EDITOR'S NOTE / NOTE DE L'ÉDITEUR

Greetings everyone, my apologies for the lateness of this issue! Delays in production and the postal strike conspired to make it later than usual.

In this issue we print the last in our series on regional histories of zooarchaeology in Canada, with an article by Dr. E. Walker on zooarchaeology in the Prairies. If anyone is interested in a bound set of the regional zooarchaeology articles (includes BC, Prairies, Ontario, Quebec, the Arctic and the Maritimes) at a reasonable price, please let me know.

I would like to bring everyone's attention to the ICAZ meeting in Victoria in August 1998 - lets see as many Canadian zooarchaeologists there as possible! Thanks to Donna Naughton for her help with this issue.

Kathy Stewart, editor

Canadian Zooarchaeology is published twice a year at the Canadian Museum of Nature. News, letters, articles, books or papers for review should be sent to: Dr Kathlyn Stewart, Zooarchaeology, Canadian Museum of Nature, P.O. Box 3443, Station D, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 6P4 Telephone: (613) 364-4051 Fax: (613) 364-4027 e-mail: kstewart@mus-nature.ca Submissions are published in English or French. Subscription costs (including GST) are:

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Cover by Debbie Yee Cannon
TRIBUTE TO HOWARD SAVAGE

by Janet Cooper

The life and work of Dr Howard G. Savage was celebrated on Saturday, September 27th, 1997, with a memorial service in Trinity College Chapel at the University of Toronto.

Family, friends, colleagues and admirers of Dr Savage turned out for this event in such numbers that the chapel was filled to overflowing. Although many were from the Toronto area, the gathering included those who had travelled from Peterborough, London, Ottawa, Montreal, New York State and Michigan.

Coordinator of the service Betty Wilson and her team are to be congratulated for putting together a program which not only incorporated some of Dr Savage’s favourite hymns, Bible passages and poetry but also many individuals to share their memories of this remarkable man. Illuminating the many facets of his life were family members and personal friends as well as colleagues from the fields of archaeology, medicine, ornithology and natural history.

Dr Max Friesen, who has inherited the mantle of Dr Savage at the University of Toronto, acted as Master of Ceremonies and as host of the reception which followed, sponsored by the university’s Department of Anthropology and held in the faunal lab where Dr Savage spent so many years among his beloved bones.

This coming together of young and old representing many fields of endeavour is something that would have greatly pleased “the Savage doc” who, for stimulating cross-pollination of interesting ideas, always encouraged an interdisciplinary mix of individuals at his traditional faunal parties.

The Howard Savage Faunal Archaeo-Osteology Collection is his most concrete legacy. To expand and improve this important reference collection -- the largest and most diverse university-based one in Canada-- the University of Toronto has established a memorial fund. It will ensure that the collection continues to provide a valuable resource for students and researchers from across North America. Those who would like to contribute to this memorial fund should contact Max Friesen for details (telephone 416-978-4505; e-mail “mfriesen@chass.utoronto.ca”).
Zooarchaeological Research on the Canadian Prairies

by Ernest G. Walker

Department of Anthropology and Archaeology
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Archaeological investigations in the prairie region have a relatively recent history in comparison to other parts of Canada. Early interest was focused on the more visible sites such as burial mounds in Manitoba or bison jumps and deeply-stratified habitation sites exposed in alluvial deposits across southern Saskatchewan and Alberta. Although interest in the mounds dates back to at least the 1880’s (Syms 1978), archaeology has a much more recent history further west. For example, the Saskatoon Archaeological Society was established in 1935 making it one of the oldest such organizations in North America. However the first professional excavation of a site in the province was not undertaken until 1954. As one might expect, zooarchaeological studies, or anything remotely attributable to interest in the bone assemblages, is even more recent. Despite the late start, zooarchaeological research in the Plains region is vibrant and of high quality. This review is intended to document some of the history of these investigations and to provide a synopsis of the more recent research in this area.

