, and identifying different species. We had the chance to examine a variety of wood samples from all around the world.



Fig 1: Wood reference slides and equipment for making them.

The training school was attended by ten participants from Ireland, Romania, Italy, Poland, and South Africa. This meant that our focus was mainly on identifying European woods, though we also learned about some tropical species found in South Africa. In the evenings we each had the chance to give presentations about ourselves and our work. This created a space for us to get to know each other and learn about the practical applications of wood identification in many spheres, including archaeological identification of wood to reconstruct environments, cultural heritage to understand what woods were used in different objects, and in building management to assist in documenting and evaluating standing structures.

We both work for IAC (Irish Archaeological Consultancy) Ltd, an archaeology company that operates across the island of Ireland and the UK. Roisin analyses plant macrofossil remains from archaeological sites and writes reports about what the seeds can tell us about the site. However, the charred wood from the site can also reveal much about the site too, and this training school, combined with mentorship from an Irish Anthracology expert, has aided her in undergoing charcoal analysis and writing reports on Irish assemblages. Marie-Therese is a senior research archaeologist, who specialises in dendrochronology, tree-ring analysis and wooden artefacts from waterlogged archaeological conditions. She has analysed and written reports on numerous archaeological assemblages from Ireland, which can sometimes contain imported wood not native to Ireland or Britain. This training school has been beneficial in enhancing her skills in the identification of imported wood.

One afternoon was spent in the Bucovina Village Museum which is an outdoor collection of various buildings such as a church, blacksmith, homes and a mill that were brought together to create a traditional Bucovinian village. Many of these buildings were wooden and we had the chance to learn more about differentiating certain distinct wood types by eye, such as conifers and deciduous trees, from the timbers used in the buildings. We also observed samples being taken from one of the buildings by researchers from the University. Following this tour, we also visited a fortified castle known as the Medieval Seat Fortress of Suceava, which served as the royal seat fortress for the princes of Moldavia during the late Middle Ages. It was a great opportunity to see the local attractions of Suceava.

The school provided intensive training on all aspects of wood species identification. The instructors provided tailored training based on individual needs and useful tips and tricks to differentiate between similar species. Participating in this program has significantly improved our ability and confidence in identifying different wood species. We would recommend this training school for anyone who wishes to increase their expertise in wood species identification.



Fig 2: (left) Bucovina village (middle) Alan Crivellaro pointing out features of conifer timbers at the village (right) Dendrochronology core being taken from a building in the village.



Fig 3: Participants of the 1st International Training School in Wood Identification at Suceava Fortress.

Historic England Guidelines Public Consultation

2011

Environmental Archaeology

*A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from
Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation (second edition)*



ENGLISH HERITAGE

The update to the Historic England Environmental Archaeology guidance is currently open for public consultation. This is an update to the 2011 guidance, and will be third edition of these guidelines. Over the last 20 years these guidelines have been updated in response to changes in environmental archaeology practice and academic advances in archaeological science, as well as changes to the English planning system. They are intended to support specialists working in the developer-funded archaeological sector, as well as providing wider advice to consultants, local authority/governmental archaeologists, and students.

This guidance is one of the key documents for environmental archaeology work undertaken as part of the English planning system. More generally I know it is also used by practitioners in other countries as a useful document for articulating the importance of environmental archaeology within an archaeological project.

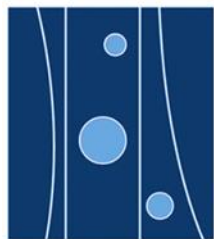
The new version is now live for public consultation until the 5th February, with the draft document found [here](#).

We are keen to hear from colleagues across the archaeological sector. This includes those working outside England to ensure we are not missing out on the experience and expertise of those working outside the English planning system, and outside of Historic England. In particular we are interested in whether there are any persistent problems people feel could be addressed with further case studies, and whether any other biological remains covered in Appendix 1 should be added.

Click [here](#) to download the draft document.

Responses or questions can be sent to [Don O'Meara](#), Science Advisor North East and Hadrian's Wall

AEA Spring Conference 3rd–4th May 2024



2024 Spring Conference of the
Association for Environmental Archaeology

Faro, Portugal 3-5 May 2024



Environmental archaeologies
of origins and transitions
in prehistory

<https://aea24faro.icarehb.com/>



The spring conference “Environmental Archaeologies of Origins and Transitions in Prehistory” will be hosted at the Interdisciplinary Center for Archaeology and Evolution of Human Behaviour (ICArEHB), University of Algarve from 3rd to 4th May 2024. This is hosted in collaboration with the Milà i Fontanals Institute for Humanities Research (IMF, CSIC, Barcelona).

