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The Mesolithic occupations of Jonquilles Cave (Caniac-du-Causse, Lot, France): First Interdisciplinary Results

Guilhem Constans, Louis Arbez, Joséphine Caro, Marie-Amandine Chautard, Elsa Defranould, Emilie Garcia-Tarac, Marine Gardeur, Arthur Gicqueau, Auréade Henry, Véronique Laroulandie, et al.

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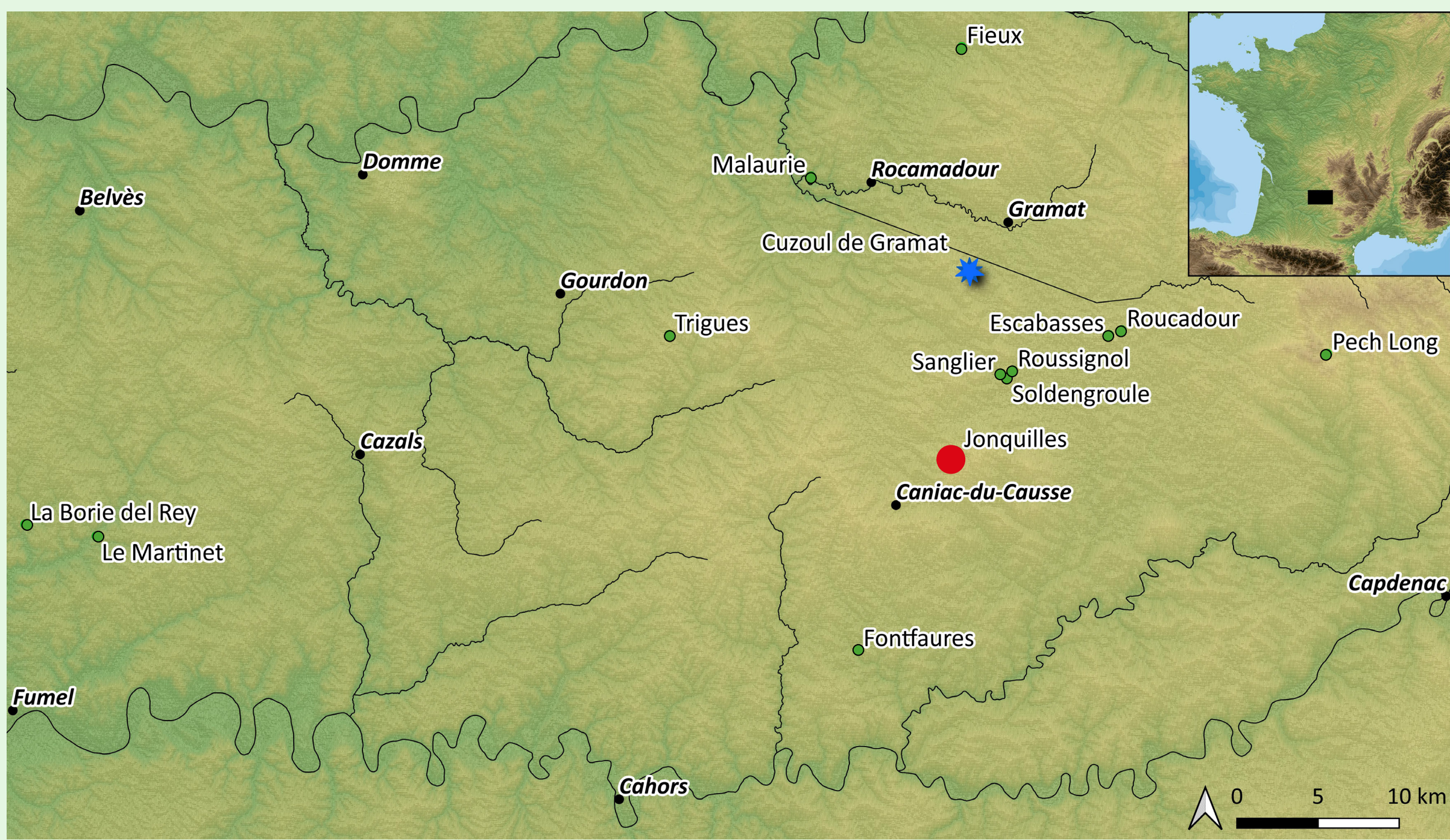
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The Mesolithic occupations of Jonquilles Cave (Caniac-du-Causse, Lot, France): First Interdisciplinary Results

