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**Abstracts**



## The traces of Upper Palaeolithic hunters on the Upper Prut

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Contrary to the nearby valley of the Dniester River with its numerous multilayered Middle- and Upper Palaeolithic sites, the Upper Prut valley, on its reach from the outcoming from the Carpathian Mts. to its turn to the submeridional direction, is relatively poor on Palaeolithic sites, especially stratified ones.

A new section of one of the middle terraces of the Prut River valley was found near the confluence of the Brusnytsia River. According to the completeness of the layers of sediments and the faunal composition, a similar section for this part of the valley was not known. The 23-meter exposure is in a ravine on the northeastern outskirts of the Zeleniv village (Chernivtsi Region, Ukraine), about 100 m from the beginning of the ravine (right side). In the early 1990s, locals found numerous remains of mammoth bones, some of which are now exposed in the Museum of Nature of the Zeleniv village (Vyzhnytskyi National Nature Park). We have conducted a detailed geological and stratigraphic study of the section and a paleontological study of the remains (Ridush et al. 2016).

Remains of large mammal fauna and mollusc shells were found in the sandy-loam bone-bearing layer at depths of 11-12.5 m. During recent years, rare flints of Upper Palaeolithic appearance were collected from the same layer. The flints here obviously do not lie in any cultural layer and are clearly redeposited by the water current and maybe solifluction, but not for a long distance.

The faunal remains of megafauna are associated with a layer of floodplain alluvium, represented by sands and sandy loams, sometimes clayey, that are strongly displaced by solifluction. The most numerous are the remains of mammoths (about 95%), represented by both fragments of the postcranial skeleton and two complete lower jaws. The mammoths belong to the intermediate thick-enamel form of the woolly mammoth (*Mammuthus primigenius primigenius*), widespread during the relatively warm stage of MIS 3. The

remains of the horse (*Equus ferus*), bison (*Bison priscus*), giant deer (*Megaloceros giganteus*), and red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) are rare. Some bones have traces of splitting and cutting. According to the radiocarbon dating after the bone material, the calibrated data is around 24 ky BP.

The molluscan fauna of this layer is represented mainly by species that represent the conditions of mesophytic meadows. *Succinea oblonga* dominates the species composition. Few *Vallonia tenuilabris*, *Pupilla sterri*, *Vertigo parcedentata*, as well as isolated finds of *Vallonia pulchella*, *Helicodiscus singleyanus*, fragments of *Vallonia* sp., *Pupilla* sp., *Clausiliidae* and *Helicoidea*. In the ecological composition, the share of mesophiles is the highest (due to the eurythermic *Succinea oblonga*). The share of species that prefer open biotopes is high. These are representatives of the genera Valloniidae, Pupillidae and the species *Vertigo parcedentata*. The presence of cryophilic species in the fauna (*Vallonia tenuilabris* and *Vertigo parcedentata*) indicates intervals of significant cooling of the climate, which were characteristic of certain stages/sub-stages of the Vytachiv (MIS 3) or the beginning of the Bug (MIS 2) Stages.

The collection of stone objects is small, which makes its complete typological and statistical analysis impossible. The artefacts discovered here demonstrate technical and typological features characteristic of the Upper Palaeolithic in general and the Gravettian technocomplex in particular (microlith with cutting retouch). At the same time, the nucleus, chisel and microlith with fine marginal retouch, microplate with a concave profile found here, considering the obtained dates and geological position, can be correlated with other technocomplexes, for example, Epi-Aurignacian.