The Current
Newsletter of the Island & Coastal Archaeology Interest Group
Volume 12: Issue 1 (2025)

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Chair and Editor's Note

Dear ICA Members,

We hope that this edition of *The Current* finds you well. This issue highlights a few exciting and ongoing coastal research projects from across California, South America, Micronesia, and the Georgia Coast, covering an array of topics from Colonization, and agriculture, to climate change, ideology and ecology, raw materials acquisition, and experimental archaeology!

For future issues, please consider submitting research blurbs or other content, such as conference announcements, field school opportunities, or recent publications.

We would also like to introduce our new editor for *The Current* - Caitlyn Streseman. Caitlyn is a first-year master's student in Anthropology and Applied Archaeology at Eastern New Mexico University. Her thesis focuses on curating a legacy collection from a Lucayan archaeological site in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas. She hopes to continue working in The Bahamas after completing her master's degree. Currently, she works as a graduate assistant and research assistant on an NSF IRES project!

Carey Garland, Ph.D.
Hannah Hoover, Ph.D.
Co-Chairs

Caitlyn Streseman
Editor

MEETINGS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND CALLS FOR PAPERS

Conference Opportunity

The University of Victoria is hosting an Oceans Past Conferences this summer (June 15-19) in Vancouver Island. Funding for students and early career researchers is available at: https://oceanspast.org/2026-opi-xi/.

Abstracts are due January 15th and registration opens in February.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Toolstone Quarrying in a Peri-Coastal Context: Results from Archaeological Investigation for a Confidential Wind Farm Project Near Point Conception, California, USA

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Loukas Barton
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Dudek, with assistance of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, recently completed excavations at nine pre-contact sites situated around the headwaters of Honda Creek, less than 5 kilometers from the Pacific Ocean and 14 kilometers north of Point Conception and the Santa Barbara Channel (Figure 1). The excavation produced over 370,000 cultural items. Chronology was determined by 24 radiocarbon dates, 22 source-specific obsidian-hydration measurements, and 20 temporally diagnostic projectile points. The results highlight patterns of toolstone acquisition and reduction of cryptocrystalline silicate material at one main quarry and satellite workshop sites. One site in particular, CA-SBA-2756, produced the bulk of the cultural assemblage. Chronology of site occupation ranges from possibly >5000 BP to the most recent contact era (ca. 350 BP), though the bulk of toolstone acquisition may be focused on the period of time between 1500-500 BP.

Notable artifacts include 760 bifaces, 534 of which came from CA-SBA-2756. One artifact concentration produced 30 notable bifaces that we described as “large and broad,” which may have been manufactured for trade (Figure 2). Given the presence of chert raw material sources on the Channel Islands and other mainland areas, we interpret the site complex as being targeted by relatively local people who traveled to the area to acquire toolstone for personal use as well as local or regional trade. It is possible that the material and bifaces were exchanged with other

Chumash communities for the purpose of maintaining social ties, in a manner similar to the Kula Ring of the western Pacific (Malinowski 1921).

Figure a. Overview of project area from east. View southwest.

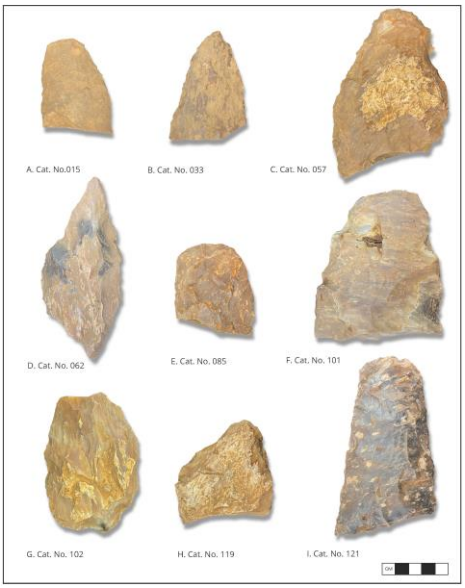

Figure b. Sample of "Large and Broad" Bifaces.

Reference Cited:

Malinowski, B. 1921. The Primitive Economics of the Trobriand Islanders. *The Economic Journal* 3. 1(121):1-16.

