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MESO2025 - 11th International Conference on the
Mesolithic in Europe

Session 5

People and Places

Coordinated by Philippe Crombé and Caroline Posch

Prehistoric as well as modern humans form an integral part of the landscapes which they inhabit. Likewise, Mesolithic people lived and moved within their environment; they established, and abandoned campsites – often repeatedly in the same location; they hunted and exploited the faunal, botanical, and geological resources available to them; and when moving on to other regions, they took objects along with them, sometimes over hundreds of kilometres. However, as humans are space-acquiring beings with a tendency towards territoriality, movement and contact between regions and groups might not always have been unhampered but possibly at times restricted to a lesser or larger extent.

But how can questions regarding Mesolithic territoriality and perceptions of space be tackled? And how is the interaction of people with their local environment as well as the interconnectedness with other regions and groups on a supra-regional scale visible in the archaeological record of Mesolithic sites?

Within this session, we invite contributions which deal with the reconstruction of Mesolithic landscape usage. We invite theoretical and practical papers dealing with e.g. the detection of sites in the landscape (e.g., survey, remote sensing, predictive modelling, geophysical survey); reconstructions of supra-regional contacts and territoriality (e.g., GIS-modelling, typological/taxonomic analysis, network analysis); raw material management with special focus on lithic resources (e.g., sourcing and regional to supra-regional distribution); analysis of settlement systems (e.g. site function, site location, persistent places / ancestral places).

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MESO2025 - 11th International Conference on the Mesolithic in Europe

ORAL PRESENTATION

Monday 15th September, h.10:15-10:30

Danish Late Mesolithic coastal settlement following the postglacial rise in sea-level. An example from a local perspective

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S5

The postglacial rise in the sea-level has played a crucial role in the Mesolithic culture development, Mesolithic economy and research in Denmark, which can be illustrated by an example from a local perspective along the coast of East Jutland, close to the town of Aarhus, Denmark. Along the new coasts, following the rise in sealevel, in the late Mesolithic a predominantly coastal culture known as the Erteboelle culture is found (5.400-4.000 bc). Here, within a late glacial moraine topografi, a fjord was formed during the late 6th millennium BC. The fjord forms the frame of a late mesolithic Erteboelle coastal settlement system. Several settlements have been excavated, including one of the largest settlements from the Erteboelle culture, and contemporary with this a shell midden well-known as a caracteristic element from this culture epoch. The settlement system and investigations testify to a rich marine biotope, documented thanks to well-preserved organic refuse layers. The settlements can be associated to the rising sealevel and sea shore displacement. The coast and the landscape around the fjord also forms the base to the introduction of agriculture with some of the earliest neolithic settlements found in Denmark, c. 3.950 bc.

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ORAL PRESENTATION

Monday 15th September, h.10:30-10:45

STONE AGE ATLANTIS ON LOLLAND-FALSTER? THE VALUE OF RECLAIMED LANDSCAPES AND THEIR ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

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S5

In the water rich landscape of Denmark, coastal areas had a significant influence on where the Mesolithic sites were located. Since the modern Danish territory has no large height differences, changes in sea level had a massive effect on the availability and loss of land. For instance, the significant sea level rises seen during the Atlantic biozone inundated coastal settlements of the Maglemose and Kongemose culture but similarly created access to new resource area for the people of the subsequent, Final Mesolithic Ertebølle culture. The sea level has not changed much from the Late Holocene until historic times. Since then, several of the shallow fjords have been drained to provide agricultural land. The major archaeological investigations in the Femern project, prior of the Fehmarn Belt tunnel, an 18 km, submarine connection between Denmark and Germany, showed that especially the dammed areas must be considered a kind of Mesolithic Atlantis. Areas with great opportunities and potential to explore settlement structures and landscape utilization in the Late Mesolithic because almost the entire material culture is preserved and (economically) accessible. In this presentation, I will present three selected areas on Lolland-Falster where the preservation conditions and archaeological potential are assumed to be as great as what was seen during the Fehmarn project. I will contextualize this with economic considerations, due to their relevance for contract archaeology, and discuss their scientific and strategic value, also in comparison with underwater archaeology.

