

Association *for* Environmental Archaeology

Inside this issue:

Chair's Piece 1

Research Piece 3

AEA Spring
Conference '24 5

Conference Ad 8

Sheffield Short
Courses 10

Book Reviews 14

AEA Grant
Fund 16

Trending in
Environmental
Archaeology 17

Key Dates 18

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AEA Newsletter 162

February 2024

Dear Members,

I hope this newsletter finds you well, and you're ready to delve into another fascinating issue of environmental archaeology!

The year began with a personal visit for me as I had the pleasure of returning to my old stomping grounds in Sheffield. While there, I attended the Archaeobotany Working Group meeting hosted by Catherine Longford's "Beyond the Silos" project. You'll also see in the newsletter information about the widely respected upcoming Zooarchaeology short courses at Sheffield. It is inspiring to see the continued dedication and positive spirit of our colleagues there, and I wish them all the best as the future of archaeology at Sheffield continues to evolve.

This edition introduces you to the MARGAIN project. This exciting project dives into the crucial topic of marine resource gathering, highlighting the importance of fresh perspectives and innovation in our field. It also showcases the enduring relevance of environmental archaeology to contemporary issues like climate change. Don't miss this opportunity to learn more about this important project.

In the newsletter you'll also find enticing details concerning our Spring Meeting in Faro. The countdown to this beautifully located conference is ticking, and there's still time to submit abstracts and register. I hope to see many of you there for what promises to be a stimulating and enjoyable few days.

A heads-up! Our 2024 Autumn Conference, the 44th, will be held in Oxford as a joint venture between the School of Archaeology

and Oxford Archaeology. Oxford is a fitting venue for our conference; not only because those in the School have been leaders and pioneers in environmental archaeology for many years, but also because the conference will align with the culmination of the innovative Rewilding project. Details about the conference will be released in the coming months.

As a reminder, members can apply for conference bursaries to help offset costs for either of the annual AEA conferences.

On the topic of conferences - happy travels to all attending the EAA! Based on the flurry of circulars (apologies for cross-posting indeed), environmental archaeology will have a strong presence there. It's sure to be a fantastic opportunity to connect with others in the broader archaeological community.

A final reminder: the deadline for AEA Small Research Grants is approaching rapidly. If you haven't already, consider submitting your research proposal. We've increased the funding pool this year and are also offering a single larger grant, a change we'll be reviewing for future years. Best of luck to all applicants!

With our 2024 conferences confirmed and the new managing committee now with their feet firmly under desks, we're brimming with ideas for the year ahead. We'll share more details in future newsletters, but in the meantime, please feel free to reach out with any suggestions or comments you might have for the AEA. You can reach me at chair@envarch.net.

