

Chapter 7

FAUNAL REMAINS FROM THE HOWARD BAUM SITE, ROSS COUNTY, OHIO

by

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7.1 Introduction

The Phase IV excavation at the Howard Baum site produced 1,522 pieces of animal bone from feature matrices. Although genus was generally recognizable, the fragmentary nature of many pieces made species identification difficult. Only 373 items, or 24.9%, were identified to species. Percentage breakdown by species is given for both the estimated number of individuals (minimum) and for actual number of identified bone items (Table 31).

7.2 Faunal Remains from the Feature Matrices

Table 32 provides an inventory of the species identified in the feature matrices. The distribution of species by feature exhibits similar density ratios. For instance, white tail deer is always the dominant species. The exception is Feature 1, which was not used to dump refuse.

7.3 Cultural Modification Within the Faunal Assemblage

Only a few butchering cuts were noted among the deer bone sample, permitting no inferences about butchering technique. It seems clear from the relative proportion of individual deer and elk elements in the collection that these animals were butchered on-site.

Table 31

Minimum number of individuals calculated from number of items from the faunal assemblage at the Howard Baum site.

| Species | Minimum No. of Individuals | Percent | No. of Items | Percent |
|--|-------------------------------|---------|--------------|---------|
| <u>Odocoileus virginianus</u> Deer | 3 | 18.7 | 153 | 55.4 |
| <u>Cervus canadensis</u> Elk | 2 | 12.4 | 71 | 25.7 |
| <u>Procyon lotor</u> Raccoon | 1 | 6.3 | 5 | 1.8 |
| <u>Sylvilagus floridanus</u> Cottontail | 1 | 6.3 | 10 | 3.6 |
| <u>Sciurus carolinensis</u> Gray squirrel | 1 | 6.3 | 3 | 1.1 |
| <u>Castor canadensis</u> Beaver | 1 | 6.3 | 1 | 0.4 |
| <u>Mephitis mephitis</u> Skunk | 1 | 6.3 | 1 | 0.4 |
| <u>Canis familiaris</u> Dog | 1 | 6.3 | 2 | 0.7 |
| <u>Meleagris gallopavo</u> Turkey | 2 | 12.4 | 12 | 4.3 |
| <u>Colinus virginianus</u> Quail | 1 | 6.3 | 3 | 1.1 |
| <u>Strix varia</u> Barred owl | 1 | 6.3 | 2 | 0.7 |
| <u>Terrapene carolina</u> Box turtle | 1 | 6.3 | 13 | 4.7 |
| Totals | 16 | 100.2 | 276 | 99.9 |

| | | |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Total Mammal | 1,416 | 94.5% |
| Bird | 61 | 4.2% |
| Reptile | 13 | 0.9% |
| Fish | 7 | 0.4% |
| | <u>1,497</u> | <u>100.0%</u> |

Table 32

Number of bone items from individual features, Howard Baum site.

| Species | FEATURE | | | | | | | | | | Total |
|--|---------|----|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-------|
| | 1 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 11 | 12 | 14 | 15 | |
| <u>Odocoileus virginianus</u> White-tailed deer | | 5 | 61 | | | 10 | 8 | 11 | 6 | 52 | 153 |
| <u>Cervus canadensis</u> Elk | | 5 | 53 | | | | 5 | 1 | | 7 | 71 |
| <u>Procyon lotor</u> Raccoon | | | | | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | | | 5 |
| <u>Sylvilagus floridanus</u> Cottontail | | | 3 | | | 7 | | | | | 10 |
| <u>Sciurus carolinensis</u> Gray squirrel | | | 3 | | | | | | | | 3 |
| <u>Castor canadensis</u> Beaver | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| <u>Mephitis mephitis</u> Skunk | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <u>Canis familiaris</u> Dog | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | 2 |
| Unidentified cervid | | 4 | 104 | | | | | | 1 | 83 | 191 |
| Unidentified mammal | 2 | 13 | 301 | 25 | 177 | 83 | 110 | 177 | 23 | 92 | 968 |
| Total mammal | 2 | 27 | 527 | 25 | 177 | 102 | 125 | 191 | 31 | 234 | 1416 |
| <u>Meleagris gallopavo</u> Turkey | | | 7 | | | | | 3 | | 2 | 12 |
| <u>Colinus virginianus</u> Quail | | | | | | 3 | | | | | 3 |
| <u>Strix varia</u> Barred owl | | | | | | 2 | | | | | 2 |
| Unidentified Bird | | | 11 | | 1 | 18 | | 6 | | 8 | 44 |
| Total Bird | | | 18 | | 1 | 23 | | 9 | | 10 | 61 |
| <u>Terrapene carolina</u> Box turtle | | | 11 | | | 1 | | | | 1 | 13 |
| Unidentified fish | | | 1 | | | 6 | | | | | 7 |
| Total | 2 | 27 | 557 | 25 | 178 | 132 | 125 | 200 | 31 | 245 | 1497 |

7.4 Seasonality

None of the faunal evidence is particularly sensitive in indicating seasonality: the birds were year-round residents of Ohio; both shed and unshed antler cores are present, but the former may represent shed racks collected by the site inhabitants for use in tool making. Elements from immature deer, turkey, and beaver were recognized, but none of these could be age-graded. Deer mandible fragments retaining teeth that could be tentatively age-graded on the basis of tooth wear indicate a very old individual, approximately six years, another approximately three years, and a third with the permanent third molar not fully erupted, approximately two years. Post-cranial elements probably represent younger individuals but these can not be age-graded more precisely. The presence of fish and naiad remains bespeaks spring/summer/fall occupation, but nothing more can be deduced from the sample.

7.5 Conclusions

The sample permits few inferences regarding seasonality, diet, length of occupation, or site size. Because of small sample size, pounds of usable meat per species was not calculated.

Deer, elk and turkey are the three most common species represented in the faunal assemblage from the Howard Baum site. Unlike most Fort Ancient assemblages, elk is well represented. These animals were probably mainstays of the prehistoric Indian larder. Noteworthy is the small amount of fish, reptilian, and bird remains present in the sample. This is atypical of most Fort Ancient faunal assemblages and may be attributed to the limited portion of the site excavated.