In this international conference we aim to bring together environmental archaeologists, palaeoecologists, environmental scientists, and others who investigate responses, resilience, and adaptability of past societies to new and changing landscapes and ecosystems.

Please feel free to contact the organisers if you have any queries.

Dr Ceren Kabukcu (ICArEHB) Dr Aroa García-Suárez (CSIC, IMF)
Dr Anna Rufà Bonache (ICArEHB) Dr Cláudia Maria Cordeiro da Costa (ICArEHB)

Abstract submission and registration will open soon!

Abstract submission deadline: March 15, 2024 23:59h WET (UTC±00:00)

Registration deadline: March 31, 2024 23:59h WET (UTC±00:00)

Welcome Reception: May 3rd (7pm) at the Municipal Museum of Faro
(regional delicacies & excellent Portuguese wine)

Conference Dinner: May 4th at Tertúlia Algarvia in the heart of the old town
(3 course buffet style dinner of traditional dishes & tapas)

Fieldtrip on May 5th along the western coastal heritage of Algarve

Visit our website [here](#).



SIMEP, Barcelona 21st–23rd October 2024

Social Interactions in Mediterranean Prehistory

Barcelona, 21-23 October 2024



The 'Archaeology of Social Dynamics' Research Group of the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC-IMF, Barcelona) is organizing an International Conference on

SOCIAL INTERACTIONS IN MEDITERRANEAN PREHISTORY in Barcelona, 21-23 October 2024.

It is expected that this conference will become a meeting point for researchers investigating social interactions in the Mediterranean Basin and its neighbouring regions from the Palaeolithic to the Iron Age.

2021 SGR 581



Agència
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d'Ajuts
Universitaris
i de Recerca



Parc
Recerca
Biomèdica
Barcelona



Archaeology
of Social Dynamics



CONSEJO SUPERIOR DE INVESTIGACIONES CIENTÍFICAS

www.simep2024.com
secretaria@simep2024.cat

The conference aims to shed light on the construction and maintenance of contacts between diverse populations involving three continents (Western Asia, North Africa, and Southern Europe), with the Mediterranean Sea acting as a vector for those connections. The focus will be on social interactions as dynamic processes that create identities and promote collaboration, reciprocity or conflict between communities. Drawing upon the exchange and circulation of ideas, raw materials, finished products, plants, animals and people examined at local and supra-regional scales, this conference seeks to explore the spread of people and culture through time and space.

We are therefore calling for papers that examine the mechanisms by which social networks developed and shifted due to internal and external social dynamics in parallel with the influence of environmental factors. We welcome papers covering a wide range of chronological periods prior to the appearance of Classical Mediterranean cultures, particularly those focused on comparative regional analyses and studies that discuss supra-regional results. Contributions concerning research which applies innovative methodological approaches (e.g., modelling, multi-scalar network analysis, ABM) are especially encouraged.

The conference will be held in-person. Contributions to the conference can be made in the form of oral or poster presentations.

FEES Students: € 80 Early Registration (until 30 June 2024):
€ 170 Standard (until 30 September)
€ 250

The conference is organised into the following sessions:

1. Cultural diffusion and population mobility
2. Alterity and confronted identities
3. Circulation, exchange and trade
4. Environment and social interactions
5. Advances in social interaction modelling

Abstracts can be submitted between 1st February and 20th April 2024.

The conference is organised by the '**Archaeology of Social Dynamics**' research group of the Spanish National Research Council CSIC-IMF, Barcelona

More information can be found [here](#).

UNDERSTANDING ZOOARCHAEOLOGY II

2nd to 5th April 2024

Department of Archaeology, University of Sheffield

A course for archaeologists, students and enthusiasts who already have some knowledge of basic zooarchaeology!



Dive into the more detailed aspects of zooarchaeology, incorporating advanced techniques in the analysis of animal bones.



Work on a mixture of theory and practical material using a range of methods.



Learn specific skills in the identification of difficult species, biometry, assemblage recording and report writing.