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ORAL PRESENTATION

Monday 15th September, h.10:45-11:00

SYNERGY AND SIMULATION - CONSTRUCTING LARGE-SCALE FRAMEWORKS FOR PROSPECTING SUBMERGED MESOLITHIC LANDSCAPES

Butler Micheal * (1), Walker James (1), Harding Rachel (1), Fitch Simon (1), Cook Hale Jessica (1), Murgatroyd Phil (1), Fraser Andy (1), Pelling Robyn (1), Urmston Ben (1), Gaffney Vince (1)

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S5

The submerged palaeolandcapes of the North Sea (Doggerland), would have once been a focal point of contact between regions across north-west Europe. Extending across much of the North Sea basin between continental Europe and Britain, it provided the means for the recolonisation and settlement of north-west Europe after the last glacial maximum. Yet, this area has largely remained terra incognita for archaeologists, due to the logistical difficulties of investigating these areas. The Submerged Landscapes Research Centre at the University of Bradford is the culmination of over a decade's worth of research aimed at understanding the palaeogeography of this vast frontier from the terminal Pleistocene to its disappearance in the mid-Holocene. Using innovative seismic mapping techniques, environmental analyses, sedimentary DNA, predictive modelling, and analytical methods, we have explored the make-up of this landscape and how it changed over time until its final inundation. In merging this data, large-scale computer simulations are being developed to explore the prehistoric populations who once inhabited this dynamic landscape. It is hoped that this will assist in the identification of areas of archaeological potential, to inform future expeditions. This paper summarises the work completed and ongoing at the Submerged Landscapes Research Centre at the University of Bradford across a number of projects, including Unpath'd Waters, Taken at the Flood, Life On The Edge, and Subnordica.

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ORAL PRESENTATION

Monday 15th September, h.11:30-11:45

MESOLITHIC HUNTER-FISHER-GATHERER (HFG) LANDSCAPE INTERACTION IN COASTAL ATLANTIC EUROPE – ANCHOR POINTS IN A FLUID WORLD

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It has long been recognised that Mesolithic populations were living in coastal areas across Europe and exploiting resources distinct to these areas such as fish, shellfish and marine mammals. This appears to have culminated in the Late Mesolithic in formation of large and perhaps complex societies, based on specialist coastal adaptation. While evidence for these communities has increased considerably in recent years, the nature of archaeological investigation tends to be 'site' specific, meaning we lack understanding of how HFGs interacted with their wider landscape and environment. Investigation has also focused on the economic and subsistence benefits of coastal adaptation, ignoring less tangible motivations. This paper presents the approach and first results of a current PhD study conducted under the HORIZON MSCA Doctoral network ArCHe (www.arche.uio.no). The study re-evaluates existing data to better understand social and communicative meaning and function and cosmological aspects of HFG populations in coastal areas with special focus on the use of the landscape and seascape. The project approaches this issue using several methods. This paper focuses on the application of GIS techniques, to known site distribution, including viewshed analysis and least cost analysis to existing data from three discrete coastal areas of Europe, Southeast Norway, Northern Spain and Western France. The three areas under study are very different in their current climate, topography, preservation and survival, as well as material expression. Comparing them will allow us to bridge knowledge gaps between these areas and give a fuller understanding of hunter-gatherer-fisher landscape interaction in Mesolithic Europe.

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ORAL PRESENTATION

Monday 15th September, h.11:45-12:00

PREDICTING AND PROTECTING LITHIC LANDSCAPES – UNDERSTANDING THE DISTRIBUTION OF LITHIC SCATTERS ACROSS DARTMOOR, UK

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This paper explores the spatial distribution of prehistoric lithic scatters on Dartmoor, a granite upland and national park in the southwest of England, and the surrounding lowlands. We present a summary of new GIS predictive modelling developed over the last three years to characterise the extent and significance of Dartmoor's lithic scatters, highlighting the relationship between lithic and peat distributions. We describe how the model was tested using a citizen science methodology in 2023. Results of comparisons between upland and lowland areas will be presented. These involved the predictive model dataset, lithic scatter and control datasets from Dartmoor and lowland regions in the southwest peninsula. Analyses incorporated Least Cost Path Analysis and consideration of three environmental characteristics (aspect, elevation and slope). Combining these results with reviews of regional palaeoenvironmental change, wayfinding, extant hunter-gatherer groups and nutritional landscapes has allowed us to identify key differences between the environmental characteristics of upland and lowland lithic scatters with important implications for understanding Dartmoor's role in hunter-gatherer lifeways and future landscape management practices.