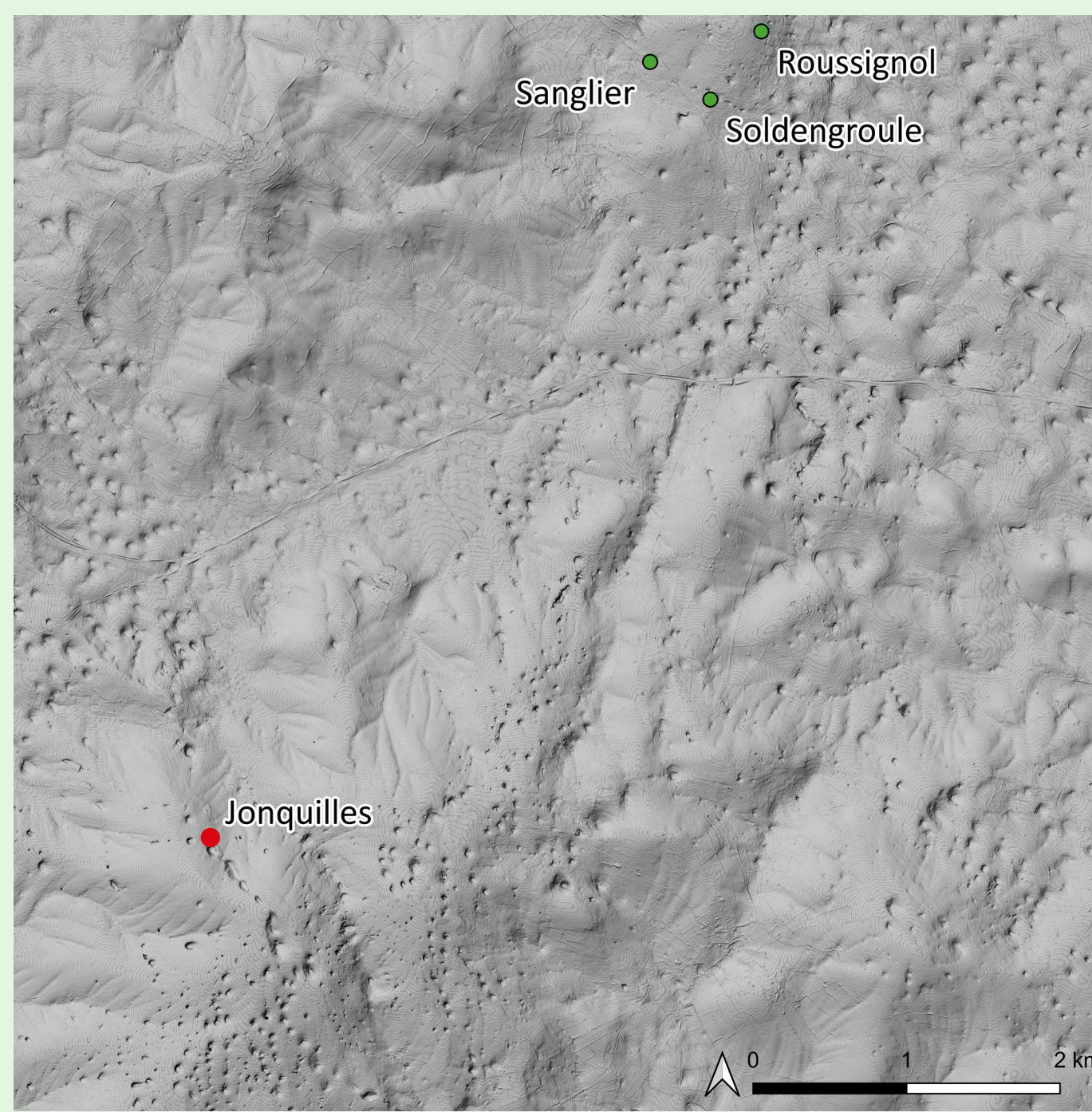
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Marine Gardeur², Arthur Gicqueau², Auréade Henry⁴, Véronique Laroulandie⁶, Mathieu Lejay^{2,7}, Jean-Baptiste Mallye⁶
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Mesolithic sites of the Quercy and surrounding areas



Distribution of Mesolithic sites around Jonquilles



Density map of dolines around the site (IGN)