The geographical focus of this review is clearly the prairie region including southern Alberta and Saskatchewan as well as southwestern Manitoba. Although there has been considerable archaeological work done in the Boreal Forest and sub-Arctic regions of these provinces, no examination of these zones is included here. Some good faunal assemblages have been recovered from the northern regions, but overall the soil conditions often preclude the preservation of organic remains resulting in the complete absence of this type of data. This review also focuses on largely published references. Indeed, there has been some very good research done by contract archaeologists and graduate students but the results are often buried in CRM reports and unpublished M.A. theses or Ph.D. dissertations. I am aware of much of this research, particularly from Saskatchewan, but can only refer to some examples in this review. In no way can a brief communication such as this do justice to the often quality work represented in this gray literature.

Establishing a Culture History

Initial archaeological research on the prairies focused on specific types of sites as previously noted with a goal of establishing a cultural historical sequence. Deeply-stratified deposits received much of the attention and although many of these sites yielded abundant faunal material, often these assemblages were ignored and in some cases not even retained. Bison kills, for example, can produce very large assemblages and the sheer logistical problems of transport and curation probably played a major role in the
decision to “leave the bones in the field”. Since creating a laundry list of species and perhaps some notion of abundance through crude NISP counts were the standard level of analysis during this time, researchers undoubtedly wondered what to do with all of the bones. Consequently, much more attention was devoted to the lithic and pottery assemblages which were more relevant to establishing the cultural sequence. For example, the Mortlach site located near Moose Jaw in south-central Saskatchewan was excavated in 1954. This site is a stratified habitation deposit pivotal in the definition of the Northern Plains cultural sequence over the past 2500 years. The monograph notes that since no palaeontologist was available to study the bone, the entire lot was shipped to the Nebraska State Museum for analysis (Wetlaufer 1955). Unfortunately, the analysis was never published. Similarly, during the period 1957-1959, extensive excavations were carried out at the Old Women’s Buffalo Jump in southeastern Alberta although the faunal materials are not mentioned in the final report (Forbis 1960). In contrast, the Long Creek site monograph, which describes a well-known stratified habitation site in southeastern Saskatchewan, provided much better information and was probably considerably ahead of its time (Wetlaufer and Mayer-Oakes 1960). Included in this study are detailed discussions of the bison and many non-bison remains including quantitative analyses and frequency distributions of elements by occupation level as well as osteometric data and observations of butchering patterns. Numerous mollusc and gastropod species are also discussed in terms of their taxonomy and ecology. The Muhlbach site report describing a Besant bison pound in south-central Alberta does not meet this standard, providing only brief descriptive statements about the bone assemblage by anatomical element (Gruhn 1969). Part of the problem here was the poor condition of the bone although there has been some more recent attempt to re-study this assemblage. Finally, the Gull Lake site monograph describes a large bison jump located in southwestern Saskatchewan excavated in 1960 and 1963 (Kehoe 1973). Detailed frequency and percent distribution data by element are provided for each level as well as descriptions of butchering patterns. Unfortunately, this is one of the assemblages that was not retained for further study. This brief discussion is not meant to be critical of these research efforts but only to point out the uneven amount of attention that was paid to the faunal assemblages during this time.

Beyond the Simple Species List Approach

The early 1970’s brought significant advances for faunal studies across the Plains area. Following work ongoing in zoology and ecology concerning quantitative studies called population dynamics, standardized techniques were developed, principally at the University of Wyoming, for determining population data for bison from various kill sites. This work involved age determination from dental eruption schedules and wear patterns, gender determination from various
osteometric variables and the establishment of life tables and survivorship curves. Reher (1970, 1973) initiated much of this work with George Frison and although the techniques have been refined and enhanced many times over, these basic procedures have become standard practice in Plains zooarchaeological studies. Other important developments at this time include the inclusion of systematic descriptions of specimens following practices used in palaeontology and a trend towards standardized measurement of bone elements (cf. Driesch 1976). The adoption of all of these methods was widespread as seen in the results from: The Cactus Flower site in southeastern Alberta excavated during 1972-1974 (Brumley 1975, Wilson 1975), the Tschetter site bison kill near Saskatoon excavated during 1970-1976 (Walker 1979), the Gowen sites also at Saskatoon excavated in 1977 and 1980 (Walker 1992), and the Stott site in southwestern Manitoba re-excavated in 1979-1980 (Hamilton et al 1981). During this time, Michael Wilson continued his interest in bison taxonomy among a myriad of other things and incorporated these ideas into analyses of the Mona Lisa site and Fletcher site assemblages in Alberta (Wilson 1974a, 1974b, 1978). Mike Wilson received his M.A. from the University of Wyoming in 1975 and was undoubtedly instrumental in spreading ideas about bison population studies among his Canadian colleagues. He also made contributions in Quaternary paleontology and paleoenvironmental studies across the prairie region (Graham et al 1987; Wilson 1978b; Wilson and Churcher 1978). Interestingly, the seasonality data procured from age determination studies resulted in considerable debate concerning bison hunting strategies particularly in the Late Prehistoric and Early Historic periods (Arthur 1975).