A Land Snail Chronology of Pingelap Atoll, Federated States of Micronesia

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Maureece Levin, Ph.D.
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Pingelap Atoll, located in the Federated States of Micronesia, has been inhabited for at least 1,700 years (Levin et al. 2019). Despite its long history, there is no published survey of its terrestrial fauna. A 2017 archaeological excavation on the high point of the atoll recovered thousands of calcium carbonate land snail shells.

In this study, hundreds of land snail shells were examined from archaeological samples dated approximately 1550-1600 cal BP and 900 cal BP, respectively. By comparing the shell morphology and dates of the literature from nearby settlements, nine unique land snail families were identified (Figure 1).

The highly invasive family Subulinidae was introduced as early as 1600 BP and made up the majority of land snail individuals by ca. 1000 BP, while families native to the Pacific experienced a near universal decline in population (Figure 2). An exception to the decline, family Rhytididae, is known to prey upon other snails, even being nicknamed the 'cannibal snail' (Cowie et al. 2017). A similar trend is found in the nearby island of Kosrae, and researchers believe Rhytididae may have established a niche by preying upon Subulinidae (Cowie and Grant-Mackie 2004). It is highly plausible that the same occurred in Pingelap.

This work supplements existing information on the colonization dates and agricultural practices of early Pingelap settlers, while providing new information on adventive and native land snails of the Pacific.

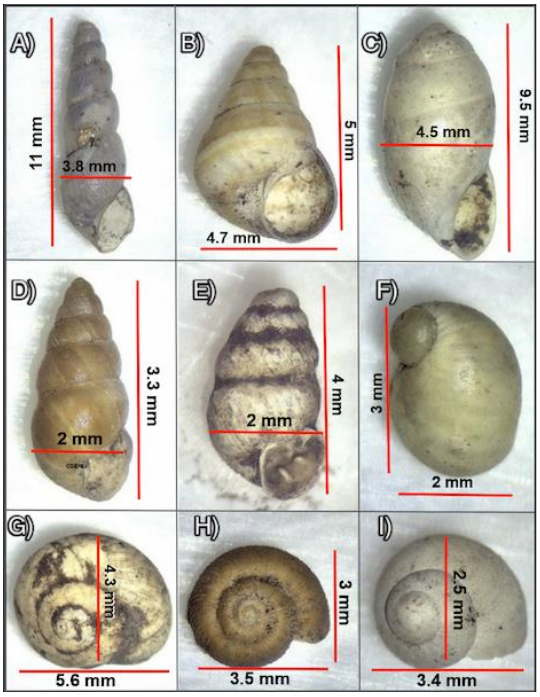

Figure 1. Micrographs of Land Snail shells from Pingelap Atoll featuring the following families: A) Subulinidae, B) Assimineidae, C) Pupinidae, D) Achatinellidae, E)Pupillidae, F) Succineidae, G) Euconulidae, H) Charopidae, I) Rhytididae.

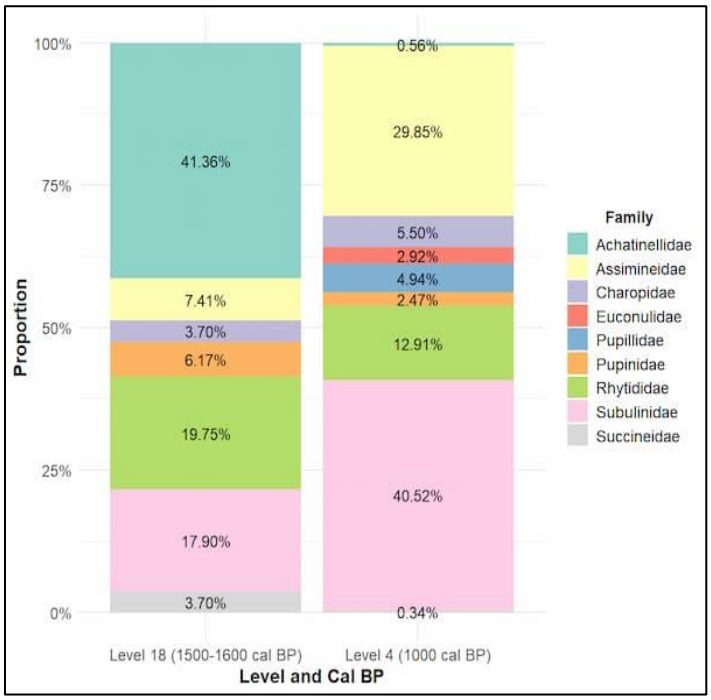

Figure 2. Proportion of land snail families in Pingelap Atoll between ca. 1600 cal BP and 1000 cal BP.