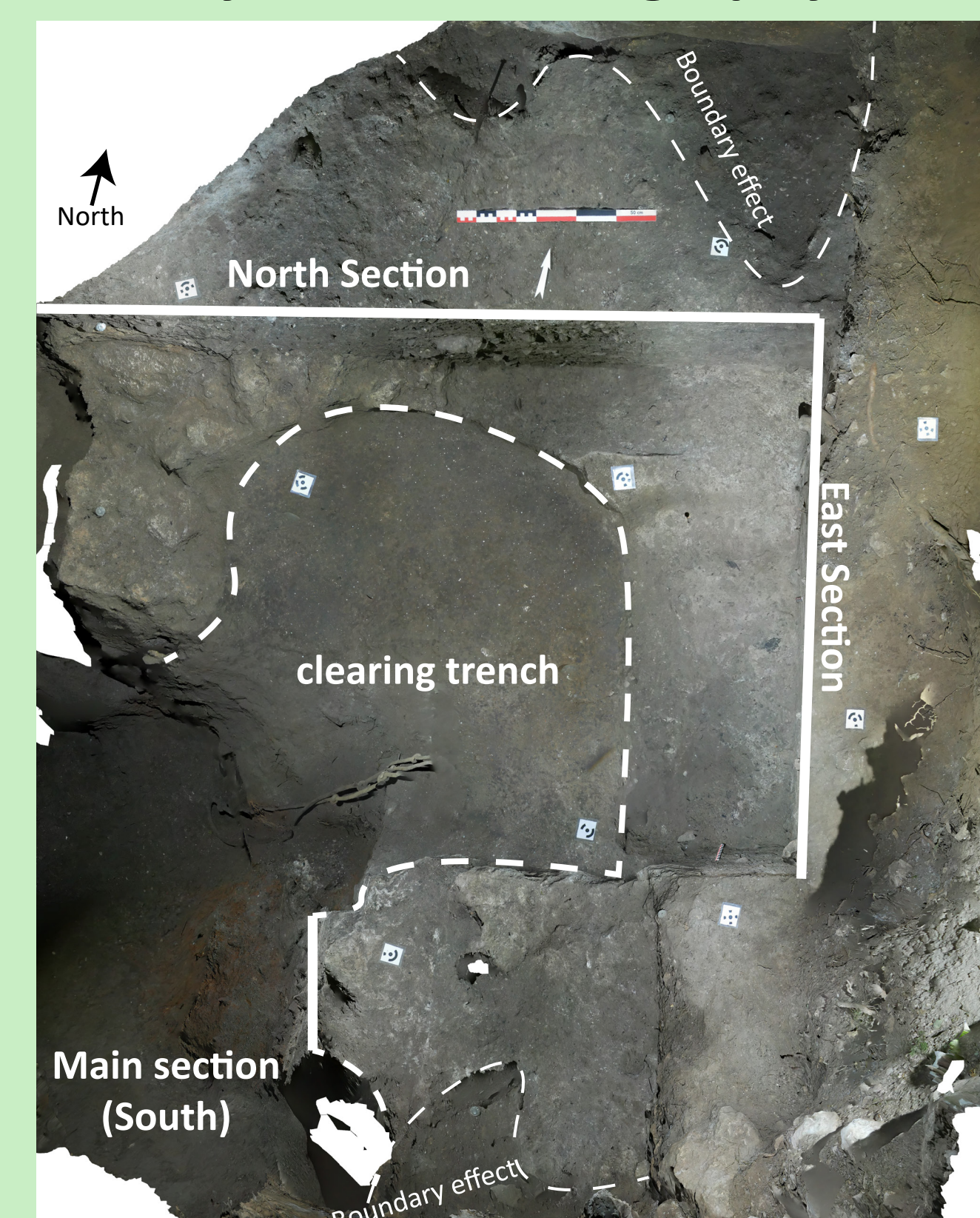
Early Mesolithic

Cuzoul de Gramat
Escabasses
Fieux
Fontfaurès
Le Martinet
Pech Long, mixed layer
Roussignol, mixed layer
Sanglier, mixed layer
Soldengroule, poorly known
Trigues, mixed layer