Happy reading and warm regards,

Dr Michael Wallace,
Chair, Association for Environmental Archaeology

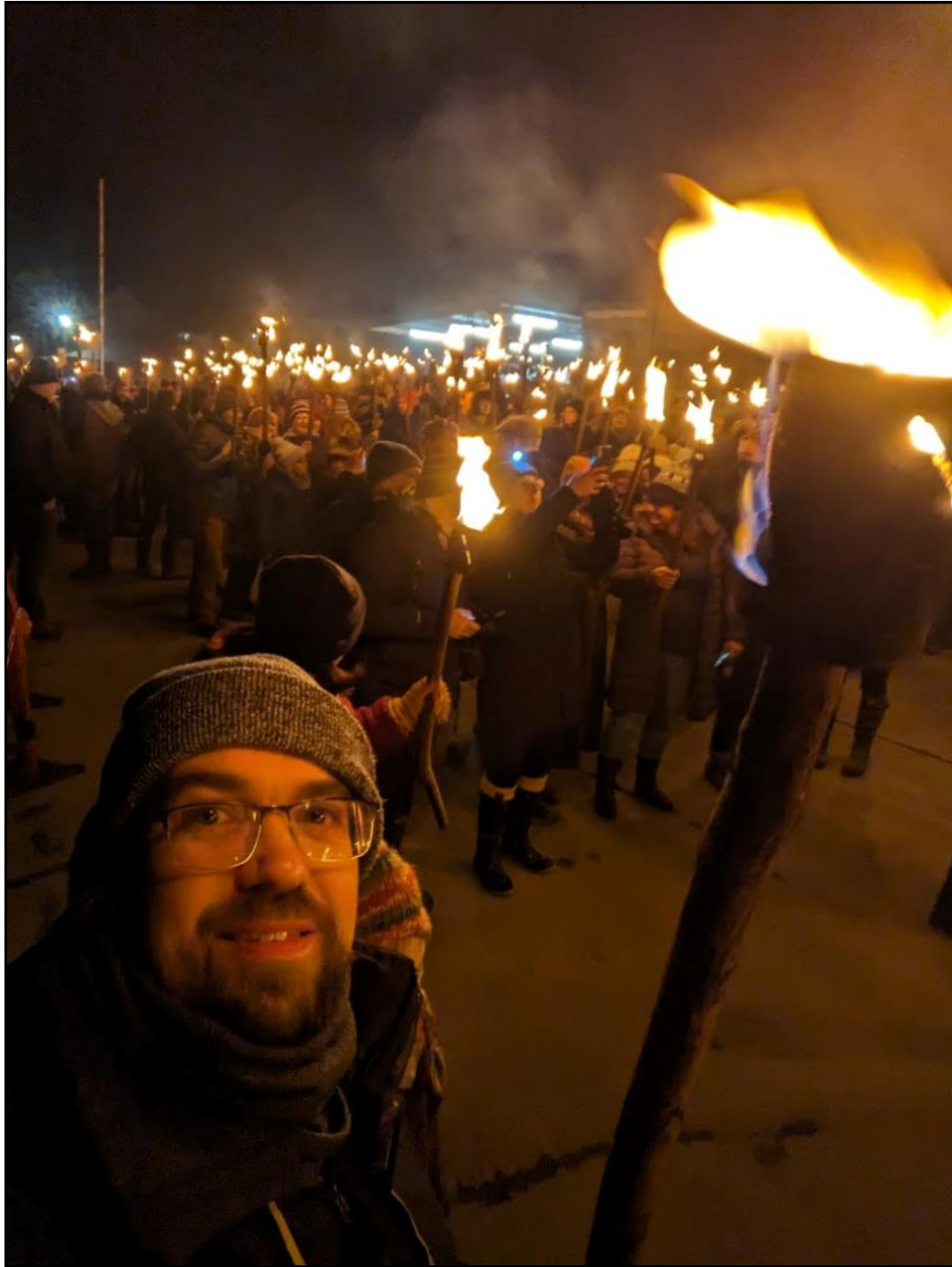


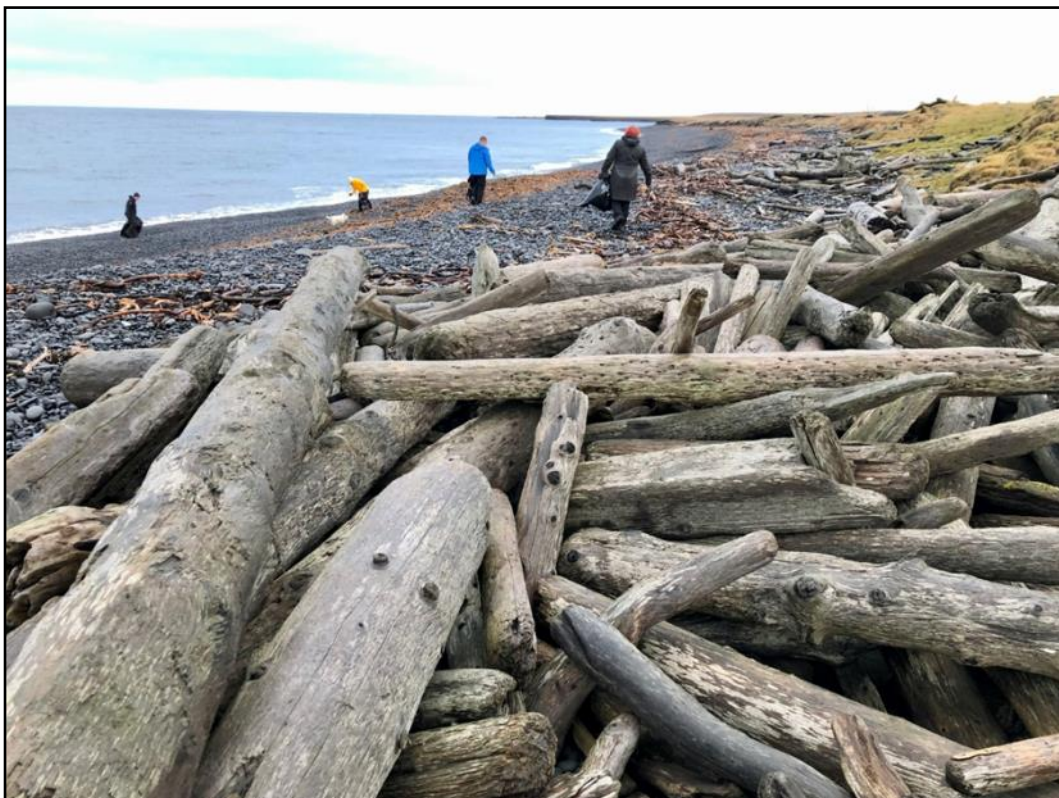
Photo by Michael Wallace: A nice bit of *Wassailing at Westons Cider: the merriest way to welcome in the year.*

The MARGAIN Project University of Stavanger, Norway

Gathered marine resources such as driftwood, seaweed, drift whales, shellfish, coastal plants, eiderdown, and bird eggs have always been vital elements of subsistence for coastal communities. However, these are often overlooked by archaeologists. In the North Atlantic region, many coastal sites have been studied, but this is almost always in the context of their role in the development of commercial fisheries. This is undeniably a key part of the economic and social history of the region. However, the narrow focus on this topic, as well as a focus on excavating midden deposits rather than occupation structures, belies the fact that these coastal sites, whether occupied permanently or only for short periods, were *lived spaces*. The project *Marine Resource Gathering and Infrastructure in the Norse North Atlantic (MARGAIN)*, recently awarded funding from the Research Council of Norway's Oceans program, seeks to combine ethnohistorical evidence and environmental archaeology in order to access the lived experience of individuals at these sites. We also aim

to use our results to engage the public with issues affecting marine environments and coastal cultural heritage, through an innovative program of public outreach.