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ORAL PRESENTATION

Monday 15th September, h.12:00-12:15

MESOLITHIC WATERLOGGED SITES IN THE NORTH OF LOWER SAXONY

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S5

The existence of Mesolithic people in the north of Lower Saxony is mainly known from surface scatters hampering our understanding of the complex relation between changing landscape and hunter-gatherer societies during the first millennia of the Holocene. After the end of the last glaciation in northern Germany, a time of changes in the natural environment began. This includes reforestation, the sharp rise of the sea-level and the growth of fens and bogs. All of this must have had a strong influence on people who lived in this area. As part of the DFG-funded project "The Mesolithic in Northwest Germany" at the Lower Saxony Institute for Historical Coastal Research (NIhK), wetland sites with evidence of Mesolithic artifacts are being investigated for their early Holocene landscape development and the human traces from that time. In this interdisciplinary project, botanists and geologists at the NIhK support the work of the archaeologists. In a project phase of intense survey, sites with particularly positive conditions were identified. These have been investigated in recent years through prospections and excavation. The presentation focusses on the latest investigations in the area of the "Obere Wümmeniederung" south of Hamburg. There, a large collection of mostly early Mesolithic surface finds from the edge of a wetland area that comprises fen bogs and the headwaters of several streams and rivers provides an area with promising preservation conditions. We are going to present the first results from surveys, excavations and laboratory investigations.

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FORMING AXES, FORMING BONDS – A GEOCHEMICAL STUDY OF LITHIC RAW PROCUREMENT STRATEGIES IN THE CENTRAL NORWEGIAN MESOLITHIC

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During the Mesolithic of Southern Norway people seem to have shifted from a highly mobile lifestyle to an increasingly sedentary way of life. An increase in the use of local lithic sources, settlement clusters around particular habitats and resource patches, and the construction of more permanent dwellings, all point in this direction. The distribution of different macro tool types and raw materials have been used to indicate the extent of regional groups and interaction patterns along the Western Norwegian coastline. However, little attention has been given to Central Norway – a region with a varied topography and climate, and which is situated between different tool traditions. Flint was the preferred raw material for lithics in this area, but this is not the case for macro tools, where various local fine-grained igneous and sedimentary rocks dominate. Could these tools and raw materials be a key to increase our understanding of the developments of local adaptations, incorporation of new technological impulses and inter-regional contacts in the period? Through a thorough geochemical and technological analysis of selected Mesolithic macro tools, we aim to uncover lines of contact and patterns of environmental and cultural interactions in the Middle and Late Mesolithic of Central Norway. By utilising the NTNU University museum's collections of both stray finds and excavated sites, we wish to challenge old postulations on territoriality and regionalisation and create new datasets for exploring Mesolithic landscape usage.

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ORAL PRESENTATION

Monday 15th September, h.12:45-13:00

Hunter-Gatherers in the Mountains: interdisciplinary research into Late Glacial and Mesolithic landscapes of the Cairngorms, Scotland

Warren Graeme * (1), Bishop Rosie (2), Buchanan Deborah (1), Butler Micheal (3), Claeys Lola (4), Crowell Clara (1), De Smedt Philippe (4), Doughty Alice (5), Fenn Kaja (6), Lifton Nathaniel (7), Kelley Sam (1), Mann Bruce (8), Moucheron Martin (1), Pendleton Simon (9), Redmond James (2), Skelton Richard (10), Verhegge Jeroen (4), Youngeagle Dakota (1)