For more information:

✉ zooarch-shortcourse@sheffield.ac.uk

📷 [zooarchlabsheff](#)

🐦 [zooarchlabsheffield](#)

📘 [sheffield zooarchaeology short course](#)



After the success of the last September's face-to-face short courses, the Sheffield Zooarchaeology team is back with a brand new version of Understanding Zooarchaeology II. For the first time the course will run for four days (instead of two!!). This course will run from the 2nd to the 5th of April 2024, covering the more detailed aspects of zooarchaeology, incorporating advanced techniques in the analysis of animal bones with the support of specialised experts.

To book a place to Understanding Zooarchaeology II short course, please click [here](#).

Understanding zooarchaeology II will cover the theory and methods central to the understanding of animal bones in archaeology. The teaching will be delivered through a mixture of theory (lectures and discussions) and hands on practical activities using a wide range of zooarchaeological methods. We will begin by showing you how to record and interpret different types of taphonomic evidence. You will learn about the identification of difficult species (e.g., sheep vs goat, cattle vs deer), you will develop the use of biometry as an analytical tool, and even try the application of digital skills to zooarchaeological material. During the course the participants will apply each new technique and method to an animal bones assemblage that is provided, recording and analysing the remains in detail. This will culminate in producing graphs and figures before finally creating a short report summarising all the data and information collected during the 4 day course.

Understanding Zooarchaeology II is directed at archaeologists, students and enthusiasts who already have some basic knowledge of zooarchaeology.

If you would like to know more about our short courses, please visit us at our [webpage](#), [facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#). You can also get in touch directly by [email](#).



AGM Summary 2023

Treasurer's Report: 2021-22

Assets at start of year

Sterling account	2021 (£)	2022 (£)
Current account	29,261.78	42,675.44
Reserve account	24,589.60	24,592.07
Total	53,851.38	67,267.51

Assets at end of year

Sterling account	2021 (£)	2022 (£)
Current account	42,675.44	59,001.60
Reserve account	24,592.07	24,645.56
Total	67,267.51	83,647.16

Summary: AEA finances remain very healthy, such that we are able to increase financial support for Research and in-person Events/Bursaries.

Income	2021 (£)	2022 (£)
Subscriptions	13,307.49	11,596.79
Donations	94.00	378.25
Books	-	-
Treasury	-	-
Journal	10,749.22	16,018.05
Interest	2.47	53.49
Web	0.94	-
Receipts subtotal	24,151.65	28,046.58
<i>Initial total assets</i>	<i>78,003.03</i>	<i>81,897.96</i>

Main comments

- Journal royalties up again.
- Subscription income slightly down – due substantially to the popularity of discounted digital-only membership.
- Donations = both underpaying subscriptions, and people donating optional £10 at checkout.

Expenditure	2021 (£)	2022 (£)
Committee expenses	-	-
Conference bursaries	-	684.24
Journal	9,247.00	5,158.20
Sponsorship (Glasgow conf)	-	235.50
Treasury	278.73	488.98
Prizes/Grants	-	4,104.75
Web	1,212.26	950.26
Outgoings subtotal	10,737.99	11,621.93
Total receipts minus outgoings	13,413.66	16,424.65
Total assets minus outgoings	64,589.37	70,276.03

Notable shifts in expenditure compared to 2021:

- Lower journal costs (fewer printed copies thank to popularity of digital-only membership).
- Resumed research grant spend (after post-covid delays in completing research and claiming funds).
- Resumed conference bursaries (for Glasgow).
- **All still within budget.**

Proposed budget for 2024

Heading	% budget	£ amount	£change
Committee expenses	8.1	2,100.00	+1,600.00
Conference fund	7.7	2,000.00	+500.00
Sponsorship/Publicity	3.8	1,000.00	+400.00
Web	5.4	1,400.00	
Treasury	1.9	500.00	
Journal	26.9	7,000.00	-3,000.00
Prizes/Grants	23.1	6,000.00	+2,300.00
T&F research grant (reserved)	7.7	2,000.00	
Editorial expenses (reserved)	15.4	4,000.00	
TOTAL		26,000.00	+1,800.00

Thanks to the new journal publishing agreement negotiated by Gill Campbell, and the introduction of digital-only membership options, we can substantially increase spending on Research and Events.