Over the next four years, MARGAIN will bring together researchers from across Europe to explore how marine resource use influenced settlement patterns in western Norway and the North Atlantic from the Viking Age to the Early Modern period. A survey of ethnohistorical sources will provide information about what resources were available in different parts of the study area, and how they were exploited in the past. We will use this data to inform our interpretations of the archaeological material. At the same time, we will examine registration and survey reports, and LiDAR data to identify coastal sites that might be of interest for the study. Collaborations with ongoing excavations of seasonal coastal structures in Strandir, northwest Iceland and at Hjartøy in western Norway will provide comparative material.



The author and friends take part in a beach clean in Skagafjörður, northwest Iceland. Photo: Ines Meier.

Sites identified during this initial study will be examined through test trenching and excavations, in order to identify and investigate archaeological features related to marine (gathered) resource use. We will also take samples for scientific analysis, using a suite of approaches including archaeobotany, charcoal analysis, zooarchaeology, archaeoentomology, soil geochemistry and micromorphology, environmental aDNA, and lipid analysis in order to track down ephemeral traces of past marine resource use. These techniques will also tell us about how people lived at these coastal sites: how long did they spend there, at what time of year, how often, and in what conditions? The project will employ a doctoral research fellow in wood and/or charcoal analysis to explore past driftwood use in our region, but we also hope to collaborate with students interested in exploring themes related to our topic at a Masters level.