By the early 1980's, zooarchaeological studies were becoming increasingly concerned with standardized measures of quantification, taphonomy and assemblage preservation as well as butchering practices and carcass utilization (Binford 1978, 1981, 1984; Grayson 1979, 1984, Speth 1983). These ideas were quickly incorporated into the study of bison bone assemblages (Todd 1987, Todd and Rapson 1988). Taphonomic issues alone have become so numerous that faunal studies have necessarily become equally complex with a corresponding literature to match (Lyman 1994). Perhaps the best example of this type of analysis of bison assemblages on the Canadian Plains is the work of Jack Brink at Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump near Fort Macleod, Alberta. After initial excavations in the 1960's and prior to the opening of H.S.I. as a World Heritage Site in 1987, Brink began a multi-year research program in 1983 (Brink et al 1985, 1986, 1989). Brink and his team have described the massive bison bone assemblage(s) in detail including taphonomic, utilization, and spatial patterning considerations. His analysis shows that the H.S.I. assemblage was somewhat atypical of other bison kill assemblages especially those materials recovered from the base of the jump. It would appear that the main kill may have been in the area of a spring channel
while the bench below the jump was actually used as a butchering area (Brink et al. 1989). As part of this research, experimental taphonomic studies were undertaken using bison carcasses from Elk Island National Park and focused on issues such as carnivore activity, transport, weathering and differential preservation. This type of experimental study has continued including an elaborate study of fat content in bison limb elements and the importance of bone grease to Plains bison hunting populations (Brink 1997).

A number of other studies are of note here with regards to bison kill studies. Fragmentation of crania and limb elements are common as part of processing procedures often leaving the determination of gender more difficult. The measurement of articular ends of long bones remains the most reliable method of determining gender although the potential use of other elements has been investigated. Morlan (1991) looked at the use of bison carpal and tarsal measurements as a means of separating bulls from cows and calves with mixed success. Other studies include Roberts (1982) and Walde (1985) both focusing on postcranial elements including phalanges.

The examination of deeply-stratified habitation sites has also provided interesting zooarchaeological data. One very good example is Richard Morlan's work at the Sjovold site in south-central Saskatchewan. Excavated in 1979 and 1980 under the direction of Ian Dyck, this site produced a surprisingly variable array of taxa even though dry-screening through standard ¼ inch mesh was the normal procedure. Morlan describes the assemblage in detail with a special emphasis on bone modification and taphonomic histories of each taxon (Dyck and Morlan 1995). Not unexpected but surprising in light of the method of recovery were the numerous bird shell fragments and small mammal bones recovered. The recovery of rodent bones, in particular, has been problematic in Plains archaeology to the point where they have often been ignored. Morlan (1994a) is critical of this approach and sets out a number of bone modification variables that are crucial to the archaeological interpretation of these elements.

Morlan (1994b) further re-studied the bison bone from the Harder site, a single component Oxbow habitation/processing locale near Saskatoon which was originally excavated during 1970-1972 (Dyck 1977). Breakage patterns suggest the processing of frozen limb elements probably representing winter caches utilizing bulls and cows equally (Morlan 1994b). This particular study shows the importance of long-term curation of archaeological faunal assemblages providing the opportunity for re-study as new techniques become available. Morlan (1994c) further addressed the problem of describing bone fragmentation and survivorship by utilizing a method focused on discrete anatomical features and defined zones. Using a minimum number of elements (MNE) and minimum animal units (MAU) as well as % MAU, Morlan compared the Sjovold and Harder assemblages. One important application
of this fragmentation analysis is the attempt to distinguish between primary kill sites, processing sites, and habitation areas.

