Preliminary Archaeobotanical Results from the Multi-Period Site at Marcham (Oxfordshire, UK)

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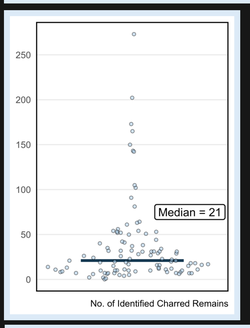
Background

Macham was excavated between 2001 and 2011 by the School of Archaeology and Department of Continuing studies, University of Oxford. Excavations uncovered a rich multiperiod landscape including a bucket urn evidencing Bronze Age activity, Early Iron Age pits, Middle Iron Age roundhouses, enclosures, and burials, a Roman ritual complex (including an Amphitheatre, temple, and shrine), and Early Medieval structures.

Throughout the course of the excavation over 500 samples were collected. Here we present the initial analysis of a 101sample subset spanning Marcham's archaeological sequence were selected for preliminary analysis.

Methods

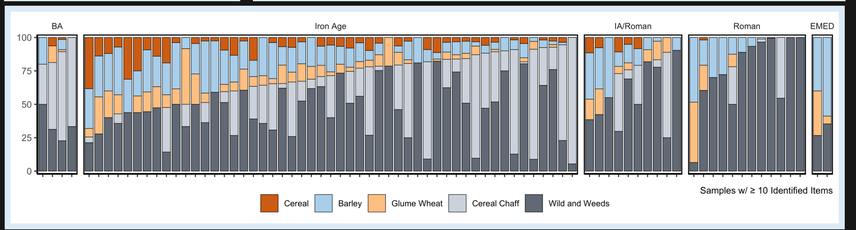
Samples were scanned for charred material and split using a rifle box at School of Archaeology, University of Oxford. These 50% sub-samples were sorted using low power (6.3 to 40 x) magnification at the Pitt Rivers Laboratory, University of Cambridge. Material was identified using the Pitt Rivers Laboratory's modern reference collection and imaged using a Keyance VHX Digital Microscope and a Hitachi TM3000 SEM.



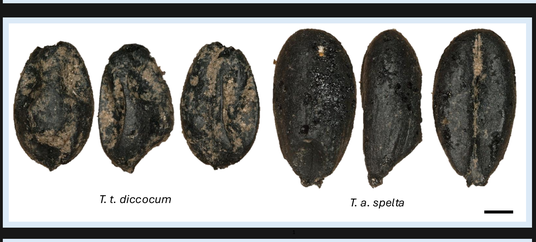
Cultivation Practices

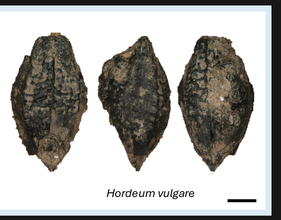
Glume wheats (emmer and spelt) and hulled barley were the key cereal crops throughout the site's occupation. Some of the barley grain were clearly hulled and twisted, indicating six-row hulled barley was being grown in both the Iron Age and Roman phases.

FINISH – ADD about Weed flora.



Cereal Crops



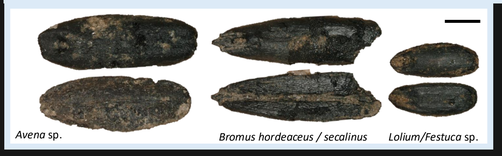






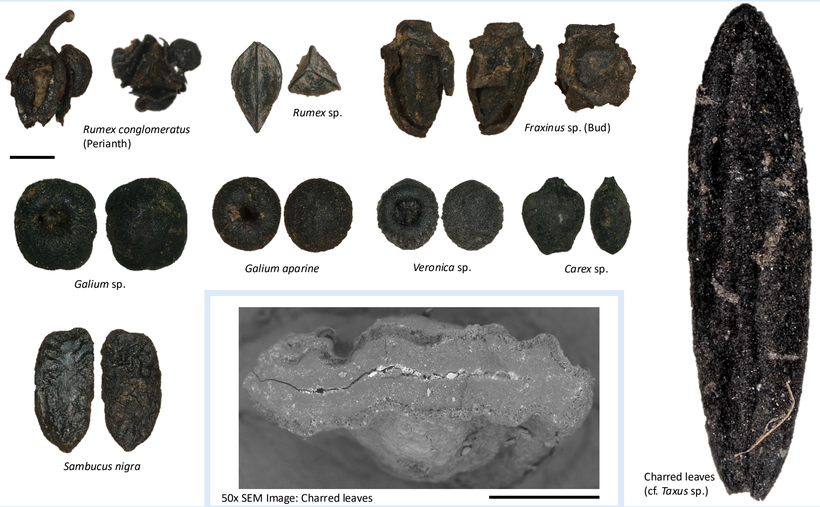
Arable Weeds





Roman Ritual Pit

A large pit was identified inside the temple's temenos wall. Four samples from different pit fills Results demonstrate burning of vegetation collected from the surrounding landscape, including abundant (n=259) *Rumex* (dock) seeds and a well preserved *Rumex conglomeratus* (clustered dock) perianth. In addition to the large quantities of *Rumex,* charred leaves, tentatively identified as *Taxus* sp. (yew), were present in all samples from the ritual pit. These, along with charred fruits, elderberry seeds, and buds, including a well preserved *Fraxinus* (ash) bud, demonstrate burning of woodland scrub or hedgerow.



Conclusions

Add.

Acknowledgements

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