

Field School for Quaternary Palaeoanthropology and Prehistory of Murcia, S.E. Spain

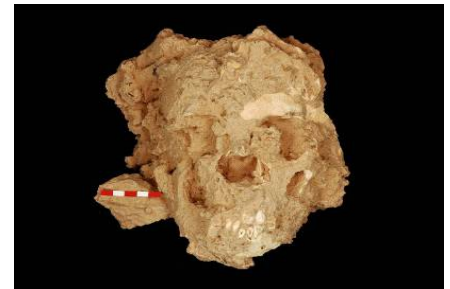
29th Field Season 2018

June 29th – July 20th 2018 at Cueva Negra del Estrecho del Río Quípar (Session 1),
July 20th – August 10th 2018 at Sima de las Palomas del Cabezo Gordo (Session 2)

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Cueva Negra hand-axe



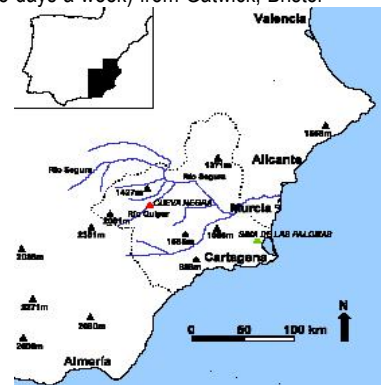
Sima de las Palomas Neanderthal child skull

Excavation has been ongoing for 29 years at these two sites. Cueva Negra has definite signs of fire, a final Early (i.e. Lower) Pleistocene fauna and Acheulian and Levallois-Mousterian Palaeolithic artifacts in a sedimentary deposit from a time somewhere between 780,000 and 990,000 years ago according to both biostratigraphy and now palaeomagnetism. Sima de las Palomas has >300 skeletal parts (teeth, bones) of 11 Neanderthal individuals, including 3 articulated skeletons one of which is 85% complete from between 55,000 and 50,000 years ago, an early Late (i.e. Upper) Pleistocene fauna, and Mousterian Palaeolithic artifacts, dated by ¹⁴C, U-ser, OSL and ESR, with new finds of Neanderthals and Mousterian artifacts in deep layers dated to 130,000-100,000 years ago.

Helpers are invited for the 2018 summer field season. All applications are considered sympathetically. You need not have archaeological experience. To apply, just send an email with brief cv after going to our MUPANTQUAT web-page, clicking there on FIELD SCHOOL and then on "BRIEFING YOU" (there's no application form to fill in as we keep paperwork to a minimum). The Murcian Association for the Study of Palaeoanthropology and the Quaternary (MUPANTQUAT) coordinates the Field School and excavations and issues your Certificate of Attendance (we also sign any required forms you bring from your university).

While at Cueva Negra we stay at the residential Ascruz school (which has its own kitchen staff) at Caravaca de la Cruz. While at Sima de las Palomas we put bunks in the school in Dolores de Pacheco and take our meals in the restaurant of the village civic centre. At both places, you must bring sheets, pillow-slip, towel, soap and shower-gel. Summer is hot in Murcia: you'll get a chance to swim. Bring light work clothes and flat-soled light footwear for Cueva Negra but bring work boots for Sima de las Palomas. Bring sun-hats, sun-glasses, sun-cream, swimmers. If you've a driver's licence, bring it and help us with driving.

Ryanair flies daily to Murcia-San Javier Airport from London (Luton and Stansted). Easyjet flies (maybe only some days a week) from Gatwick, Bristol and Newcastle. Other budget airlines also fly here from the UK and other European countries. A new Murcia Airport has been built but is not yet open, though if flights land there in 2018 you will be met there, so don't worry. Provided we have their flight details in advance we ferry our helpers (free of charge) between Murcia Airport and our field headquarters who arrive on Friday June 29th or who arrive or depart on Friday July 20th, or leave on Friday August 10th. Caravaca is 100 km from the airport, but Dolores de Pacheco is only 6 km from it. We run from Fridays to Fridays as we often have USA helpers flying into Madrid who need to get connecting weekday flights to Murcia (because weekend flights to Murcia often are cancelled without notice). Travellers by train on June 29th or July 20th can probably be also met by us. For Cueva Negra, train-travellers should arrive at Calasparra railway station (Madrid-Cartagena line) on June 29th and leave on July 20th. For Sima de las Palomas, train travellers should arrive at Balsicas-Mar Menor railway station (Madrid-Cartagena or Barcelona-Cartagena lines) on July 20th and leave on August 10th. Other travellers must make their own arrangements to get to our headquarters at Caravaca or Dolores de Pacheco. We do not meet people at Alicante International Airport, whence travellers can take a "Costa Cálida" bus to Murcia, and then buses from Murcia bus station, either to Caravaca (for Cueva Negra), or to San Javier or Los Alcázares which are 5 km from Dolores de Pacheco (for Sima de las Palomas).



Daily routine: we rise at 7 a.m. and after a light breakfast we excavate from 8 a.m. till 2 p.m. with a mid-morning sandwich. A cooked lunch at 3 p.m. is followed by a nap. We sort finds from 5 p.m. till 9 p.m. when we have a hot dinner. In each 3-week period, there are talks and seminars about our work and human evolution, and we also visit local places of interest. The programme is thus based on a 3-week Session (if you stay for a shorter time you'll miss part of the programme). The normal contribution from helpers staying for a full Session corresponds to €50 euros (€50) a day; covering instruction, board, lodging, and local transportation, or €45 a day when both full sessions are attended (first-time participants staying for less than one full session should contribute €60 a day). To guarantee a place you must send a non-returnable deposit, preferably by May 1st 2018, of €250 (euros) per each 7 days of intended stay. You pay the balance on arrival. You must arrange your own health and personal accident insurance cover beforehand, holiday/travel insurance if desired, and sign an indemnity form on arrival. EU residents should bring the EU card from their country entitling them to public health care in other EU Member States.

Cueva Negra del Estrecho del Río Quípar



Cabezo Gordo and Sima de las Palomas