References Cited:

Cowie, Robert, Rebecca Rundell, and Norine Yeung. 2017. *Samoan Land Snails and Slugs-An Identification Guide*.

Cowie, Robert H., and J. A. Grant-Mackie. 2004. Land Snail Fauna of Me Aure Cave (WMD007), Moindou, New Caledonia: Human Introductions and Faunal Change.

Levin, Maureece J, Katherine Seikel, and Aimee Miles. 2019. A Partial Chronological Sequence of Human Habitation for Pingelap Atoll (Pohnpei State, Federated States of Micronesia). *Radiocarbon* 61(03):765–776.https://doi.org/10.1017/RDC.2019.30.

Ideology and Ecology in Coastal Adaptations, Seven Millennia of History at Longotoma, Southern Andes (32°24'S)

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A Chilean research team of 13 recently completed excavations in the Longotoma Dune Field, one of the largest dune systems on the north-central Chilean coast (Figure 1). The site offers exceptional preservation of faunal and botanical remains, enabling cross-temporal comparisons. Radiocarbon dates indicate occupation since at least 7000 cal BP, with later use during the Ceramic period (post-2000 cal BP) and colonial times. The project seeks to understand discontinuities in the use of dune spaces over time.

Figure 1. Shell Middens at the Upper Dune in Longotoma.

Fifteen excavation units sampled the dune field's spatial variability (Figure 2). Archaeological evidence appears segregated between a southern, tall dune (60 m asl) and a northern, more

extensive dune area: fish remains occur more frequently in the south, while ceramics dominate the north.

Figure 2. Archaeological excavation at the Logotoma Northern Dune Field.

Findings inform the historical ecology of local populations, whose activities left enduring ecological legacies, including shell midden-promoted pedogenesis and extended vegetation cover (Hernández Castillo et al. 2025). Present-day ritual processions along coastal valleys suggest that access to the coast has long been shaped by ideological control—sometimes to promote mobility and small group size, and at other times to support different forms of social organization. Exploring the interplay between ecology and social dynamics promises new insights into how this coast became home to cosmopolitan, heterarchical societies linked to far-reaching exchange networks.

Reference Cited:

Hernández Castillo, Daniel, Isidora Lea-Plaza, Daniel Pascual, Francisca Vera, Cristian Dávila, Mauricio Soto, Georgianna Pineda, and Ismael Murillo. 2025. The Coast of North-Central Chile as an Anthropogenic Landscape: An Assessment from the Longotoma Dune Field (32°24'S). *Andean Past* 15:In Press 1-32.

A Preliminary Test of the Effectiveness of Circular Fish Hooks: An Exploratory Experimental Archaeological Project

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As a final project for the online Graduate Certificate Program for Experimental Archaeology and Material Culture from the University College of Dublin, Ireland, an exploratory, experimental archaeology approach was used to investigate circular fishhooks (Figure 1). These hooks are found throughout the coastal regions of the mid-southern Pacific, Australia, and Africa.