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This paper synthesises the most recent phases of ongoing interdisciplinary archaeological, geomorphological and geological research carried out to examine Late Glacial and Early Holocene hunter-gatherer landscapes in the Cairngorm Mountains, Scotland since 2021. This work allows us to understand the changing relationships between people and place and reconstruct how mountain landscapes were used by hunter-gatherers in the Mesolithic. Our research has utilised a diverse range of methodologies, including those designed to deal with the challenges of survey and fieldwork in mountain landscapes. Our work has involved archaeological excavations and post excavation analyses; innovative forms of cosmogenic nuclide dating of ice retreat; characterisation of landforms and sediments; mathematical models of ice extent; the development of predictive models of Mesolithic site location; the development of policy advice for those managing these landscapes; and a range of outreach and engagement activities. This has provided outstanding new evidence of hunter-gatherer activity in the largest mountain landscape in Britain and Ireland; new data on the timing and character of landscape change from the Late Glacial into the Early Holocene; and indications of the relationships between the two.

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ORAL PRESENTATION

Monday 15th September, h.13:00-13:15

New Palaeolandscape Reconstructions for the Northern Adriatic: Coastal Environments and Ecologies of the Last Hunter-Gatherers

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The Northern Adriatic region is one particularly rich in Mesolithic sites, as testified by the numerous discoveries made in the Eastern Alps, the Trieste and Slovenian Karst, and Istria. While decisive insights have been obtained for higher altitude areas, our knowledge of the lowland occupation in this period is still limited to stray finds and occasional surface scatters. This is because of a variety of factors, including the geomorphological setting of the region, the impact of human activities on the current plain, and post-glacial sea level rise. Due to the latter, the Early Holocene coastlines are now submerged, thus strongly affecting archaeological visibility and hindering our understanding of the Mesolithic in the region. Therefore, this paper will present new palaeolandscape reconstructions for the Northern Adriatic between 9000 and 5000 cal BC, with the aim to explore the possible environments exploited by Mesolithic coastal communities in the area. This will be based on the analysis of unpublished sub-bottom profiles, which will be integrated with available sea level index points and environmental data. Thus, different paralic and coastal environments will be identified, changing over space and time and ranging from lagoons and estuaries to freshwater marshes and deltas. Finally, data from archaeological sites in the area will allow to investigate the relation between hunter-gatherers and these environments, with significant implications for a number of issues, including coastal resources exploitation and the spread of farming in the region.

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ORAL PRESENTATION

Monday 15th September, h.14:30-14:45

Holocene Hunter-Fisher-Gatherer Occupation of Adriatic Islands: Example of Korčula Island

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S5

While various factors, such as research biases, the challenges of detecting hunter-gatherer sites, Holocene landscape transformations, and the (subsequent) scarcity of Mesolithic sites in Dalmatia, have impacted our understanding of this period, the archaeological record suggests that Holocene hunter-gatherer sites in the region are predominantly located on islands. Most of these sites are concentrated on the island of Korčula, highlighting its significance for studying Mesolithic occupation in the Adriatic. Although the Adriatic coastline has undergone significant changes since the Last Glacial Maximum—due to ongoing warming and subsequent sea-level rise—many present-day islands were already isolated landforms by the beginning of the Holocene. This indicates that Mesolithic hunter-fisher-gatherers had adapted to and exploited island environments early on. This presentation provides an overview of the Holocene hunter-gatherer occupation of Korčula, examining potential differences between sites on the island and identifying specific characteristics of insular Mesolithic life compared to that of the mainland. Situated along the Transadriatic Bridge—a natural corridor that facilitated interactions between the eastern and western Adriatic—Korčula also offers valuable insights into the Mesolithic-Neolithic transition of the entire Adriatic region. The high density of Mesolithic sites on the island, along with unique site features, suggests that Neolithisation processes on the islands may have followed different trajectories than those observed in coastal and inland Dalmatia. This raises the possibility that local hunter-gatherer groups played a more active and influential role in shaping the transition to farming in these insular contexts.