The Future: Problems and Prospects

Current zooarchaeological research on the Plains region is varied yet extensive. At Wanuskewin Heritage Park near Saskatoon, E.G. Walker and R.E. Morlan continue the examination of a series of multi-component habitation/processing and bison kill sites spanning the past 5500 years. Four sites have been investigated with another in progress. Intensive water-screening of 25% samples and, in some cases, 100% samples as well as flotation of the fill from a variety of features has resulted in extremely large databases including mammal, bird, reptile, amphibian, fish, insects, snails, and botanical remains. Not all of these materials are related to human occupation, however, but are part of the Holocene paleobiological record which deserves study in its own right (cf. Morlan 1987). Archaeologists must assume responsibility to at least recover such paleobiological materials. The Wanuskewin research program includes the analysis of both the archaeological and paleobiological data sets. Intensive recovery techniques have not been routinely employed on the Plains but clearly are required at all sites where the potential for the preservation of microvertebrate, invertebrate, and botanical remains is present. The recovery of microfaunal remains has the potential to radically change our perception of Plains area subsistence strategies.

One of the problems facing zooarchaeological research on the Plains is the availability of adequate comparative faunal collections. Two major collections exist; one at the Archaeological Survey, Provincial Museum of Alberta and the other at the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, University of Saskatchewan. The establishment and management of comprehensive comparative collections is expensive, time-consuming, and requires considerable dedication over the long term. Providing the appropriate acquisition permits are in place, it would be useful for institutions across the country that maintain research collections to provide detailed information about their holdings if not to assist each other in obtaining specimens.

Bev Nicholson’s current research in southwestern Manitoba is focused on the evidence for incipient horticulture and subsistence practices generally. The continuing excavation of a series of sites in the Souris and Pembina drainages will undoubtedly provide ample opportunity for faunal studies in that area. In Alberta, Jack Brink is continuing research on bison utilization and his much awaited Ph.D. dissertation promises to make a tremendous contribution to the study of Plains bison kills and bison hunting strategies. Dale Walde continues to study fetal bison bones crucial to the analysis of winter procurement sites.
As previously noted, considerable zooarchaeological research has been carried out across the Plains region by graduate students. These projects involve not only new synthetic studies, but increasingly the analysis of assemblages recovered from CRM research or the re-study of existing collections. The importance of these contributions cannot be underestimated especially when one considers the backlog of unstudied collections available. Some examples from Saskatchewan include: an examination of a large fish processing/habitation site (Smith 1986), an analysis of a Mummy Cave bison kill assemblage (Zurburg 1991), a taphonomic study of a Palaeoindian bison kill assemblage (Corbeil 1995), and a study of a large bison kill assemblage from a Besant bison trap (Hjermstad 1996). Investigations of faunal assemblages from large habitation sites include Clarke (1995) and McKeand (1995). The latter is particularly noteworthy consisting of the faunal analysis of materials recovered from the excavation of over 700 square metres at the Bushfield West site near Nipawin, Saskatchewan. This research was conducted as the result of CRM investigations for the Nipawin hydroelectric project. Similarly, CRM studies related to the Oldman River dam in southern Alberta have incorporated detailed faunal analyses. Krooser (1991) examined the continuing problem of distinguishing the various canid species recovered at Plains sites especially bison procurement sites.

**Conclusion**

Interest in zooarchaeological studies across the Plains area is alive and well. Although basic analyses of many existing collections is required in addition to new collections, quite clearly this research has moved on to more methodological and theoretical concerns as well. The old idea that Plains studies must necessarily be focused on just “tons of bison bones” is not the case and there is great potential for investigating not only a larger subsistence base, but also for making contributions to palaeoenvironmental and Holocene palaeobiology generally.

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The Worked Bone Research Group

by Alice Choyke

At the beginning of February 1997, the first inaugural meeting of the Worked Bone Research Group (WBRG), organized by Dr Ian Riddler, was held in London at the British Museum. While it concentrated mainly on proto-historic assemblages of worked bone, antler, and ivory, the intention of the group was to bring together specialists working in prehistoric and proto-historic periods as well as archaeologists with archaeozoologists. It is hoped that the establishment of this group will stimulate multidisciplinary as well as cross-cultural approaches.