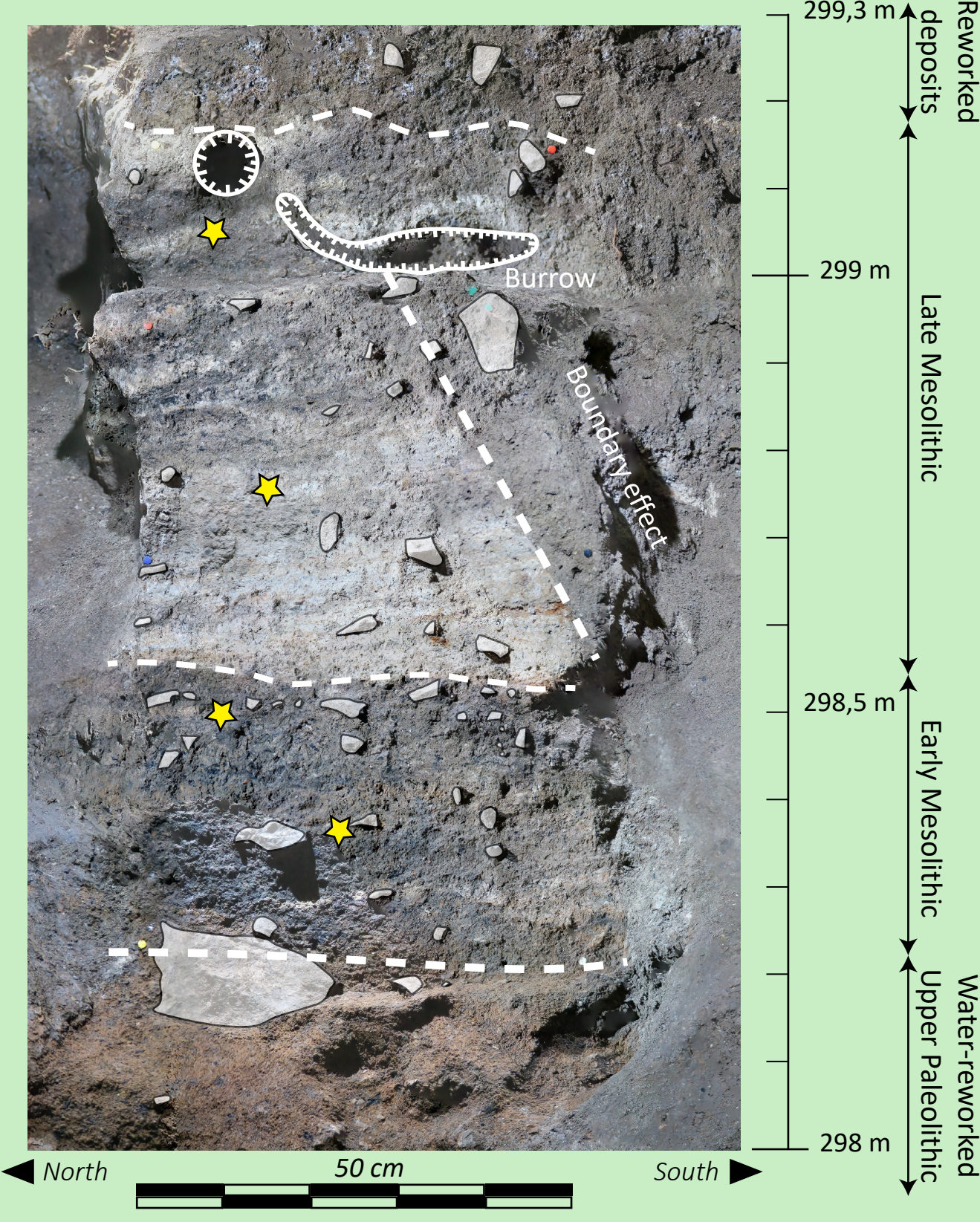
Late Mesolithic

Cuzoul de Gramat
La Borie del Rey
Le Martinet
Maurie, old unknown layer
Roucadour, mixed layer
Roussignol, mixed layer
Sanglier, mixed layer
Soldengroule, poorly known

