



TRENDS AND TRADITIONS IN SOUTHEASTERN ZOOARCHAEOLOGY



EDITED BY TANYA M. PERES

"A much-needed presentation of the potential contribution of zooarchaeological studies to our overall understanding of both historic and prehistoric cultures in the southeastern United States. No other volume has brought together such a diverse set of faunal studies from the region."—**ERIN KENNEDY THORNTON**, University of Florida

"Provides an update of recent issues in southeastern faunal studies and a showcase of established and emerging practitioners within the field. Embedded within a long and respected tradition of regional scholarship, this significant volume forges a path forward by offering new insight into a variety of themes within prehistoric and historic archaeology that spans environmental, economic, and social topics especially salient to modern archaeology."—**AMBER VANDERWARKER**, author of *Farming, Hunting, and Fishing in the Olmec World*

WHILE MOST WORKS of southeastern archaeology focus on stone artifacts or ceramics, *Trends and Traditions in Southeastern Zooarchaeology* calls attention to the diversity of information that faunal remains can reveal about rituals, ideologies, socioeconomic organization, trade, and past environments.

These essays, by leading practitioners in this developing field, highlight the differences between the archaeological focus on animals as the food source of their time and the belief among zooarchaeologists that animals represent a far more complex ecology. With broad methodological and interpretive analysis of sites throughout the region, the essays range in topic from the enduring symbolism of shells for more than 5,000 years to the domesticated dog cemeteries of Spirit Hill in Jackson County, Alabama, and to the subsistence strategies of Confederate soldiers at the Florence Stockade in South Carolina.

Ultimately challenging traditional concepts of the roles animals have played in the social and economic development of southeastern cultures, this book is a groundbreaking and seminal archaeological study.

TANYA M. PERES, associate professor of anthropology at Middle Tennessee State University, is the coeditor of *Integrating Zooarchaeology and Paleoethnobotany*.

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Cover: Top, Archaic period bundle from the Fernvale site (40WM51), Tennessee; photo by Aaron Deter-Wolf; courtesy of the Tennessee Division of Archaeology. Bottom, Mississippian period marine shell mask from the David Davis site (40HA301), Tennessee; photo by Teresa Ingalls; courtesy of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Middle Tennessee State University.

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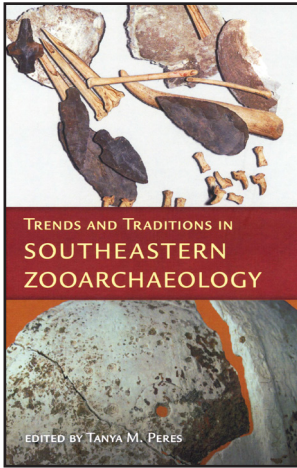
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Trends and Traditions in Southeastern Zooarchaeology

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Reviewed by Heather A. Lapham, Center for Archaeological Investigations, Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Trends and Traditions in Southeastern Zooarchaeology nicely illustrates the wide range of anthropological research questions that can be asked and answered using animal remains recovered from archaeological sites. Considered together, the chapters in this volume showcase the breadth and depth of contributions that zooarchaeological studies

make to our understanding of human behavior and the human condition in the recent and ancient pasts. The book, which contains seven chapters along with an Introduction written by the volume's editor (Tanya Peres), is relevant to students and professionals alike, from scholars with specific interests in zooarchaeology to individuals with more general interests in Southeastern and Midcontinental archaeology.

Peres begins the volume with a thoughtful overview of the early beginnings and subsequent development of zooarchaeology in the American Southeast. Her review gives the reader substantial insights into the "trends and traditions" that have shaped the discipline of zooarchaeology as we know it today.