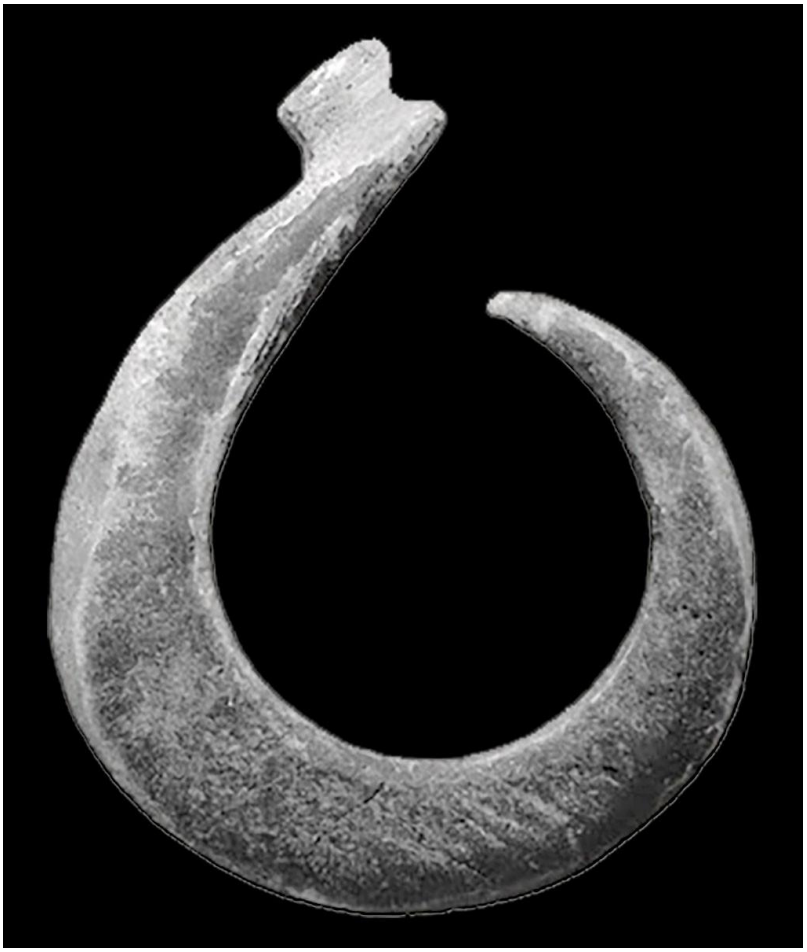

Figure 1. Chumash Abalone Circular Fish Hook (Guttenberg 2014)

The project was designed to test the effectiveness of modern circular hooks and 3D-printed archaeological replicas. Experiments were designed to simulate catching fish (Figure 2). A silicone model of a fish mouth was created. Tests were performed by placing a hook into the 'mouth' at different angles, pulling line, and recording if the hook "caught" the mouth (Figure 3). The ratio of

the number of times the hook successfully "caught" the 'mouth' (h) divided by the number of tests (n) was determined to be the definition of effectiveness (h/n).

The resulting effectiveness scores ranged from 0.0 to 0.9, with the lowest "scores" correlating with lower line angles (0°) (i.e., pulling the hook straight out of the 'mouth'), whereas the strongest positive correlation with effectiveness was that of higher line angles (180°) (i.e., pulling directly back from the 'mouth').

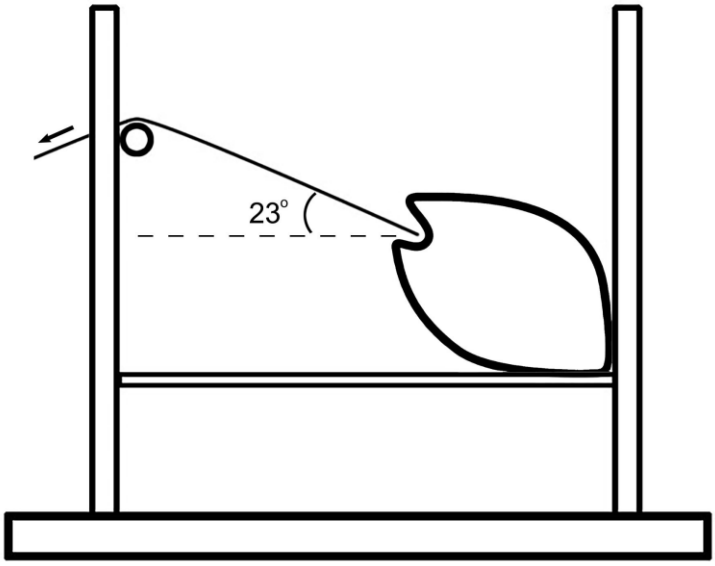

Figure 2. Diagram of experiment structure (shown at an angle of 23°)

Figure 3. 3D-printed hook replica "catching" the silicone fish mouth model.

From the observations made while performing the experiments, the motion illustrated in Sinoto (1991: Figure 4) seems to be incorrect. Rather than rotating toward the line, it appears that the hook rotates away from the line (Crain 1966: Figure 4), allowing the hook to snag the lip of the mouth. It also seems like the attachment and direction of the line is crucial to the action of the hook. Both observations are intriguing subjects for future study.