Bone tools represent a difficult class of materials, often ignored or superficially treated by archaeologists. This may perhaps be related to the fact that unlike ceramics or stone tools, it is less easy to place them in typological categories because it is difficult to separate the osteological aspects of these artifacts from their culturally determined form. Thus, in a purely typochronological sense they are often of less use than the aforementioned classes of artifacts.

Both Ian and I (see addresses at end of article) decided, quite spontaneously as it turned out, that a forum was needed to bring the isolated specialists working here and there together. First it would be very useful to know who has done what kind of work and where. Secondly, it is even more important that specialists get together to talk about some of the problems (e.g. origins of raw material, use-wear, curation) they all encounter when analyzing this class of artifacts irrespective of temporal affiliation.

Further, a kind of gap has been developing between archaeologists and archaeozoologists in this field. On the one hand archaeologists sometimes ignore or misinterpret the zoological aspects of the material and conversely archaeozoologists are sometimes guilty of treating the cultural aspects of the material too lightly. We must all learn from each other!

In the coming year we would like to build up bibliographies of members of the group from the last five years. Anyone interested in contributing and/or joining the group should send the targeted bibliography as well as a short resume of their work to any of the addresses listed below.

An electronic mailing list has also been set up and we would like to encourage people to send in their e-mail addresses. Experience with other working groups has shown that this can be a very good way of organizing meetings and getting hold of information for research problems which crop up.

Finally, a larger broader-based conference is planned for September 1999 to be held in Budapest, Hungary. The first circular will be sent out at the end of this year. We hope to have sessions related to periods, methodology and perhaps even theoretical questions. Most important is that people should
have a chance finally to talk and discuss problems. We are looking forward to hearing from all interested parties.

Any inquiries should be sent to either:
Dr Alice Choyke
Aquincum Museum
Szentendrei ut 139
H-1031
Hungary
e-mail: H13017cho@ella.hu

or

Dr Ian Riddler
22 New Road
Thelveton, Near Diss
Norfolk, IP21 4NH
England

ICAZ Conference Results

At the March 1997 ICAZ Conference, the ‘Fish Remains Working Group’ session presented a large number of papers. Some selected examples are listed:

Bartosiewicz, L. - Relative size estimation of archaeological fish using computerized mass measurement of vertebrae.

Greenspan, R. - The use of gear selectivity models in the interpretation of archaeological fish remains: a case study from the Harney Basin, Oregon, USA.

Lougas, L. - Growth ring studies of fish remains from archaeological sites: a methodological approach.

Needs-Howarth, S. - Iroquoian fishing around Lake Simcoe, Ontario, Canada.

and

Seasonality from scales and other structures: an application of fisheries methods.

Recent Publications / Publications Récentes


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Forthcoming Conferences / Conférences à Venir

1997

THE ENTANGLED PAST
Integrating History and Archaeology
30th Annual Chacmool Conference
13-16 November 1997
University of Calgary
Calgary, Alberta
Sessions begin in the morning of the 14th and will include:

- Construction of historical identities.
  **Chair - Susan Bender**
- Archaeology as long-term history.
  **Chair - Lisa Rankin**
- Social history and the material world.
  **Chair - Barbara Voss**
- Seeing the invisible:
  Interdisciplinary investigations into the Old World’s hidden past.
  **Chair - Terry Fingerhut and Emily Weglian**
- The past is the present.
  **Chair - Gerald Conaty**
- Archaeology and history of the northern plains.
  **Chair - Matthew Boyd**

For registration information contact:

**Registration, 1997 Chaacmool Conference**  
Department of Archaeology  
Calgary, Alberta, Canada  
T2N 1N4

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**1998**

31st International Symposium on Archaeometry  
27 April to 1 May 1998  
Hungarian National Museum  
Budapest, Hungary

**Call for Papers**

Symposium organizers are soliciting abstracts for papers to be received by 1 November 1997.

Sessions include:
- Biomaterials (bones, plant remains, residues)
- Dating (organic and inorganic materials)
- Field archaeology (prospection and geoarchaeology)
- Technology and provenance of metals, ceramics/glass and stone/pigments/plaster

The Symposium will include a full day theme session on the scientific aspects of experimental archaeology and its impact on contemporary archaeological research, featuring invited contributors as well as submitted papers.

