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## Fish and Fishing

Archaeological, Anthropological,  
Taphonomical and Ecological perspectives

Proceedings from the I.C.A.Z. Fish Remains Working Group,  
Jerusalem, October 22<sup>nd</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Assistant Editors:  
IRIT ZOHAR & ARLENE FRADKIN



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37008 SALAMANCA



Attendants to the 16<sup>th</sup> Fish Remains Working Group Meeting at Massada  
(Photo: Daniella Bar-Yosef)





## Fish and Fishing: Archaeological, Anthropological, Taphonomical and Ecological Perspectives

### EDITORS' NOTE

The 16<sup>th</sup> biennial meeting of the Fish Remains Working Group (FRWG) was the first archaeozoological conference ever held in Israel and met from October 23-30, 2011. This FRWG was a joint research conference of the Institute for Advanced Studies of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, and the Israel Science Foundation (ISF). It was part of an ongoing grant awarded by the ISF (Grant No. 300/06) to the Center of Excellence, under the project entitled: *"The Effect of Climate Change on the Environment and Hominins of the Upper Jordan Valley between ca. 800Ka and 700Ka ago as a Basis for Prediction of Future Scenarios"*.

Surrounded by diverse aquatic ecosystems (Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea, Sea of Galilee, and Jordan River) and coastal and inland archaeological sites, some dating to as early as the Lower Palaeolithic, Israel presented an ideal place for a thorough discussion on the role of fish and aquatic habitats in human evolution and in fish-based economies of past human populations. For these reasons, the meeting was held here with activities scheduled at several venues in Jerusalem, Haifa, and Eilat.

The meeting drew together a diverse group of 64 scholars from 24 countries, with training in such disciplines as archaeology, zoology, paleontology, geology, history, and anthropology. Scholarly communications included 40 oral presentations and a session in which 12 posters were presented. All displayed expertise in recent advances in the study of fish remains in different parts of the Old and New World. Conference sessions were organized according to the following themes:

- Fish dispersal routes: In and out of Africa
- The role of fish and fishing during the "Agricultural Revolution"
- Fish consumption methods
- Fishing activity in Europe
- Fishing cultures of the world
- Taxonomy and nanotechnology

A special session was dedicated to the memory of Professor Oscar Polaco, a renowned archaeozoologist in México, who had passed away in October 2009. This session started with a brief but touching presentation by Dr. Ana Fabiola Guzmán, followed by seven lectures illustrating recent advances in neotropical zooarchaeology.

The topic of fish exploitation, fishing, and seafaring along the Mediterranean Sea included a visit to Mount Carmel caves and an ichthyological workshop conducted by Dr. Dani Golani, Curator of Fishes at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Edmond J. Safra Campus, Givat Ram. Following his presentation, conference participants were allowed to collect fish for their reference collections. The Red Sea ichthyofauna was explored by a visit to the Dolphin Reef and the Underwater Marine Park in Eilat.

Furthermore, an online manual for freshwater fish otoliths was produced for this meeting ([http://www.nature-conservation.org.il/BuildaGate5/general2/data\\_card.php?dc=725026172~119~~~conserve~Card4](http://www.nature-conservation.org.il/BuildaGate5/general2/data_card.php?dc=725026172~119~~~conserve~Card4)).

The goals for this meeting were achieved as we encouraged rich and productive, formal and informal, dialogues among participants and across disciplines. We exposed students to new advances in the study of

fish remains. We discussed the accuracy of research methods used. Above all, our interactions were lively, engaging, and productive.

Conferences like this that include both formal and informal interactions are the ones that we most treasure and remember. Such conferences leave an imprint that generates messages and ideas that form and transform our views of the past, promote future research, and encourage new collaborations. The exciting collection of papers published in this special volume of ARCHAEOFAUNA summarizes some of the topics discussed during the FRWG conference and illuminate broad, important questions in the study of fish remains.

The success of the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the FRWG is in no small part due to the financial help received from the Israel Science Foundation (ISF), the Institute of Advanced Studies (IAS) at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Edmond J. Safra Campus, Givat Ram), and the Wenner-Gren Foundation.