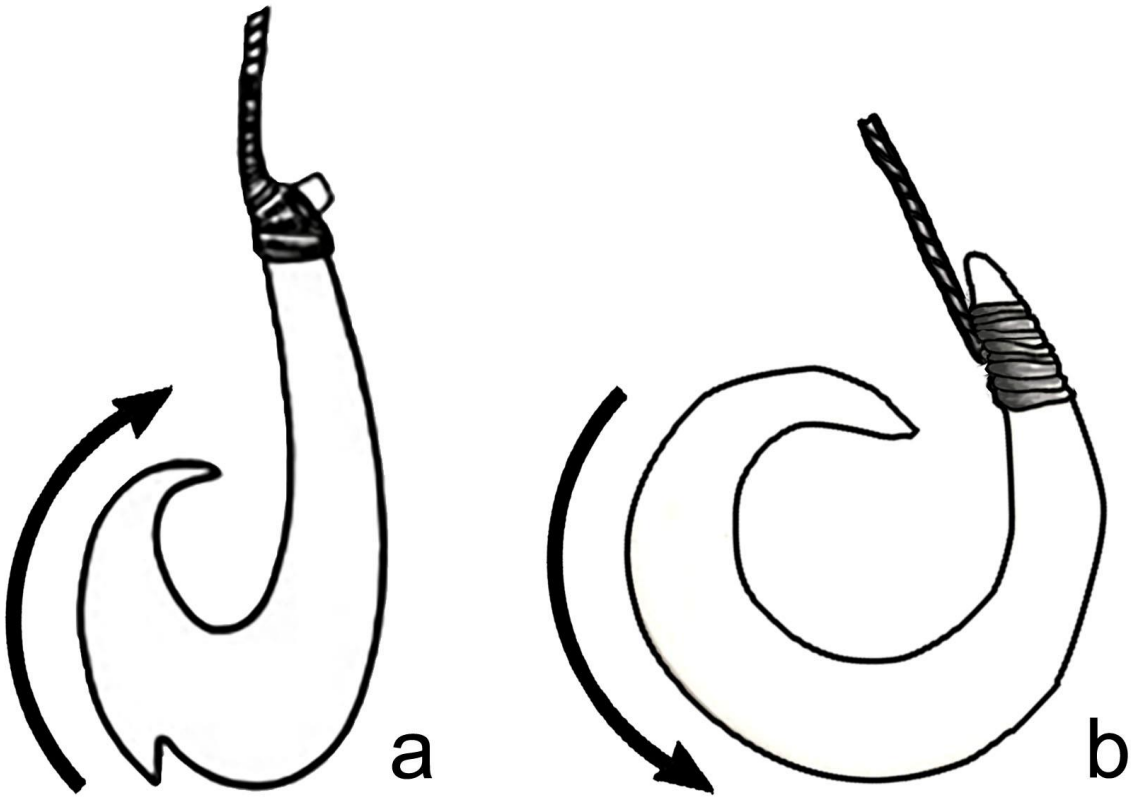

Figure 4. Circular hook rotation. (a) Rotation toward line (Sinoto 1991). (b) Rotation away from line (personal observation), (Crain 1966).

References Cited:

Crain, Carlton L. 1966. Mechanical aspects of the single-piece curved shell fishhook. *The Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers* 24, 17-29. University of California, Berkeley.

Guttenberg, Richard B. 2014. Spatial Signatures of Ceremony and Social Interaction: GIS Exploratory Analysis of Tule Creek Village (CA-SNI-25) San Nicolas Island, California. M.A. Thesis. California State University, Los Angeles.

Sinoto, Y. H. 1991. A Revised System for the Classification and Coding of Hawaiian Fishhooks. *Bishop Museum Occasional Papers* 31, 85-105.

University of Georgia 2025 Field School Summary

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The University of Georgia's (UGA) *Enfulletv Mocvse* in Archaeology 2025 Field School was held at the Wormsloe Historic Site in Savannah, Georgia. In collaboration with UGA's Laboratory Center for Research and Education at Wormsloe, Georgia DNR, and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, this project focused on documenting eroding shell middens within the historic state park because many cultural sites along the Georgia coast are being lost due to erosion from rising sea level and increased storms.