Membership

Our active membership currently stands at 202, broken down into Ordinary, Student, and Retired/Unwaged categories. We're also pleased to host 11 Honorary Members representing the international environmental archaeology community

Current AEA membership	
Ordinary	155
Student	31
Honorary	11
Retired/unwaged	5
Total	202

The AEA continues to represent an international community of environmental archaeologists. Many of our majority UK-based members are nationals of a wide range of countries. AEA members currently live and work in 25 countries across the globe.

Current AEA membership	
UK	144
EU	32
Rest of the World	26

Members	EU Region	Total
5	Ireland, Germany, Netherlands	15
3	France, Portugal	6
2	Bulgaria, Greece, Spain	6
1	Austria, Finland, Italy, Sweden, Poland	5
	13 countries	32 members

Members	Non-EU countries	Total
11	USA	11
4	Australia, Canada	8
1	China, India, Israel, Jordan, Norway, Russia, Syria	7
	11 countries	26 members



Environmental Archaeology: online access and membership

From 2022, AEA members were able to choose online-only access or print copies of our journal. New subscription rates offered a discount for online-only access. We're pleased to report that our online-only membership option has increased in popularity in its second year with both our Ordinary and Concessionary members

Ordinary Members	Print Journal	Online Only
2022	58%	42%
2023	55%	45%

Concessionary Members	Print Journal	Online Only
2022	46%	54%
2023	39%	61%

- Currently 6 issues per year
- Quartile **Q1**
- **58K** annual downloads/views (up from 53K in 2022)
- **64%** acceptance rate

July-September
2023



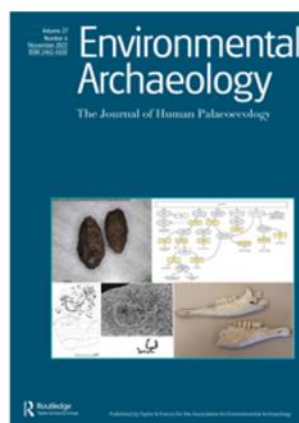
2023

12657 downloads
in quarter 3 of 2023



2022

11796 downloads
in quarter 3 of 2023



EDITOR A.LIVARDA
alivarda@icac.cat

- Copy for vol 28 (2023) complete & online; issues 1-6

Issues 2, 3, 5, 6: independent papers

Special Issues:

Issue 1- Nature and Culture in Medieval Towns
Guest editors: *Stefka G. Eriksen & Elise Naumann*

Issue 4- Living Through Change: The Archaeology of Human-Environment Interactions. Guest Editors: *Louise Illes, Catherine Longford, Lenny Salvaano & Michael Wallace* **SHEFFIELD AEA conf**

- 8 SIs in progress – possibly 1 or 2 ready for Volume 29 (2024)

- **Continuation to publication per no. of papers and not no. of pages.**

For 2024: 32 papers (5 x 5 issues, 7x 1 issue) but with flexibility.

CHANGES!!!

- **Book reviews:** eliminated from the journal → moved to the AEA newsletter; all reviews to the AEA secretary and online for members to review
- **Data articles ?** In discussion with T&F for the near future, market research by T&F

Small Research Grants

2023 grant recipients

- Ninth successful year of AEA grants, with a highly competitive submission and many worthy applications
- 18 applications: 8 UK, 2 Australia, 2 USA, 2 Canada, 2 Netherlands, 1 Spain, 1 Greece.
- 11 Funded projects to a total of £5509

Alexandra E.T. Kriti	PhD Candidate Universitat Rovira I Virgili Tarragona Spain
Dr Asta Rand	Memorial Uni Newfoundland Canada
Dr Aurelie Manin	University of Oxford UK
Caroline Vermeeren	BIAX Consult, Netherlands
Elisa Scorsini	MA Student ANU Australia
Dr Gene Shev	Lieden Netherlands
Jaime Rogers	PhD Candidate Uni of South Florida USA
Jess Peto	PhD candidate Exeter University UK
Dr Kangkang Li	Queens University Belfast UK
Dr Michael Given	Glasgow University UK
Dr Petra Dark	Visiting research Fellow University of Reading UK

2024 Grant Scheme

- Proposal to change the Small Research Grant Scheme: 2024 grant budget = £8000
- A) Increase SRG funding to £750 each grant (c.10 in 2024's budget)
- B) Increase SRG funding to £750 each using the AEA funds (c.8 in 2024's budget) and offer one Large Research Grant of £2000
- C) No change