### **Fish Remains Working Group (FRWG) 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting: 23-30 October 2011, Israel**

#### **List of Participants**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>
Artzi Yifat	Hula reserve, NPA, Israel
Bar-Oz Guy	Haifa University, Israel
Bar-Yosef Daniella	Tel Aviv University, Israel
Barkai Ofra	Haifa University, Israel
Bartosiewicz Laszlo	Institute of Archaeological Sciences, Loránd Eötvös University, Hungary
Belfer Cohen Anna	Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel
Biton Rebecca	Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel
Blake Emily	Dept. of Archaeology, Durham University, South Road, Durham, County Durham, UK
Borges Caroline	Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris
Burns Peter	Peabody Museum, Harvard University, USA
Butler Virginia	Portland State University, Department of Anthropology P.O. Box 751, Portland, OR 97207-0751
Carenti Gabriele	Università degli Studi di Sassari, Sardinia
Carvajal-Contreras Diana	Universidad Externado de Colombia, Bogotá, Colombia
Cerón-Carrasco Ruby	Collections Documentation Officer, Edinburgh, Scotland
Dufour Elise	Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris
Fradkin Arlene	Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, Florida, USA
Friedman Zaraza	Haifa University, Israel
Galik Alfred	Dep. for Pahtobiology, Inst. Anatomy, Vet. Med. Univ. Vienna Vienna, Austria
Galili Ehud	Israel Antiquities Authority, Jerusalem, Israel
Galimova Dilyara	The Institute of problems in ecology and mineral wealth Tatarstan Academy of science, Russia
Gisis Giora	Beit Osishkin, Kibutz Dan, Israel
Guzmán Ana Fabiola	INAH and Escuela Nacional de Ciencias Biológicas, IPN, Mexico
Golani Dani	Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel
Goldstein Mara	Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel
Goldstein Hava	Golan region biologist, NPA, Israel
Gonzales Manoel	Centro Regional de Pesquisas Arqueológicas, São Paulo, Brasil



Goren Menachem	Tel Aviv University, Israel
Goren-Inbar Naama	Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel
Griffiths David	University of Leicester, UK
Grossman Leore	Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel
Grouard Sandrine	Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris
Hamilton-Dyer Sheila	Southampton, UK
Herzlinger Gadi	Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel
Joordens Josephine (Jose)	Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University, The Netherlands
Krylovich Olga	Laboratory of Biogeocenology and Historical Ecology, Moscow
Kunst Karl Günther	Vienna Institute for Archaeological Science, Austria
Kunst Möwe Gisela	Vienna Institute for Archaeological Science, Austria
Lougas Lembi	Institute of History, Rütli 6, EE10130 Tallinn, Estonia
Marder Ofer	Israel Antiquities Authority, Jerusalem, Israel
Matthews Alan	Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel
Miranda-Muñoz Luis R.	Zona Arqueológica Caral. Ministerio de Cultura. Perú
Morales-Muñiz Arturo	Lab. de Arqueozoología Dept. Biología-Facultad de Ciencias Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain
Oterro Olga	Université de Poitiers, France
Pinton Aurelie	Université de Poitiers, France
Rabinovich Rivka	Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel
Quintana-Morales Eréndira	Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Bristol, UK
Ridler Ian	UK
Ritchie Ken	Højbjerg, Denmark
Robson Harry	Department of Archaeology, University of York, The King's Manor, York, YO1 7EP, UK
Roselló-Izquierdo Eufrasia	Lab. de Arqueozoología Dept. Biología-Facultad de Ciencias Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain
Rosen Baruch	Israel Antiquities Authority, Jerusalem, Israel
Russ Hannah	Department of Archaeology, University of Sheffield, UK
Sapir Hen Lidar	Tel Aviv University, Israel
Studer Jacqueline	Muséum d'histoire naturelle, Département d'archéozoologie, Genève
Trzaska-Nartowski Nicola	UK
Vasilyan Davit	Institut for Geosciences, University Tuebingen., Germany
Weinstein Evron Mina	University of Haifa, Israel
Weissbrod Lior	Haifa University, Israel
Wilkens Barbara	Department of History, University of Sassari, Italy
Yeshurun Reuven	Haifa University, Israel
Zabilska Mirosława	Laboratory for Natural Environment Reconstruction, Institute of Archaeology, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun, Poland
Zhang Ying	Institute of Archaeology, University College of London, UK
Zidane Anuar	Haifa University, Israel
Zohar Irit	Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel



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