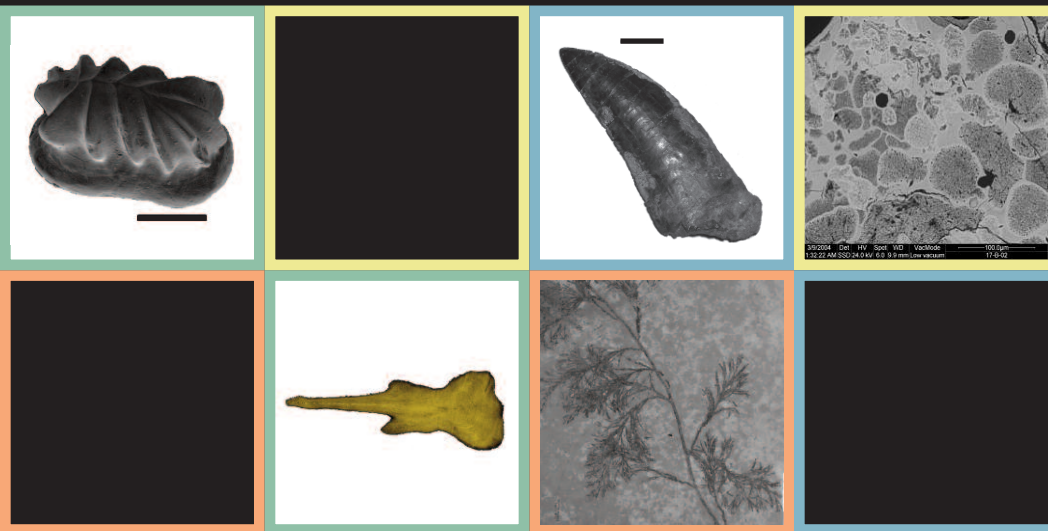


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New perspectives on the Evolution of Phanerozoic Biotas and Ecosystems



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Portalón del Tejadilla: new contributions to the ecosystems of the Castilian Plateau during the late Pleistocene

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The interior of the Iberian Peninsula, and particularly the Castilian Plateau is especially scarce in terms of archaeo-paleontological record and little is known about ecosystems and human occupations during the Pleistocene in this region. The Tejadilla Valley is located in Perogordo (Segovia), in the transition zone between the Sierra de Guadarrama and the Castilian Plateau. In that valley are located some karstic sites like the Búho and Zarzamora caves, dating from the Late Pleistocene (Sala *et al.*, 2011; Sala, 2012). In 2012, a new cave called "El Portalón del Tejadilla" has been excavated and studied in this area, where a considerable amount of faunal remains have been recovered. In this work we report the results of the paleontological study of the remains of macrofauna from this new site, whose main aim is to expand the knowledge about the Late Pleistocene ecosystems in the Castilian Plateau. For this purpose, we have analyzed all bone remains of macrofauna (NR = 559) that have been recovered since the beginning of the excavation and, nowadays, this material remains unpublished. In the taxonomical list, we can highlight the abundance of equids belonging to two species: *Equus ferus* (MNI=4) and *Equus hydruntinus* (MNI=4). But it also includes other taxa like **Rhinocerotidae** (MNI=2), Artiodactyla: *Cervus elaphus* (MNI=2), *Dama dama* (MNI=1), *Bos primigenius* (MNI=1), *Capra pyrenaica* (MNI=2) and *Sus scrofa* (MNI=1), and Carnivora: *Crocuta crocuta* (MNI=8), *Ursus* sp. (MNI=2), *Vulpes vulpes* (MNI=1) and *Panthera* cf. *leo* (MNI=1). This faunal assemblage suggests that

the age of site is Late Pleistocene and slightly differs from that documented in the neighboring caves (Búho and Zarzamora Cave) (Sala *et al.*, 2011). The dominance of species adapted to a diet of grass (such as horses and rhinos) indicates an open environment as the dominant ecosystem. On the other hand, the abundance of carnivores (especially hyenas), of which some juveniles individuals of hyenas have been recovered, the presence of tooth marks on the bones as well as digested bones and coprolites, suggest that El Portalón del Tejadilla cave was a hyena den during the Late Pleistocene.

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