Abstract

Paso Otero 4 is located in the Pampean region of Argentina, within the Interserrana area. Human occupations are chronologically placed between ca. 8900 and 4600 years BP. The objective of this paper is to present the main characteristics of the faunal record of the site through the zooarchaeological and taphonomical analyses. In addition, hunter-gatherers subsistence trends for this time period are discussed. In the light of these new data, faunal exploitation models proposed for the Pampean region are evaluated. The results of different lines of evidence suggest that activities such as the final artefact production stages and maintenance of lithic instruments, as well as the processing and consumption of an important number of taxa such as carnivores, small and large birds, artiodactyls, large rodents, and small and large armadillos, were carried out at the site. In comparative terms, during the earlier occupations (ca. 8900 to 7700 years BP; Lower Levels) a diversified subsistence strategy is recorded, while during the later occupations (ca. 7700 to 4600 years BP; Upper Levels) the diversity of species is lower and the subsistence strategy is oriented to artiodactyl procurement.

Keywords

Zooarchaeological and taphonomical studies; Hunter-gatherers; Early and Middle Holocene; Subsistence models of the Pampean region