Proposal for change to AEA membership registration (Michael Wallace)

Registration period	Registration options
Jan - Jun	Registration for current calendar year Print and digital options available
Jul - Oct	Registration for current calendar year Digital options only available
Nov - Dec	Registration for next calendar year Print and digital options available Free: <i>digital</i> membership for remainder of <i>current</i> calendar year

Proposal for change to the AEA constitution (Don O'Meara)

- 5. An Annual General Meeting will normally be held in **March or April** (or on such a date that is agreed by the Managing Committee and the Conference organisers). The agenda for the meeting shall be distributed to Members in the last newsletter published before the Annual General Meeting.
- Proposal: change to "**during the autumn/winter conference**"

John Evans Dissertation Prize Winners 2023

We are pleased to announce the Undergraduate winner is Elizabeth Joanna Jackson from the University of Glasgow.

‘Believe the Leaves: A medium scale synthesis of pollen records covering the Mesolithic of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland’



This dissertation was a synthesis of pollen records which re-modelled the dating of eight different existing pollen records. It investigated chronological and/or taxonomical connections between anthropological disturbances. Patterns of taxa were used to reveal information on Mesolithic communities and environmental questions.

The results and conclusions were discussed very well.

We are pleased to announce the Postgraduate (Masters) winner is Rainie Hoogendoorn from Bournemouth University.

‘Microfauna; more than an agent for paleoenvironmental reconstruction.

A taphonomic and quantitative analysis to investigate the accumulation of small vertebrates in an Iron Age pit at Winterborne Kingston, Dorset, England’

This dissertation examined a large assemblage of microfaunal remains recovered from a single deposit within an Iron Age pit. The study detailed the quantification of different elements recovered and detailed taphonomic analysis which was supported by other archaeological material within the deposit.

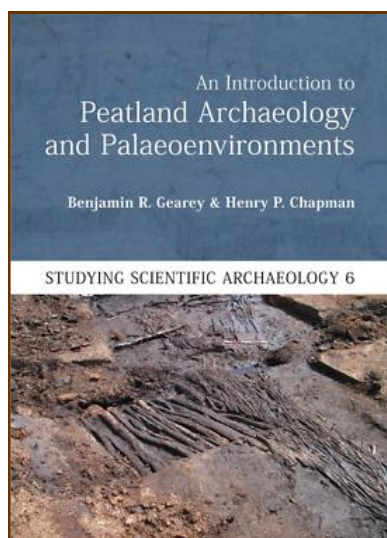
There was a differentiation made between culturally mediated deposition, predation, and natural accumulation within the deposit, such as pitfall.

The results were very well discussed and the conclusions well grounded in the data presented.

Many congratulations to this years winners!

Book Reviews

The AEA has a long history of reviewing the latest book releases and the AEA newsletter is now home to these book reviews. As a perk of AEA membership, you can request to review a book. Please email [Don O'Meara](mailto:Don.O'Meara@aea.org) if interested in reviewing one of the following titles or if you are promoting a new book release and require a reviewer.



Ben Gearey & Henry Chapman

An Introduction to Peatland Archaeology and Palaeoenvironments

ISBN: 9781789257557

This new book 'An Introduction to Peatland Archaeology and Palaeoenvironments' is the latest in a series of titles from Oxbow Books on Studying Scientific Archaeology. It is a fantastic overview, not just of peatland environments themselves, but of the wealth of archaeological and palaeoecological information that can be gleaned from them, when research strategies and budgets allow! Written by Ben Gearey (a champion of peatland archaeology and its conservation) and Henry Chapman (specialist in human-environment interactions in ancient wetlands), and with contributions from a myriad of specialists spanning across the field of environmental archaeology, this is testament to the broad spectrum covered by 'peatland archaeology' and the required multi-proxy nature of investigations.

Chapter 1 provides a comprehensive overview on the mechanisms and processes of peat development that is essential reading not only for students but for professional archaeologists wanting to refresh their knowledge. To study such landscapes, it is paramount to understand the principles behind their development and the categorisation of wetland environments into peatlands, mires, fens, raised bogs, and blanket bogs is useful. Topics such as 'where are peatlands found?' and 'how does peat form' provide a solid grounding for the following chapters. The summary table of flora associated with different peatland environments was particularly welcome, as although we may study such environments, we are not all botanists!