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ORAL PRESENTATION

Monday 15th September, h.14:45-15:00

PREDICTIVE MODELLING AND SETTLEMENT STRATEGY ANALYSIS IN FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA DURING THE MESOLITHIC

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S5

Within studies related to settlement and land-use strategies adopted by the Mesolithic hunter-gatherers, Northeastern Italy and, in particular, the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region, represent a high-potential geographical area to test the efficacy of predictive models, thanks to the numerous Mesolithic sites discovered since the second half of the 20th century. The distribution of these sites covers a wide range of environments, from low and high alluvial plains to mid and high altitudes, suggesting a great adaptability of human groups to different geo-morphological contexts, vegetation and ecotones. Despite the richness of the archaeological evidence, the quantity and distribution of sites appear underestimated and do not provide an exhaustive picture of the settlement dynamics. We developed a predictive approach using a GIS software to understand this variability and identify specific behaviours related to diverse environments and periods (Early Mesolithic vs. Late Mesolithic). To this purpose, several cultural (e.g. lithic raw materials, artefacts density, site function), geographical (e.g. elevation, slope, aspect, solar radiation, hydrology, wetland, landuse) and geological (e.g. lithology, chert outcrops) variables were combined with paleoenvironmental data. Lastly, the statistical significance of each variable and of their combinations were tested using RStudio Software. The model developed aims to identify the zones with the highest potential for Mesolithic occupation in Friuli and to understand the specific characteristics and factors that may have attracted Mesolithic groups in relation to specific units of landscape characterised by geographically homogeneous features.

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ORAL PRESENTATION

Monday 15th September, h.15:00-15:15

REEVALUATING THE MESOLITHIC OCCUPATION OF WESTERN LIGURIA: PRELIMINARY RESULTS

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S5

Western Liguria has long been considered a conundrum in the larger panorama of research on the Mesolithic of Mediterranean Europe, largely due to the absence of dated Mesolithic assemblages from secure Ligurian stratigraphic contexts. This has led to the area being considered by some a 'no man's land' during the early Holocene. However, recent discoveries have forced a radical rethinking: the discovery of the in situ burial of a female infant dating to the Early Mesolithic (Sauveterrian) at Arma Veirana in the Neva Valley and the reanalysis and dating of human remains from Arma di Nasino, located in the Pennavaire Valley immediately west of the Neva Valley both provided indications that this long-held view was incorrect. In 2022, our team began a project aimed at redating a few key Western Ligurian sites, recontextualizing them and reanalyzing the relevant artifactual assemblage that had been collected from them over the decades. Here, we present the first results of these efforts, focused not only on new dates and first-hand stratigraphic observations, but also on the reanalysis of original field documentation and of archaeological material from targeted levels within them. The resulting data from Arene Candide, Arma dello Stefanin, and Arma degli Zerbi allow us to establish with certainty the presence of Sauveterrian-age human occupations at both these sites, thus demonstrating a Mesolithic presence from the coast to mid-altitude valleys of the hinterland.

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ORAL PRESENTATION

Monday 15th September, h.15:15-15:30

OPEN-AIR MESOLITHIC SITES IN THE PARIS BASIN: LOCATIONS, SPATIAL ORGANISATION AND CHRONOLOGY. OVERVIEW OF 15 YEARS OF PREVENTIVE ARCHAEOLOGY

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S5

After fifteen years of preventive archaeology, many Mesolithic sites have been discovered and excavated in the Paris region. In 2024, 53 archaeological sites (or levels) were identified in Île-de-France region. Between 2008 and 2023, 14 purely Mesolithic excavations were carried out in the Paris region. All were open-air sites. 47 dates from 12 sites are available. Sites from the 8th millenium are the most numerous and belong to the Beuronian. At the same time, numerous burials have been discovered and dated to the end ot the 8th millenium. The increase in Mesolithic excavations has been accompanied by a major effort in terms of excavation methods (extensive stripping, three-dimensional scoring of all the remains, excavation by quarters of a square metre, sieving). Frequently, the remains are scattered over several dozen square metres of surface area (from 20 to 100 m²) and several tens of centimetres in thickness (up to 30 or 40 cm). Most of the preventive Mesolithic excavations carried out in recent years have been in valley bottoms, while too few have been on plateaux. Furthermore, valley bottom sites, concentrated along the major rivers (Seine, Oise, Marne), are intensely reoccupied. It is therefore still difficult to understand the relationship between these two environments. Preventive archaeology and the many related discoveries now make it possible to draw up a chronocultural and palethnological assessment of the spatial organisation of the sites and their functions. Some elements about the exploitation of the territory and the frequentation of certain contexts will also be provided.