Site Layout and Stratigraphy

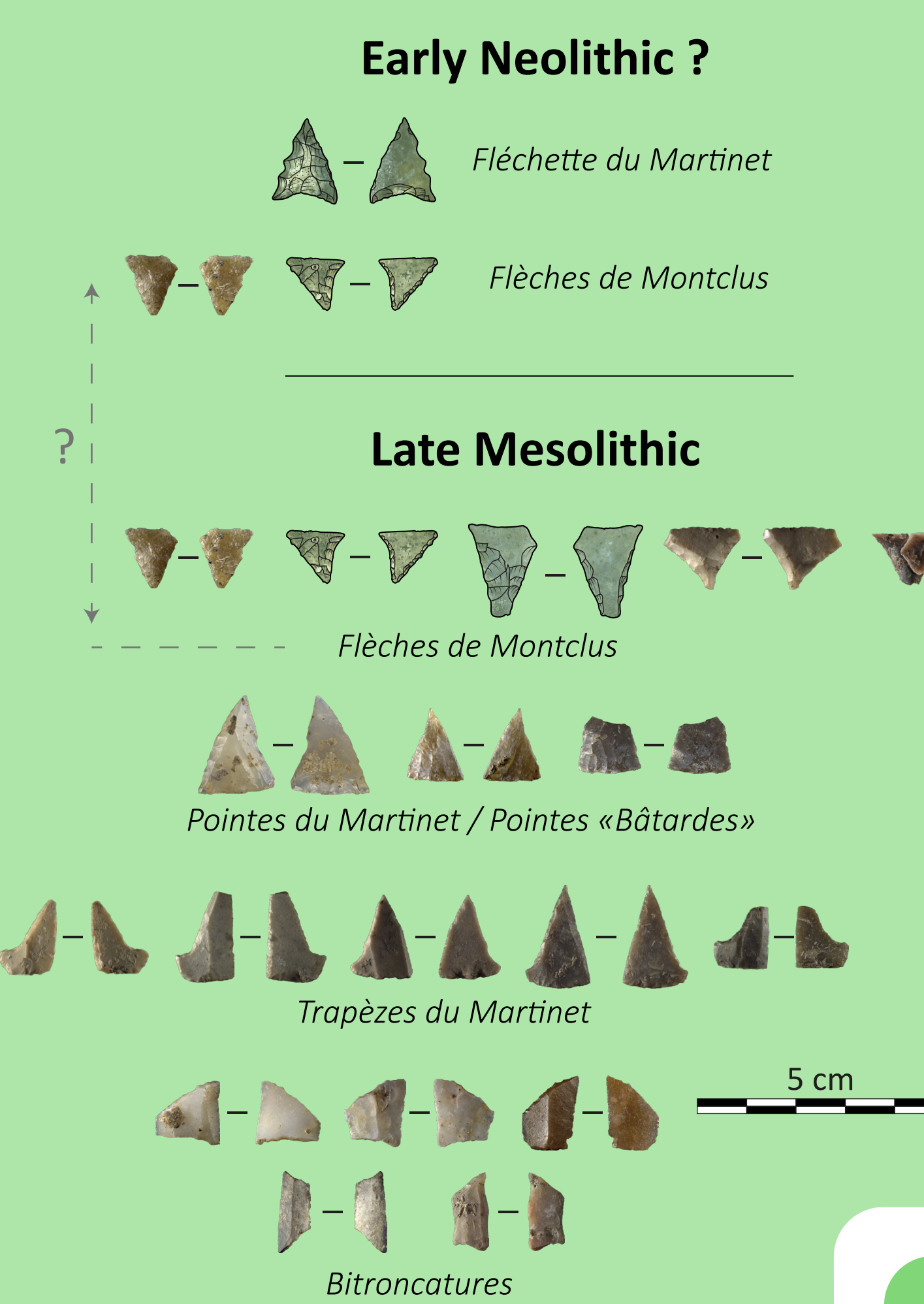


Plan of the excavation (2025) around the clearance trench