Chapter 2 takes us on a tour of the development of the sub-discipline, from early antiquarian interest in peatlands to the first concerted efforts at scientific investigation; for example, the early work of Georg Sarauw in late 19th century Denmark to the 20th century work on the Somerset Levels by Sir Harry Godwin. Several critical sites and bog finds, such as Star Carr, the Sweet Track, Flag Fen, Céide Fields, and Tollund Man are reviewed and how each led to further development of the field. Discussion is focussed on investigations in the UK, Ireland, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Germany.

Chapter 3 focusses on archaeological approaches to peatlands and introduces readers to the irony of peatland; the mechanisms that allow for the discovery of such rich archaeological material is also leading to the loss of such heritage. The challenges faced, and required adaptations of traditional archaeological

methods for the excavation of preserved organic remains are discussed. The box inserts also bring to life the actual nature of excavating peatlands; the unique experience of revealing features with bare hands is given by nostalgic archaeologist testimonies.

Chapter 4 discusses palaeoenvironmental techniques that can either complement archaeological investigations or be carried out in areas where no archaeological remains have been identified. While not going into great detail, this provides the reader with enough knowledge to understand the case studies presented in the following chapter. Techniques discussed include pollen, fungal spores, beetles, macrofossils, testate amoebae, tephra, and wood. An interesting aside is mention of spheroidal carbonaceous particles (derived from fossil fuel combustion) which when present in UK peat may represent a golden spike for the start of the Anthropocene.

Next (Chapter 5) follows a series of 6 case studies which illustrate approaches to peatland archaeology covering both pre-peat (archaeology on a formerly dry land surface now subsumed by peat) and intra-peat (laid directly on a peat surface) remains. The former is covered by investigations of the Beara Peninsula, southwest Ireland (where blanket peat buried stone walls), and Hatfield Moors, South Yorkshire (where a GIS-based approach allowed for the modelling of hidden pre-peat land surfaces). Investigations into the latter include the Lisheen Archaeological Project, Co. Tipperary, Ireland (one of the most detailed archaeological and palaeoenvironmental studies of a peatland), Tumbeagh Bog Body Project, Co. Offaly, Ireland (a 'best practice' example for the excavation of a bog body), Flag Fen, Peterborough (the largest known prehistoric wooden structure in the UK with 4 decades of research) and Bourtanger Moor, the Netherlands (an extensive area of peatland studied for over 70 years).

Key themes arising from the case studies are considered in Chapter 6. These include the relationship between pre-peat human activity and subsequent peat inception, the variable development of peat, issues of identifying climate markers, and the difficulties of chronologies that will allow for the accurate comparison of multiple palaeoenvironmental records. How peatlands were accessed and used by people in the past is also reflected upon and a particularly interesting table highlights the functional uses of various wetland plants that may have been accessible. The need for multi-proxy investigations with a carefully devised sampling strategy is emphasized.

The final chapter (Chapter 7) examines contemporary threats to peatlands and begins with the horrifying statement that 60% of European peatlands have been lost. Direct and indirect damage caused by drainage and extraction has led to the loss of an unknown number of archaeological sites across Europe. The authors make a case for stronger mitigation efforts to protect sites and stress the need for sufficient monitoring to ensure conditions are maintained (e.g. high water table). Furthermore, as healthy peatlands undergo carbon sequestration, the restoration and conservation of peatlands is especially pertinent now as urgent agendas concerning responses to biodiversity loss and global warming are addressed. This book is highly recommended to all those working in, or interested in, peatland environments.

AEA 2024 Research Grant Fund Now Open

We are delighted that the AEA Research Fund: 2024 grant fund is now open!

Christmas is almost here so that must mean the AEA research fund is open! Once again, the AEA is offering several grants to fund specific aspects of research projects concerning any area of environmental archaeology. Grant applications are open to all AEA members including students and unwaged members. The deadline for applications is the 29th February 2024.

For 2024 the AEA has an exciting change to the grant structure. With an increase in available funding, the 2023 AGM AEA members voted both to increase the amount of each small grant from £500 to £750 and to also offer one larger £2000 award. The breadth of research in our discipline is extraordinary and we look forward to receiving your applications for the 2024 round.

