

Chapter 7. Faunal Remains

The Southern Oregon University excavations at the Hayes site resulted in the recovery of 81 individual faunal specimens weighing a total of 74 grams. These were recovered from sediment excavated from the three quads of the 1 m x 1 m excavation units and the 50 cm x 50 cm shovel test pits that were screened in the field over ¼-inch hardware cloth and the southwest quads of the 1 m x 1 m excavation units that were screened in the field over ¼-inch hardware cloth. This small collection was catalogued, counted, weighed, and analyzed to identify the lowest possible taxonomic classification using the standards collection at the Southern Oregon University Laboratory of Anthropology, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Forensics Lab in Ashland, Oregon, and several zooarchaeological reference manuals (e.g. Olsen 1964, 1968; Hess and Wapnish 1985). All identified specimens were quantified to the number of individual specimens (NISP) and were weighed to the nearest 0.01 gm. In addition, the faunal remains were each examined for evidence of human or natural modification (Binford 1981; Lyman 1994).

Results

Table 13 summarizes the small and highly fragmented and burned assemblage of faunal remains recovered from the Hayes site. The majority of the faunal remains come from two locations. First, the contiguous excavations of shovel test pit STP E and excavation units Unit 1 and Unit 6 over the Feature 1 oven feature all encountered, near the surface, a scatter juvenile cervid remains. I doubt these remains are associated with the archaeological deposits at the site, and most likely represent the remains of a single juvenile deer (*Odocoileus sp.*) that had died or was killed on the site in the not too distant past. The majority of the remaining faunal assemblage is comprised of tiny fragments of heavily calcined bone that were recovered from the disturbed sediment on the leading edge of the Terrace IV in Unit 12. A few other small pieces of calcined bone were recovered from Unit 7 and Unit 8 in association with Feature 1, and from Unit 10 in association with Feature 2.

Among the few remains likely of ancient cultural origin, heat treatment was the most commonly observed modification. In fact, setting aside the recently deceased deer, all of the recovered faunal remains from the Hayes site were heavily calcined, the result of either human modification (i.e. cooking or landscape burning) or natural processes such as wildfires in the area. No cut marks or polishing were observed on any specimen.

Table 13. Faunal remains recovered from the Hayes Site.

unit	level	quad	taxon	species	element	weight	nisp	comment
1	I	A	mammal	medium	vertebra	4.87	2	
1	I	D	mammal	medium	centrum epiphysis	0.01	1	
4	I	B	mammal	medium	sternum	1.59	1	
4	I	B	mammal	cervid	carpal/tarsal	0.84	1	probably deer
4	I	B	mammal	cervid	hoof	3.11	1	probably deer
4	I	D	mammal	medium	rib diaphysis	4.43	4	
4	I	D	mammal	medium	proximal rib fragment	0.62		
6	I	A	mammal	medium	vertebra centrum	10.37	1	
6	I	B	mammal	medium	rib	10.77	4	
6	I	B	mammal	medium	nid	0.21	1	
6	I	C	mammal	medium	rib	5.06	2	
6	I	D	mammal	nid	nid	0.2	2	
7	I	D		nid	nid	1.28	1	
12	I	D		nid	nid	0.05	13	calcined
12	II	B		nid	nid	0.06	3	calcined
12	III	B		nid	nid	0.02	8	calcined
12	V	B		nid	nid	0.13	1	calcined
12	I	B		nid	nid	0.07	1	calcined
12	I	A		nid	nid	0.1	3	calcined
2	II	B		nid	nid	0.36	4	calcined
2	II	D		nid	nid	0.45	2	calcined
8	IV	C		nid	nid	0.55	1	calcined
10	I	D		nid	nid	0.01	3	calcined
stp F	I			nid	nid	0.12	1	calcined
stp E	I		mammal	cervid	vertbra	11.88	4	probably deer
stp E	I		mammal	medium	rib	10.48	5	
stp E	I		mammal	medium	centrum epiphysis	0.91	4	
stp E	I		mammal	medium	sternum	3.69	2	
stp E	I		mammal	medium	rib	1.75	2	
stp E	I		mammal	nid	nid	0.03	2	

notes: weight in grams, nisp=number of individual specimens, nid=not identified

Summary

The excavations at the Hayes site resulted in the recovery of a small and highly fragmentary and mostly burned and calcined assemblage of animal bone. With the exception of the scattered carcass of a recently deceased deer, no specimen could assuredly be identified to a taxonomic category. No cut marks were observed on any faunal specimen. It is therefore difficult, if not impossible, to use these data to assess the significance of hunting activities. It is tempting to argue that local soil conditions impede the preservation of faunal remains, and that much of the bone originally deposited at the site has simply burned away, leaving just a few meager remains, as is common in many interior or non-shell bearing southwest Oregon archaeological sites (e.g. Tveskov et al. 2002:119). Additionally, the use of 1/4-inch screen during most of the excavation may have additionally impeded the recovery of faunal remains that were still extant. At the very least, the presence of at least some bone at the site considered with the recovery of chipped stone projectile points suggests that hunting was an activity undertaken by the inhabitants of the Hayes site.