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ORAL PRESENTATION

Monday 15th September, h.15:45-16:00

Rock crystal and place during the Mesolithic in the Swiss Alps

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Throughout the Mesolithic, people's use of the Swiss Alps extended to all vegetation zones and persisted for millennia. The evidence from the Central and Southwestern Swiss Alps, esp. at higher altitude, is typified by an almost exclusive use of rock crystal/quartz as lithic raw material. This is in contrast with what is known from many other upland and lowland regions in Switzerland, where a combination of local and non-local raw materials tends to make up lithic assemblages. Most of our knowledge about Mesolithic activity in the Swiss Alps comes from survey finds and test-trenching. Still, recently discovered and analysed high-elevation occupation sites in the Valais, as well as the discovery of extraction sites, such as the Fuorcla da Strem Sut, confirm that the quartz/rock crystal used, is of regional origin and was purposefully extracted and used extensively. Both extraction and occupation sites were often repeatedly visited, forming nodal points in the landscape, sometimes over millennia. Although our knowledge of these sites is limited, together with observations of decisions on raw material use, they provide insights into alpine Mesolithic land-use and territoriality. Using old and new archaeological data, it will be attempted to answer questions such as: Can surface finds and test-trenching sites provide insights into alpine Mesolithic land-use and territoriality? What can extractions sites tell us about Mesolithic senses and use of place in the Swiss Alps? Is the singular use of rock crystal in certain regions an indication of Mesolithic territories?

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MESO2025 - 11th International Conference on the Mesolithic in Europe

ORAL PRESENTATION

Monday 15th September, h.16:00-16:15

First Mesolithic cultural and environmental dynamics at La Grande Rivoire: a 3,000-year record of human activity in the Northern French Alps

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La Grande Rivoire rockshelter, located at 580 m asl in the northern French Alps, was discovered in 1986 and features a six-meter stratigraphic sequence. The site, occupied over a span of 10,000 years, offers significant insights into the Holocene period, particularly on the First Mesolithic (ca. 9200-6500 cal. BCE), which is the object of this presentation. Recent excavations (2020 to 2024), have focused on the earliest Mesolithic levels in the central area of the shelter, which has been preserved by its natural overhang. These investigations have enhanced the chronostratigraphic framework and deepened our understanding of how the Mesolithic groups interacted with their environment. Notably, the excavations uncovered deeper anthropogenic layers dating to the 10th millennium BCE, previously undocumented in other areas of the site, and which are particularly rare at a regional level. Paleoenvironmental data from the Mesolithic sequence provide crucial information regarding the impact of climate change on the landscapes over time, wild plant and firewood gathering practices. The archaeological assemblage is rich throughout the sequence, featuring various faunal remains that suggest the exploitation of locally available species. Additionally, the lithic industry reveals diverse flint-knapping techniques along with different manufacture objectives and ornamental artifacts provide evidence of varying cultural influences. These findings offer new insights on Mesolithic mobility patterns and contribute to a first attempt at reconstructing the different strategies of occupation and resource exploitation in the subalpine mountain range of Vercors and its surrounding areas over a diachronic scale of more than 3,000 years.

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ORAL PRESENTATION

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The Early Mesolithic occupation of Malga Staulanza in the context of the peopling of the Belluno Dolomites (Italy) during the Sauveterrian

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S5

The recently excavated site of Malga Staulanza (Belluno Dolomites, Italy) adds important new data and offers the chance to test the old hypotheses. The site is an open-air high-altitude settlement (1.681 m a.s.l.), occupied during the Late Glacial (Late Epigravettian) and the Early Holocene (Early Mesolithic, Sauveterrian). The lithic industry related to the latter phase presents typical Sauveterrian features and confirms the existence of a common know-how. However, compared to the other highland sites of the region, the site's altitude is unexpectedly low. Thanks to a multi-disciplinary approach involving lithic technology, raw material analysis, traceology and spatial analysis, it was possible to infer the reasons that led Mesolithic people to occupy this area during the Early Holocene. A complex relationship with local topographic and environmental features emerges from our study. In particular, the driving factor seems to be the presence of an intramorenic pond and its natural resources. Particularly significant is also the presence of a clear-out testified by the uncovering of a tree-thrown around which most of the activities took place. These data represent a further step forward in understanding the Mesolithic peopling of one of the best-known territories throughout Europe.