Small grants will now be offered for up to £750 (c. €850 /c. US \$900) together with one Research Grant of up to £2000 (c. €2300/c. US \$2500). On your application form please indicate which grant you are applying for: the £750 or £2000 grant. Grants cannot cover the cost of equipment or conference attendance, or costs that should normally be covered by developers or larger funding bodies (e.g. AHRC, NERC, ERC) funding other areas of the same project. Costs that may be covered include travel and accommodation for visits to research facilities, scientific analyses, or time buy-out for those working in the commercial sector and wishing to carry out research beyond that funded by developers. Grants may also be used for research start-up or pilot projects.

Please see the AEA grants website for the [application form](#) and evaluation criteria (note that this will be updated in January).

Please consider the evaluation criteria while you are preparing your application. Note that applications exceeding the word limit as indicated in each section will be penalised (reduction of 2 points of their final score in the evaluation process).

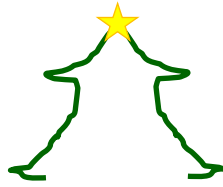
If you that are planning to apply for this round of AEA research grants, please email your expression of interest to the [grant administrator](#) (note: this does not require any explanation, simply your name, affiliation and a statement that you intend to apply, and does not commit you in case you later decide not to go ahead).

For this round, the application deadline is the 29th of February 2024. Please email a pdf of your application to the grant administrator [Catherine Longford](#) by the deadline.

All best wishes,

Catherine Longford on behalf of the AEA committee

Committee Members 2024



*From the
Committee*

Chair: Michael Wallace

Secretary: Kate Turner

Treasurer: Mike Bamforth

Membership Secretary: Jo McKenzie

Journal Editor: Alex Livarda

Newsletter Editor: Daisy Spencer

Prize Officer: Aldona Mueller-Bieniek

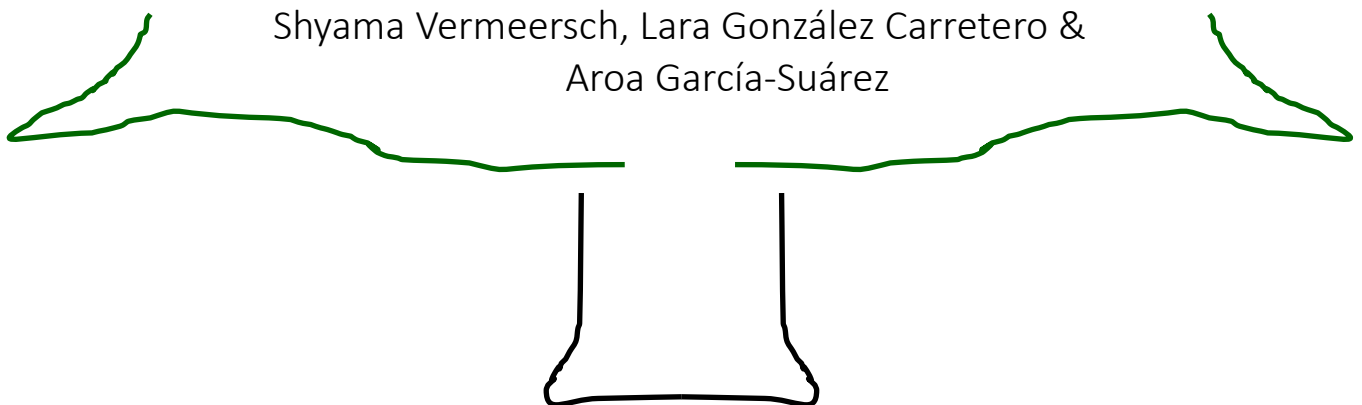
Social Media Officer: Emma Karoune

Grants Officer: Catherine Longford

Student Representatives: Kay Hamilton & Alexandra Kriti

Web Officer: *needed*

Ordinary Members: Tom Gardner, Matt Law, David Stone, James Morris,
Shyama Vermeersch, Lara González Carretero &
Aroa García-Suárez





Trending in Environmental Archaeology



Welcome to our Social Media roundup of all things environmental archaeology! Here you will find snapshots from social media selected by our student representative to provide a flavour of what has been happening online in the world of environmental archaeology during the last quarter. If you have a particular social media campaign that you would like featured on this page, please email the newsletter editor newsletter@envarch.net

Archaeology Magazine @archaeologymag · 16h

Near a royal tomb complex in Xi'an, China, dating to the Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 9), archaeologists discovered the remains of more than 400 sacrificed animals including a giant panda (top), a tapir, and a tiger (bottom).

archaeology.org/issues/537-fea...



