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Book Review

Noe-Nygaard, N. (1995): *Ecological, sedimentary, and geochemical evolution of the late-glacial to postglacial Åmose lacustrine basin, Denmark.* Fossils and Strata, No. 37. pp. 1—436. Scandinavian University Press, Oslo. ISSN 0300-9491. ISBN 82-00-37656-7.

This volume is the comprehensive result of a long tradition of research on Danish Mesolithic to Neolithic sites during the last about three decades of which the authoress was involved. It is an impressive achievement, not only by its sheer size. The study is based on excavations at 4 sites in the Åmose lacustrine basin, Sjælland, East Denmark. These sites are Ulkestruplyng (Late Boreal), Kongemose (Early Atlantic), Præstelyng (Late Atlantic), and Muldbjerg (Early Neolithic). The excavations at these sites yielded a total of 16.762 vertebrate bone fragments which could be identified as belonging to 77 species (Mammalia: 23 species; Aves: 41 species; Reptilia: 1 species; Amphibia: 2 species; Pisces: 10 species). Compared to other European archaeological sites Mesolithic subfossil bone material from East Denmark is exceptionally well preserved and allows detailed analysis. The scope and detail of documentation of all data is ample and excellent, no matter whether they are presented in the text, in tables, diagrams, photos, or in Appendix 1 which gives detailed systematic descriptions of individual bone elements of the different species or Appendix 2 with detailed measurements. The study is especially important because of the wealth of geological, geographical, palaeoclimatic, palynological, palaeoecological and archaeozoological data brought together. By this means it is possible e.g. to correlate changes of the local vertebrate fauna which are documented over the time period studied with changes in e.g. climate, degree and type of plant coverage and changes in sea or lake level. Based on the extensive and well preserved bone material conclusions can be drawn on e.g. the time of the year when these sites were occupied by human hunters, the way they killed their prey animals and how they cut up the carcasses.

This volume can stand as a standard for any similar study to be undertaken in the future, despite minor oversights like e.g. the inclusion of the European pond turtle *Emys orbicularis* under the heading "various mammalian and amphibian species" in Table 8 or the listing of amphibian bone remains under the column head Anura sp. (sic!) in Tables 6 and 7. Finally, it seems worth reminding of the fact that one essential prerequiste for archaeozoological studies with the scope and the quality of the present one to be carried out and the far-reaching conclusions which can be based on them, is the continued existence of large, comprehensive and scientifically well documented collections of vertebrate skeletal material.

G. Peters (Bonn)