Letter to the Editor/Erratum

Øystein Wiig
Natural History Museum, University of Oslo,
P.O. Box 1172, Blindern, NO-0318 Oslo (Norway)
oysteinwiig@nhm.uio.no

Ian Gjertz
Research Council of Norway,
P.O. Box 564, N-1327 Lysaker (Norway)
ig@forskningsradet.no

Christian Lydersen
Norwegian Polar Institute,
Fram Centre, Postbox 6606, Langnes, N-9296 Tromsø (Norway)
christian.lydersen@npolar.no

Robert E. A. Stewart
Freshwater Institute, Department of Fisheries and Oceans,
501 University Crescent, Winnipeg MB, R3T 2N6 (Canada)
and Sila Consultants,
1218 Marchand Road, Howden MB, R5A 1J6 (Canada)
sila@highspeedcrow.ca

Elspeth Ready
Stanford University, Department of Anthropology,
Main Quad Building 50, 450 Serra Mall, Stanford, California 94305 (USA)
eveready@ualberta.net

Hervé Monchot
Muséum national d’Histoire naturelle, Département de Préhistoire,
Institut de Paléontologie humaine,
1 rue René Panhard, F-75013 Paris (France)
herve.monchot@wanadoo.fr

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The article Monchot et al. (2013), used data that had not been made available for this paper and the owners of the data did not know about the use. The data in question underpinned Wiig et al. (2007) but were not enumerated in that paper. At his request, these data were shared with Monchot on the condition that if the data were used in a publication, all data owners (Gjertz, Lydersen, Stewart & Wiig) would be included as co-authors. Such a manuscript Monchot H.,
Ready E., Wiig Ø., Stewart R. E. A., Gjertz I. & Lydersen C. Sex identification of walrus mandibles: Implications for understanding walrus biology and archaeology in the eastern Canadian Arctic, was eventually submitted to the journal Arctic 4 February 2013, after the Anthropozoologica paper had been accepted. The paper in Arctic required revisions but those revisions lapsed and the paper was rejected. A new version was submitted 29 June 2015, but was rejected 4 November 2015.

Figure 4 in the Anthropozoologica paper is a copy of Figure 3 in the Arctic submission. The text in the Anthropozoologica paper referencing this material is found on pages 21 and 22: “Fig. 4. — Diagram of the maximum length (mm) and the maximum height (mm) and mixture analysis curve of the maximum length of the Tayara and Foxe Basin walrus mandibles (reference collection: Stewart, personal data in Wiig et al. 2007). (Mixture analysis, Cutoff point = 235.277 after Monchot & Léchelle 2002).” and “The most reliable and successful separations for determining size groups in walrus focus on the mandible (Wiig et al. 2007; Monchot et al. submitted). Thus, using the walrus individuals from Foxe Basin as a reference population (Wiig et al. 2007), we can plot in a bivariate diagram 5 of the 7 mandibles from Tayara (Fig. 4). The results show clearly the presence of 3 males and 2 females.” emphasis added. The “Monchot et al. (submitted)” citation refers to the manuscript that was submitted to Arctic and later rejected.

The journal Anthropozoologica bears some responsibility for allowing a citation to a manuscript that was not at least in press. We leave that to the journal editor to address. Because our data were published pre-emptively to the now suspended Arctic paper, readers are unable to determine the provenance and treatment of these data. Reviewers for Arctic voiced concerns about the ability to differentiate males from females without age data by which juveniles could be identified and it would have been better to have those issues resolved before citing the results.

This information that was in the draft Arctic manuscript is summarized here. The reference material from Wiig et al. (2007) comprised two samples. The first included mandibles of 33 female and 49 male walrus collected in Foxe Basin, Nunavut, Canada for other research (e.g., Fisher & Stewart 1997; Garlich-Miller & Stewart 1998, 1999). The mandibles were selected from a larger sample to represent an age range from 0 to 25-30 years in both sexes based on counts of annual growth layer groups (GLGs) in the lower canine (Garlich-Miller et al. 1993). By age five years there was no overlap between males and females of similar ages in the variables used (Wiig et al. 2007: 71).

The second reference sample was composed of 591 mandibles recovered from terrestrial haul-outs in the Tusenøyane area of southeastern Svalbard, residual from animals harvested mainly during the nineteenth century. The ages of these Svalbard walrus were between five and 30 years based on GLG counts of post-canine teeth present in 83 of the mandibles. The sex ratio in this sample was previously estimated using a discriminant analysis method (Wiig et al. 2007).

Monchot et al. (2013) used these measurement-at-age data in a mixture analysis described by Monchot & Léchelle (2002) (More details on the mathematical model and on various applications of mixture analysis are available in Aitkin & Tunncliffe Wilson (1980), Everitt (1984), Flury et al. (1992), Airoldi et al. (1995), Dong (1997), Monchot (1999), Monchot & Léchelle (2002), Quilès & Monchot (2004), Monchot et al. (2005), Fernandez & Monchot (2007), Helmer (2008), and Monchot & Gendron (2010)). The results of this analysis of the Wiig et al. data are presented in Fig. 4 of Monchot et al. (2013) with comparable data for the Tayara mandibles (age unknown) added.

We appreciate the editor of Anthropozoologica offering this opportunity to provide readers with the necessary details beyond Fig. 4 in Monchot et al. (2013) and proper credit for the sources of those data.

REFERENCES


MONCHOT H., HOUMARD C., DIONNE M.-M., DESROSIERS P. M. & GENDRON D. 2013. — The modus operandi of walrus exploitation during the palaeoeskimo period at the Tayara site,


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