Chapter 2 by Judith Sichler examines the diet of Confederate soldiers stationed at Florence Stockade in Florence, South Carolina. This Civil-War era prisoner-of-war camp held more than 15,000 Union soldiers for a brief six-month period, from September 1864 through February 1865, following which the camp was abandoned as the war came to an end. Sichler studied a sample of animal remains from several contexts associated with the prison guards. When the guards consumed meat during meals, they subsisted largely on beef, supplemented on occasion by pork and chicken and, as a rare treat, by squirrel. Cattle arrived to the camp on hoof or freshly slaughtered. Pork was also procured from local sources, being brought to the camp butchered and quartered, rather than in salted or pickled form. Sichler concludes that the guards at Florence Stockade were better off than many Civil-War era soldiers whose diets were plagued by poor quality rations.

Chapter 3, written by volume editor Peres, provides a fascinating window into how economic status and access to resources influenced, and sometimes restricted, meat diet at four nineteenth-century farmsteads in central Kentucky. The sites' residents spanned the socioeconomic spectrum from enslaved African Americans to middling class farmers to two wealthy, slave-owning planters. Peres considers the zooarchaeological assemblages in light of idealized Upland South foodways, which relied most heavily on pork. Her findings, some of which are consistent with other studies, indicate that slaves supplemented their diet of pork, chicken, and occasionally beef, with wild game and fish. In addition, she concludes that geographic isolation, regardless of wealth, also contributes to households augmenting

their meat diet by hunting wild animals. The food choices made by the wealthiest families with the best access to market-produced meats are aligned most closely with the idealized Upland South diet, which is, as the author points out, an overstated ideal far removed from the reality of many nineteenth-century households.

Moving farther back in time into the Mississippian period, Chapter 4 by Maureen Meyers discusses the production and trade of shell beads at a fourteenth-century Native American settlement in southwestern Virginia. In Chapter 5, Renee Walker and Jeannine Windham explore the health and societal roles of 29 domestic dogs buried upon death (natural, accidental, or sacrificial) by their human companions at the multi-component, Middle Woodland- to Mississippian-period Spirit Hill site in north-eastern Alabama. A few of the dogs were buried alongside or with their owners, some dogs were buried together, and some were interred with associated grave goods. Adult female dogs comprise the majority of the animals, although juvenile dogs are also present. Nearly a third of the dogs exhibit pathologies (bent or fractured vertebral spinous processes) indicative of carrying packs. The contextual and skeletal evidence suggests the Spirit Hill dogs served as pack animals, companion animals, possibly hunters, and they held spiritual significance in life and death to their human companions.

Chapter 6 by Cheryl Claassen provides an in-depth review and discussion of ritual uses of animals and how such rituals might manifest in the zooarchaeological record. She cautions zooarchaeologists to carefully consider a broad suite of characteristics when analyzing faunal data. Variables that can help illuminate nonfood uses of animals include the age, sex, and size of the animal, combinations of different animal species within a specific context, the presence of select skeletal elements and body units (i.e., wings, feet, etc.), and certain modifications (such as burning). Drawing on examples from Native American cultures throughout North America, Claassen then provides a brief overview of the ritual uses of a few, select animals (specifically, deer, perching birds, frogs and toads, turtles, snakes, and fish). Her contribution to this volume will broaden the reader's perspective on how animals were used, and viewed, in both the recent and ancient pasts.

In Chapter 7, Aaron Deter-Wolf and Peres tackle the expansive topic of five thousand years of shell symbolism in the American Southeast. Their chapter begins with a discussion of how shell architecture (mounds, middens, and rings) served to assert ancestral connections and legitimate territorial control on the prehistoric and historic landscapes. Next, Deter-Wolf and Peres turn their attention to the meaning and use of objects crafted from exotic marine shell that moved from the coast to inland locales through extensive, long-distance trade networks. Lastly, the chapter explores shell symbolism in the mythology of the historic Omaha tribe, and how this information can inform our understanding of shell objects and shell depictions in the Mississippian-period Southeast.

The final chapter in the volume (Chapter 8) by Evan Peacock and colleagues considers shell from another perspective, one that uses shell data to better understand past environments. Distributions of freshwater mussels and brackish-water bivalves on Woodland-period sites in southern Alabama are compared to gain insights into possible sea-level fluctuations and past water salinity levels of the Mobile River basin.