We aim to use our results to raise awareness of the issues affecting our oceans in the present. As our planet warms, coastal cultural heritage sites are at particular risk, as rising sea levels and increasingly violent winter storms lead to increased coastal erosion. Sea level rise doesn't just threaten archaeology; modern settlements and agricultural land are also subsumed by the rising waters. As we seek to protect our towns and fields by erecting sea defences or reclaiming land, we destroy or drown shallow-water marine habitats. This is known as 'coastal squeeze', and is a major driver of marine biodiversity loss. Increasing temperatures combined with increased river management are also affecting the driftwood cycle in the Arctic, and it is estimated that delivery of driftwood to North Atlantic beaches will be reduced to almost zero within this century. On beaches where we once found driftwood, we now find plastic pollution, which is a serious problem for marine ecosystems.

However, accumulations of ocean plastic may help us identify drift traps — sites where ocean currents washed wood and dead whales to shore, where seals and walruses would haul out, or where the currents created an easy path to shore. These locations were important to humans across the world throughout the past, and many of the sites investigated during the MARGAIN project will also be drift traps. This allows us to make a direct connection between the past and the present. Public awareness of the severity of environmental

issues is limited by 'shifting baseline syndrome' — individuals experience environmental change only over the course of a lifetime, which is generally too short to see long term trends. Archaeologists, on the other hand, are used to working with great time-depths, and we habitually compare changes over hundreds or even thousands of years. We therefore have a unique and important perspective to offer — we can help people see beyond the span of their own lifetime to understand environmental change on a larger scale.

Through open days, beach clean events, and workshops making crafts from modern drift material, we aim to encourage creativity and playfulness in how we engage the public with archaeology and with environmental issues. This approach will continue in a touring exhibition, which will tell the story of past human-ocean interactions through art, film and photography as well as archaeological remains. We hope that by telling new stories about the past and employing the long-term perspective that archaeology offers, we can encourage more thoughtful human-ocean interactions in the present and future.

MARGAIN is hosted at the Museum of Archaeology, University of Stavanger, in collaboration with the University of Bergen, UiT – The Arctic University of Norway, the University of Iceland, the Institute of Archaeology, Iceland, the Spanish Research Council's Institute of Heritage Sciences (INCIPIT-CSIC), and Kollektiv Lichtung, Berlin.

The project is funded by the Research Council of Norway's Oceans program, and will run from 2024-2027.

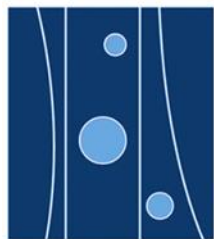
A project website is currently under development, but details of the project can also be found in the [Research Council of Norway's project database](#).

For questions or further information about the project, contact project leader [Dawn Elise Mooney](#).

Dawn Elise Mooney

Associate professor in palaeobotany
Museum of Archaeology, University of Stavanger

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 or use the [conference email](#) for 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 is now OPEN! - click [here](#) to submit!

Register your attendance [here](#)!

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 at Vila do Bispo including a visit to the spectacular views at the Ponta de Sagres

Visit our website [here](#).



Registration fees

Student/Unemployed AEA member	€60
Student/Unemployed non-member	€70
Regular AEA member	€90
Regular non-member	€100
Online (attendance only)	€30

In the 2024 Spring conference of the Association for Environmental Archaeology, we are looking for contributions tracing shifts, transitions and periods of change in prehistory which provide evidence and insights into the diversity of practices, resilience and adaptability of human populations in prehistory.

Conference themes

- Palaeolithic environments, subsistence, and diet
- Agricultural origins and the earliest villages
- Adaptations to coastal and wetland environments
- Environmental impact of sustained human settlements
- Human adaptations to extreme or arid environments
- Cross-disciplinary research in environmental archaeology

Guidelines for authors

We accept three types of submissions:

1. Standard presentation format for 15-minute presentations.
2. Lightning presentation format of 6-minute presentations (participation limited to registered full-time and part-time students only).
3. Poster presentations.

Abstract submission is limited to 300 words.

With the generous support of the Archaeological Association of the Algarve, we will offer two student prizes (€50), one for the best presentation during the ‘Lightning’ session, and one for the best Poster presentation.

