

An overview to the Cenozoic tracksites of Aragón (Spain)

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Abstract:

The southern margin of the Pyrenees and its foreland Ebro Basin in Aragón (northeastern Spain) presents a great wealth of Cenozoic tracksites that range from the Late Eocene to the Miocene. Recently, a palaeoichnological itinerary through the main sites has been proposed emphasizing the value of this palaeontological heritage as a tourist and educational resource and the geoconservation work carried out on the tracksites. The site of Bailo-Arrés is located in a transitional stratigraphic unit (Yeste-Arrés sandstone unit, Late Eocene) and has preserved at least two different types of artiodactyl, as well as perissodactyl and carnivore (feliform-like) footprints. The Peralta de la Sal and La Sagarreta tracksites occur in an alluvial unit (Peralta Formation, Early Oligocene) and show bird and mammal (artiodactyl, perissodactyl and carnivore) tracks. The Abiego tracksite is located in a lacustrine unit (Peraltila limestones, Early Oligocene) and displays three different types of artiodactyl tracks. Casa de la Tejera is preserved in a fluvial unit (Uncastillo Formation, Late Oligocene-Early Miocene) and shows indeterminate mammal tracks. Sierra de Luna is a lacustrine unit site (Alcubierre Formation, Early Miocene), where large quadrupedal mammal tracks (mainly perissodactyls) can be distinguished. The new sites of Alto del Poyero must be added to the itinerary. They occur in younger lacustrine-palustrine deposits of the Alcubierre Formation (Middle-Late Miocene), and are characterized by a high diversity of mammal (carnivor, artiodactyl, proboscidean) and bird tracks. Altogether, they show variation of the ichnofauna within a time range of 20-25 million years.

Keywords: birds, mammals, Eocene, Oligocene, Miocene