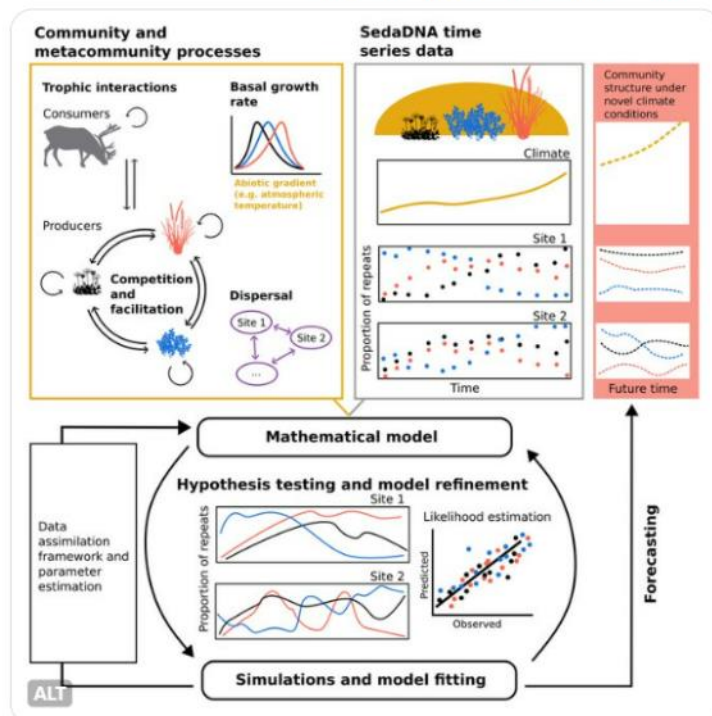
Muriel Gros-Balthazard @muriel_grosb · Dec 7

Uncovering 3000 years of date palm cultivation in the Sahara! Our latest research delves into the spread and evolution of the iconic crop of oasis agroecosystems. Kudos to the team, esp. @KaczmarekThoma! journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/09... #DatePalm #Dynadiv @HoloceneJ #Archaeobotany



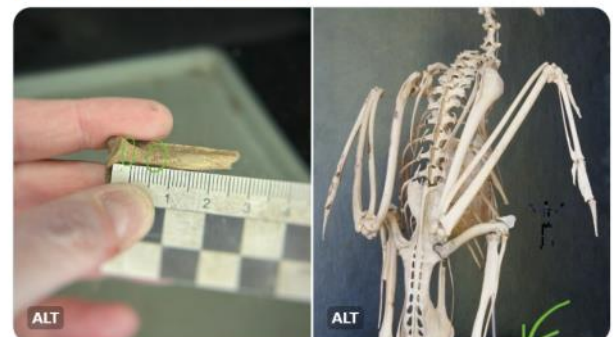
Ecosystems and Landscape Evolution @ELE_ETHWSL · Dec 8

Ancient DNA unveils #ClimateChange impacts on #ecosystems like never before! Sedimentary ancient DNA (#sedaDNA) holds the key to forecasting changes, offering species-level insights and revealing the dynamics of biotic interactions. #AncientDNA #EcosystemForecasting



Ruth Carden @RuthFCarden · Oct 7

A partial lower leg bone (tarsometatarsus) from a cormorant, with very small multiple cut marks on the shaft. From Iron Age archaeological site of Drumanagh, Co. Dublin - they utilised every animal they got! #IrishArchaeology #zooarchaeology





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The AEA

The AEA promotes the advancement of the study of human interaction with the environment in the past through archaeology and related disciplines.

We hold annual conferences and other meetings, produce a quarterly newsletter for members, and publish our conference monographs, as well as our journal 'Environmental Archaeology: The journal of human palaeoecology'.

Key Dates

AEA Grants Deadline

29th February 2024

Understanding Zooarchaeology II, Sheffield

2nd—5th April 2024

AEA Spring Conference, Faro

3rd—4th May 2024

SIMEP, Barcelona

21st—23rd October 2024

We are always keen to receive newsletter content, especially from our non-UK members. We accept short research pieces, thesis abstracts, conference announcements and calls for papers, and are always open to other suggestions.

To submit please email word documents and images to:

newsletter@envarch.net

Next deadline for content is 1st Feb 2024 for inclusion in the February newsletter

Daisy Spencer