At our conference venue, we will be able to accommodate standard poster sizes, as well as large-format A0 posters.

Please print your posters prior to arrival at the conference, as printing facilities on campus are limited.

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



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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](#).





University of
Sheffield

Human Osteology Short Course

8 - 10 APRIL 2024

A three-day course on
the skeletal analysis of
archaeological human
remains.

Interested in pursuing further study
in biological anthropology/human
osteology? Previously worked with
archaeological human remains?
Amateur enthusiast? All welcome!

TO REGISTER, PLEASE VISIT
[WWW.SHEFFIELD.AC.UK/ARCHAEOLOGY/
SHORT-COURSES/HUMAN-OSTEOLOGY](http://WWW.SHEFFIELD.AC.UK/ARCHAEOLOGY/SHORT-COURSES/HUMAN-OSTEOLOGY)

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The Department of Archaeology at the University of Sheffield is excited to announce that the 2024 instalment of the Human Osteology Short Course is open for registration and places are filling quickly!

Attendees will be taught by PhD students and teaching staff basic human osteology and advanced methods in estimating skeletal sex, age-at-death, and stature, how to assess taphonomic and pathological changes to the skeleton, and an introduction to funerary archaeology.

8–10 April 2024

Ella Armitage Building, Sheffield

£200 regular or £140 concession

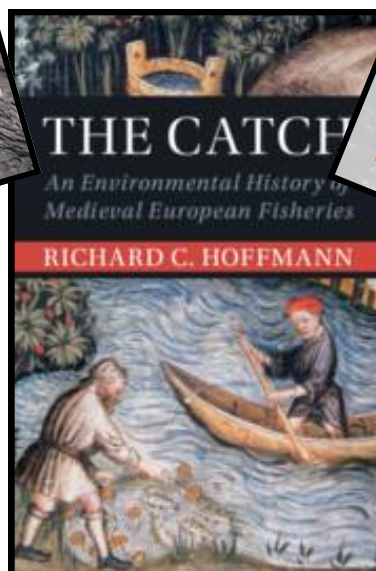
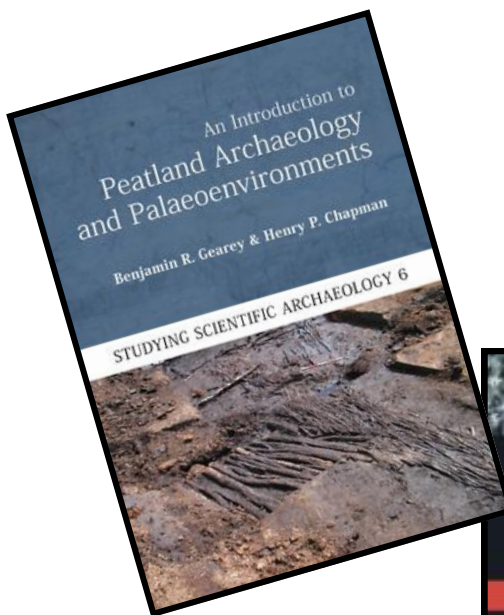
For more information and to register please visit our [website!](#)



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 the [**AEA secretary**](#) if interested in reviewing or if you are promoting a new book release and require a reviewer.