Figure 1. Students screening soil from a shovel test

This year, we worked in an area on the northern extent of the historic park that has significantly eroding shell middens. Field school students placed shovel tests along the shoreline where there were visibly eroding shell middens (Figure 1). Shovel tests were also placed 10-m to the west of each shoreline shovel tests. Most of the shovel tests inland from the shoreline were sterile, indicating that much of the site has already eroded into the marsh. Shovel tests showed that the site primarily consists of thin shell sheet middens. We encountered mostly shell, Indigenous ceramics, and faunal. Shovel tests to the north contained primarily Deptford-typed ceramics and Savannah Burnished Plain ceramics, dating to the Middle Woodland to Early Mississippian period (~1500 to 800 years BP). Shovel tests further to the south contained primarily Irene and Altamaha ceramics dating to the Late Mississippian and Early Contact periods (14th-16th centuries) (Figure 2). During the second week of the field school, we observed a circular shell ridge at the northern extent of the site in the area where we were encountering Deptford-type ceramics. The shell midden appears to have been cut through by a historic trench. We placed a 2x1-m unit to bisect the ridge and trench. Like the shovel tests, these excavations primarily encountered Deptford ceramics, indicating it is a Middle Woodland (~1500 years BP) shell midden.

During future field seasons, we plan to continue to explore this site as there are not many Deptford or Altamaha sites in the area. Future work will include expanding units to identify potential subsurface cultural features and deposits and submit samples for radiocarbon dating. Doing so will not only allow us to learn more about Indigenous history in the region during these time periods but also document these cultural sites before they are lost to climate change.

Figure 2. Examples of ceramics encountered at site, including Deptford Check Stamped (left) and Irene Complicated Stamped (right).

FIELDSHOOL OPPORTUNITIES

***Enfulletv-Mocvse* in Archaeology Field School, University of Georgia**

Come explore the history of the Georgia Coast this summer at the Wormsloe Historic Site. Located just south of Savannah, Georgia, Wormsloe has a rich history that extends from the Plantation and Colonial eras and back until the Ancestral Muskogean groups first began to occupy the Georgia coast some 4500 years ago. The *Enfulletv-Mocvse* in Archaeology Field School (Muskogean for "new ways of doing" archaeology) is a collaborative field school between UGA, Muscogee (Creek) Nation, whose ancestral homelands cover most of Georgia, and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. **The field school is for course credit and is open to UGA students and students from other colleges and universities as well.** The field school consists of archaeology field and lab method courses that are designed to teach students the field techniques of archaeological excavation and laboratory skills concurrently. This year we will be exploring archaeological sites on Wormsloe. You will learn archaeological survey methods, excavation, remote sensing, drone LiDAR, go on field trips around to different islands and sites, and live by the beach and coastal estuaries.

The first four weeks of the field school will take place at Wormsloe and the last two weeks will be back at UGA's Laboratory of Archaeology in Athens, GA. Because the class is held in a non-

traditional setting, students are also required to learn to live and work together as a group while they contribute to the success of the archaeological project.

Lodging and Meals: All meals and housing costs while in the field are provided for in the costs of the program. Students must cover their own lodging and food costs for the last two weeks when back in Athens. Students will stay in dorm-style lodging at a UGA extension at Wormsloe, which includes a state-of-the-art experiential learning building.

Field School Goals: Through participation in an archaeological research project, students will be introduced to the methods of archaeological survey, excavation, data and materials recovery, recording, and processing. Students will be involved in all phases of field excavation, including archaeology survey, test unit excavations and remotes sensing. Students will also be trained in basic laboratory processing and analysis, and will work collaboratively to present the results of their research in a professional presentation.

Credits: Students in this field school will enroll in both ANTH 4200 Field Methods in Archaeology (6 credit hours) and ANTH 4240 Laboratory Methods in Archaeology (6 credit hours), for a total of 12 credit hours. Both of these courses introduce archaeological field and lab techniques and the methods and approaches by which archaeology and heritage are interpreted. These courses fulfill one or more UGA general education core curriculum requirements, university-wide requirements, Franklin College requirements, and/or Department of Anthropology major requirements.

Apply by February 1, 2026
Field school dates: June 3–July 10, 2026
For more information contact Dr. Carey Garland (carey.garland@uga.edu)
For more information about Wormsloe: https://gastateparks.org/Wormsloe
To Apply: https://anthropology.uga.edu/archaeology-field-school

RECENT AND UPCOMING PUBLICATIONS

Rick, T.C., Radde, H. D., Bentz, L., Braje, T.J., McKechnie, I., & Elliott Smith, E. A. 2025. Into the Deep: Origins and Evolution of Northeastern Pacific Ocean Tuna (*Thunnus* spp.) Fisheries. *Fish and Fisheries*, 26(6): 1164-1179.