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MESO2025 - 11th International Conference on the Mesolithic in Europe

POSTER

Monday 15th September, h.17:00-17:15

MESOLITHICS OF BOHEMIAN KARST

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S5

Hunter-gatherer settlement in the Bohemian Karst has been studied for many years; however, the Mesolithic period has rarely been the central focus of specialist research. Despite this, the region holds significant settlement and burial evidence from this era. These remains are found across various landscape types—including under rock shelters, in caves, and at open-air sites. The Bohemian Karst is not only rich in archaeological material, but also hosts numerous important palaeoecological sites. Unfortunately, the archaeological and palaeoecological records are often studied separately and remain largely unintegrated. This poster presents new information within the context of existing knowledge about Mesolithic occupation in the region. To deepen our understanding, we focused on two key aspects: Radiocarbon dating of the sites, and Integration of archaeological and palaeoecological records. A central example is the Skalice rock shelter near Měňany. While this site has long been recognized for its valuable palaeoecological record, its archaeological materials remained unanalyzed until 2024. Recent research has revealed important evidence of both Mesolithic and Final Palaeolithic occupation. A new series of radiocarbon dates has been obtained to refine the chronological framework, and archaeological finds—particularly lithic assemblages—have been studied in greater detail.

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POSTER

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PALÙ DI BRENTONICO (TRENTO, ITALIA). A NEW MESOLITHIC SITE IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE ALPINE MID-MOUNTAIN FREQUENTATION

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S5

The climatic changes of the Early Holocene strongly influenced landscape transformations in the Southern Alpine area, particularly along the Adige Valley (Trentino, Northeastern Alps) and surrounding highlands. In this region, the emergence of wetlands provided new resources for Mesolithic hunter-gatherers, who adapted their subsistence and settlement strategies by focusing on repeated occupations of valley-floor sites and high-altitude hunting camps. However, little information is available regarding Mesolithic activity at mid-altitudes, especially around lake basins or other wetlands. Recent investigations at the Palù di Brentonico site, located at approximately 700 m a.s.l. on Monte Baldo (Province of Trento, Italy), have provided new data to shed light on these aspects.

The archaeological significance of this area has been recognized since the 1950s, following the discovery of an Early Medieval necropolis just a few meters upstream from the site. New excavations conducted in 2023 and 2024 have uncovered a complex stratigraphic sequence, revealing repeated human activity spanning from the Early Mesolithic to the Middle Neolithic along the shores of an ancient lake.

This poster presents the first data on these occupations and outlines the ongoing analyses aimed at reconstructing paleoenvironmental context of the site and its organization over time, highlighting how human groups adapted to transformations in the surrounding landscape during different settlement phases.

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POSTER

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Persistent places, but for who?

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This paper provides the first study within the project: "Revealing the invisible: Identifying preserved Pennine Mesolithic sites in the face of climate change". Numerous Mesolithic finds have been recovered from across the Pennine region of northern England, which have led to the allocation of 'persistent places' within the West Yorkshire Historic Environment Record. This study takes a statistical approach to assess the links between key collector areas, accessible places and erosion patterns to establish the extent of bias within the Historic Environment Record within the West Yorkshire Pennine region. Numerous collectors of flint artefacts have been active within the region for decades, which has created the dataset used for site distribution today. Whilst find density within these persistent places is high, perhaps the vast quantity of data produced has less to do with preferred Mesolithic places and may instead be a product of the collecting practices within the region. Before further steps can be taken to create a predictive model of 'invisible sites' using the Historic Environment Data, this paper tackles the issue of collector impact on the current dataset and asks... persistent places, but for who?