

Deer Parks and Recreation. Zooarchaeological evidence from the Earls of Arundel hunting lodge in Downley (West Sussex, UK).

Mariana Nabais (mariananabais@gmail.com)*

Mark Roberts (mark.roberts@ucl.ac.uk)

Nicole Barber (nicole.barber.12@ucl.ac.uk)

University College London, Institute of Archaeology

*corresponding author

Abstract

The deer park at Downley is one of many medieval parks known from the county of Sussex (UK), 8km north of Chichester. The park belonged to the Earls of Arundel and there is evidence of its occasional use by high-status figures, such as King Henry VIII. The park perimeter measures 6.6km and covers an area of 261.7ha. During the first season of excavation in 2014 the presence of a substantial lodge building was proven within the pale, the features associated with the lodge contained various archaeological and environmental remains. This paper focuses on the study of zooarchaeological materials recovered from the 16 trenches opened in 2014. All faunal remains were studied, revealing domestic animals such as cattle and sheep, as well as wild animals such as deer and boar. Fallow deer is the most frequent species showing a very complete body part representation, suggesting it was hunted and processed locally. Further work is carried out looking at body part representation, which is particularly important when looking at the ritualised dismemberment of hunted animals. In any hunting milieu dogs/hounds are prevalent, and are represented by some anatomical elements, but also by considerable evidence of gnawing marks on bones that were clearly humanly processed before being fed to the animals.