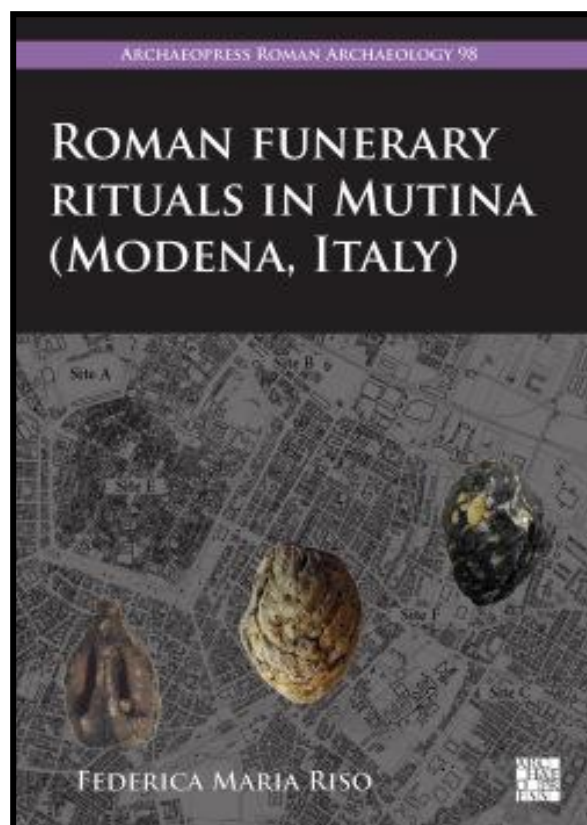
Current titles available for review to AEA members :

Federica Maria Riso

Roman Funerary Rituals in Mutina (Modena, Italy)

This book presents the results of a research project undertaken in collaboration with the University of Huddersfield. The project sought to identify and reconstruct the funerary space and rituals of the necropolis in Mutina (now Modena) in the period between the first century BC and second century AD.

The research is a key example of integrated analyses, linking the different results in the same interpretative system and supporting traditional strategies (archaeology and archaeobotany) with advanced technology (SAXS, CT-scan). The archaeobotanical remains (seeds and fruit) and the objects involved in the ceremonies constitute an important investigatory lens to reconstruct the mortuary rituals and attendance at the funerary space.



AEA 2024 Research Grant Fund

The AEA Research Fund: 2024 grant fund is still 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.

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. 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.

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.

Please see the AEA grants website for the [application form](#) and evaluation criteria.

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).

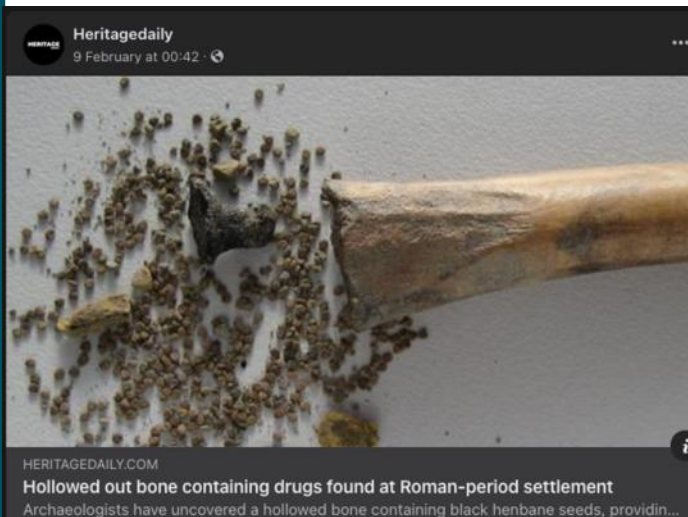
For this round, the application deadline is the 29th of February 2024. Please email a pdf of your application to the grant administrator [Catherine Longford](#) by the deadline.



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



This Facebook post from Heritage Daily is based on the recently published online research article '*Evidence of the intentional use of black henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*) in the Roman Netherlands*' ([Groot et al. 2024](#)).



This X post from Science Magazine is re-posting a research article with the title '*Human sound systems are shaped by post-Neolithic changes in bite configuration*' ([D.E. Blasi et al. 2019](#))

This X post from Fundacion Palarq is based on the recently published online research article '*Earliest directly dated rock art from Patagonia reveals socioecological resilience to mid-Holocene climate*' ([Romero Villanueva G. et al. 2024](#)).



This Facebook post (made on 15.02.24) from Archaeology Magazine is based on the recently published online research paper '*Rope making in the Aurignacian of Central Europe more than 35,000 years ago*' ([Conard N. J. and Rots V. 2023](#)).





www.envarch.net



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

Human Osteology Short Course, Sheffield

8th—10th 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 May 2024 for inclusion in the May newsletter

Daisy Spencer