McNiven, I.J., 2025. More than the sea: Review of different approaches to seascapes reveals unique transdisciplinary conceptualizations and contributions of archaeology. *Journal of Island and Coastal Archaeology*, 20(4): 775-818.

Piper, Philip J., Nguyễn Thị Thúy, Peter Bellwood, Trần Thị Kim Quý, Elle Grono, Fiona Petchey, Charles Higham, Jasminda Ceron, Fredeliza Z. Campos, and Lâm Thị Mỹ Dung. 2025. Thạch Lạc and the Neolithic transition in north-central Vietnam, 3000–2000 BCE. *The Journal of Island and Coastal Archaeology,* 20(4): 1-25.

Krooks, Beatrice, and Hanna Kivikero. 2025. Fish species richness, resourse availability, and human selectivity reflected in the fish bone material from a medieval Franciscan friary in the Baltic Sea. *Journal of Island and Coastal Archaeology* 20(4): 918-935.

Holland-Lulewicz, Jacob, Brandon T. Ritchison, Isabelle Holland-Lulewicz, Matthew D. Howland, Amanda Roberts Thompson, and Victor D. Thompson. 2025. Modern coastal ecosystems of the American Southeast are shaped by deep-time human-environment interactions. *Communications Earth & Environment*, 6(1): 238.

**Please be on the lookout for the upcoming publication of the Oxford Handbook of Island & Coastal Archaeology, edited by Scott Fitzpatrick and Jon Erlandson! It contains 47 chapters covering numerous topics and regional casestudies. The print version scheduled for publication early in 2026; however, many of the chapters are online at:
https://academic.oup.com/edited-volume/46866

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS: HOW TO CONTRIBUTE TO *THE CURRENT*

A variety of interest pieces and announcements are accepted for publication in the ICAIG newsletter. Generally, the deadline for submission for the Spring/Summer Issue is March 1st and for the Fall/Winter Issue, September 1st. Submissions and inquiries may be directed to *The Current* editor, Caitlyn Streseman (Caitlyn.Streseman@enmu.edu) Contributions need not follow any specific format, with the exception of "Research Highlights" and "Recent Publications" (instructions below).

Instructions for Submitting Recent Publications

PLEASE NOTE: The editors will no longer be surveying literature for the Recent Publications section; Recent Publications will only contain those citations sent to us.

- Citations submitted for the "Recent Publications" section of the newsletter should follow the *American Antiquity / Latin American Antiquity* style guide.
- "In press" citations should be accompanied by a digital object identifier (DOI).
- Submit recent publications to Caitlyn.Streseman@enmu.edu

Instructions for Preparing "Research Highlights" Descriptions

- Prepare a short description, written in the third person, that includes the purpose of the research, location, brief review of findings to date (if relevant), and other information of potential interest to the membership.
- Descriptions should be single spaced, using 12 pt, Times New Roman or Calibri font, and should be submitted as an MSWord file (.doc or .docx).
- Be sure to provide a title (project name or site name) and include the names and organization of the author(s)/principal investigator(s) submitting the description.
- Provide a valid email address for a single contact author/principle investigator.
- Proof read and spell check the research description, especially place names.
- **Word limit**: please keep the description to a maximum of about 250 words (i.e., abstract length).
- Only include literature citations if absolutely necessary. List these after the research description using the citation format for *American Antiquity*.
- **Images**: One or two (maximum) JPEG or TIFF format photos/images/illustrations may be included with the research description. Image resolution should be 600 dpi. Please note that photos may be cropped to fit to the page if images are too large or include significant "empty" space. To avoid this, please format images prior to submission to include only necessary content.
- Include a caption for any images submitted.
- If your images contain identifiable photographs of people, each person in the photo will need to sign a release form, which we will provide for you.

Submit descriptions and images as separate files to (Elizabeth.moore@dhr.virginia.gov). Submissions that do not meet the above guidelines will be returned to the author for revision, which may delay publication in *The Current*. Due to space constraints not all submitted pieces may be included in a given issue of *The Current*. If this is the case, your contribution will receive priority listing for the next issue. Do not hesitate to contact the editor if you have any questions. We look forward to receiving your contributions.

Past Issues of *The Current* are available on the Island & Coastal Interest Group's Website.