A preliminary Program with details on registration, the scientific and social program, hotels, travel and sightseeing options will be available in January 1998.
The organizers hope to provide limited financial aid to qualifying applicants in the following categories:
1. Archaeometry students.
2. Researchers encountering financial hardship and who plan to submit significant research papers.
Interested individuals should request and submit application forms with abstracts to the address below.

Registration information and correspondence address:

Katalin T. Bir
Hungarian National Museum
Dept. of Information
H-1450 Budapest Pf.124.
Hungary
tel., fax: (36)-1-2101-338
e-mail: h5852tbi@ella.hu

The Organizing Committee invites proposals for sessions and workshops, and abstracts for papers and posters to be delivered as part of the conference programme. Sessions already proposed include:

2. High resolution faunas at the Pleistocene/Holocene boundary. Chair - Jon Driver.
5. Oceanic midden analysis: Problems, methods and results.
6. Patterns of faunal exploitation in Pacific prehistory: From observation to explanation.

Deadlines:
Submission of Sessions and Workshop Proposals: September 15, 1997
Submission of Abstracts: January 30, 1998

Queries may be directed to the Conference Chair:

Becky Wigen
Conference Management
Division of Continuing Studies
P.O. Box 3030, University of Victoria
Victoria, BC, Canada, V8W 3N6
or
e-mail: ICAZ@uvcs.uvic.ca

ICAZ
International Council for Archaeozoology
8th International Congress
University of Victoria
Victoria, B.C.
23-29 August 1998
Requests, Exchanges, Notices / Demandes, Echanges, Avis

Dr. Barry Baker in Texas has written requesting information on the “Association of Professional Zooarchaeologists of Ontario”. He would like to include the information on the Zooarchaeology Web Page:

(http://home.sprynet.com/sprynet/fdirrigl/).

***Editor's note***

The following information is provided by Janet Cooper, founder of APZO:

“The Association of Professional Zooarchaeologists of Ontario was founded in 1995 to promote the study, analysis, and interpretation of zooarchaeological remains from Ontario archaeological sites. APZO operates as an informal working group for professional zooarchaeologists with a vested interest in and demonstrated commitment to Ontario archaeology.

APZO fosters a sense of community within the profession. As a working group we are interested in furthering our professional development by exchanging knowledge and ideas, by sharing research methods, interpretive models and results, and by keeping up with developments in our discipline and in areas of natural science, ethnology and archaeology that relate to zooarchaeology. We work on developing applications of zooarchaeological data to archaeological research. We promote compatibility of analytical and recording procedures between databases.

As archaeologists we promote the role of zooarchaeology in Ontario archaeological research. We are concerned about the inconsistent implementation of zooarchaeological analysis in archaeological projects. We therefore aim to improve awareness and understanding of the contributions of zooarchaeology among our fellow archaeologists.

We are also lobbying for better provincial legislation and guidelines relating to recovery, analysis and curation of faunal remains. As part of this process, we have contributed to the formulation of government guidelines for CRM projects, soliciting feedback from the Ontario archaeological community and fellow zooarchaeologists in Canada, the United States and Europe.”

APZO can be reached at:

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Toronto, Ontario
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telephone Suzanne Needs-Howarth at (416) 652-9099
e-mail: s.needs@sympatico.ca
ADDENDUM: Skeleton of the Heart by David Campbell, Canadian Zooarchaeology 1997, Issue No. 11, pages 15-17, to Figure 1 page 15, add the following caption:

**Top pair**: right os cordis, side facing aorta, anterior end to the left

**2nd pair**: right os cordis, exterior lateral surface, anterior end to the right

**3rd pair**: right os cordis, dorsal view, anterior end to the left, curve follows wall of aorta

**4th pair**: right os cordis, ventral view, anterior end to the right

**5th pair**: left os cordis, ventral view, anterior end to the left, lower curve follows wall of the aorta

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**6th pair**: left os cordis, external lateral view, anterior end to the left.

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**NOTICE FROM EDITOR!!!**

This issue contains our final article on regional zooarchaeology in Canada. If you are interested, or think others are, in a bound version of the collected regional zooarchaeology articles, at a reasonable price, please write or e-mail Kathy Stewart with your comments. E-mail address: kstewart@mus-nature.ca