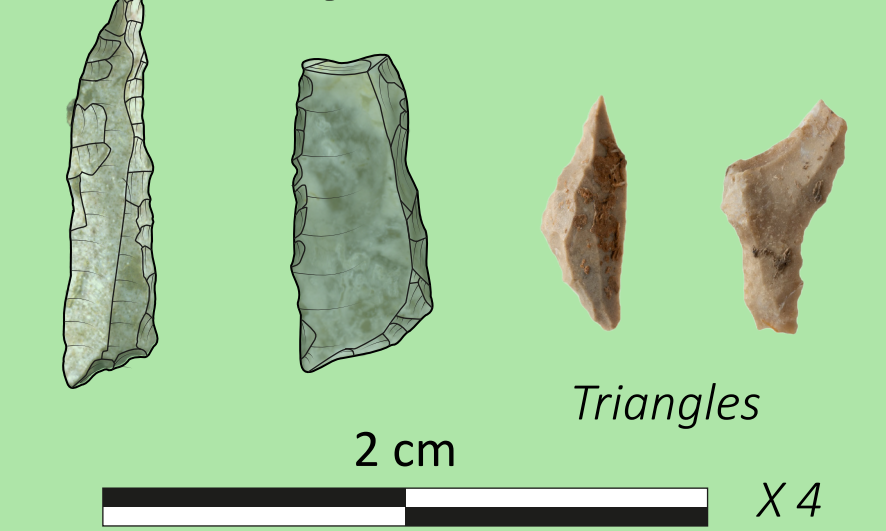


Main section (Section of the southern area)
★ Datations

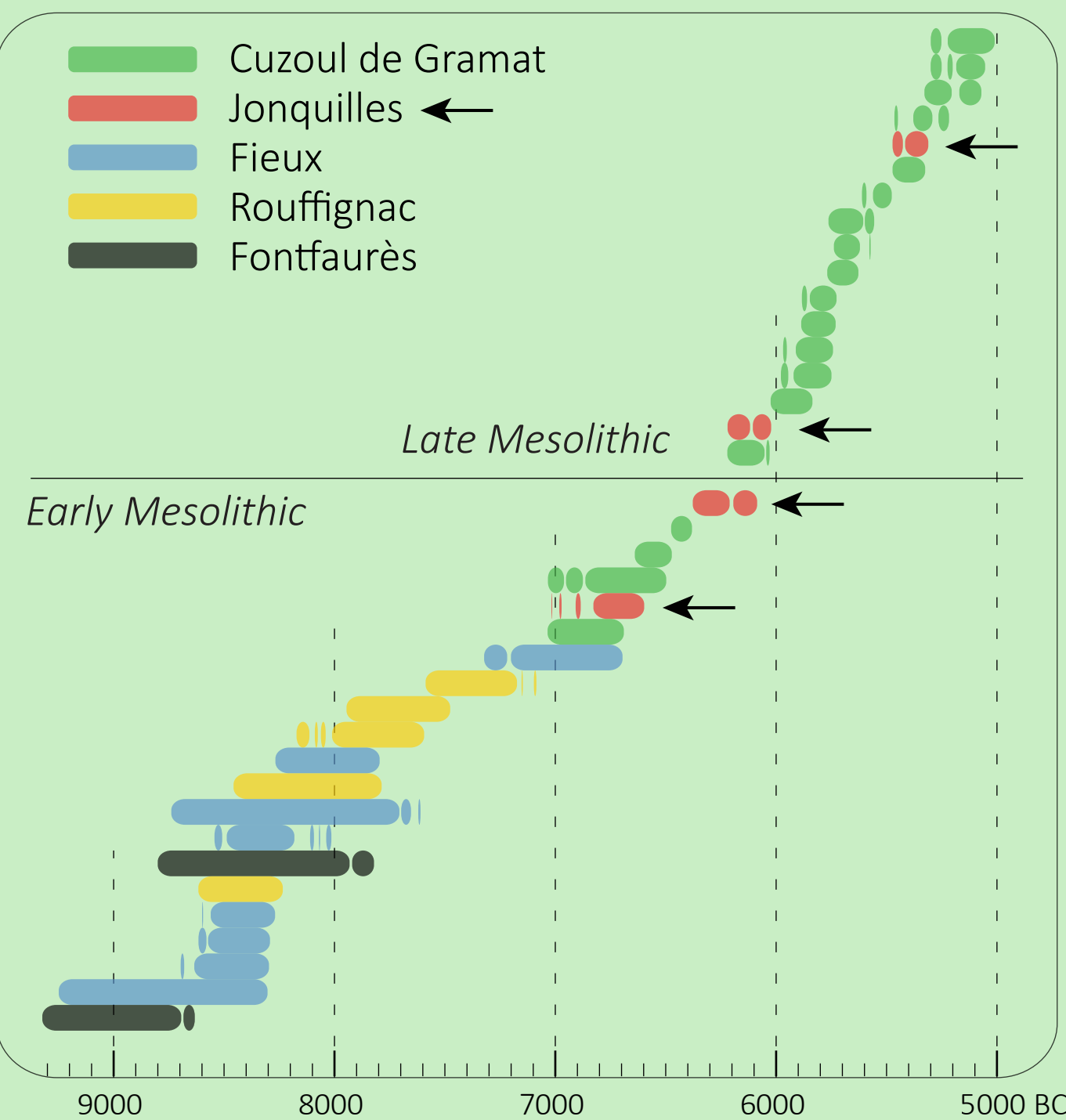
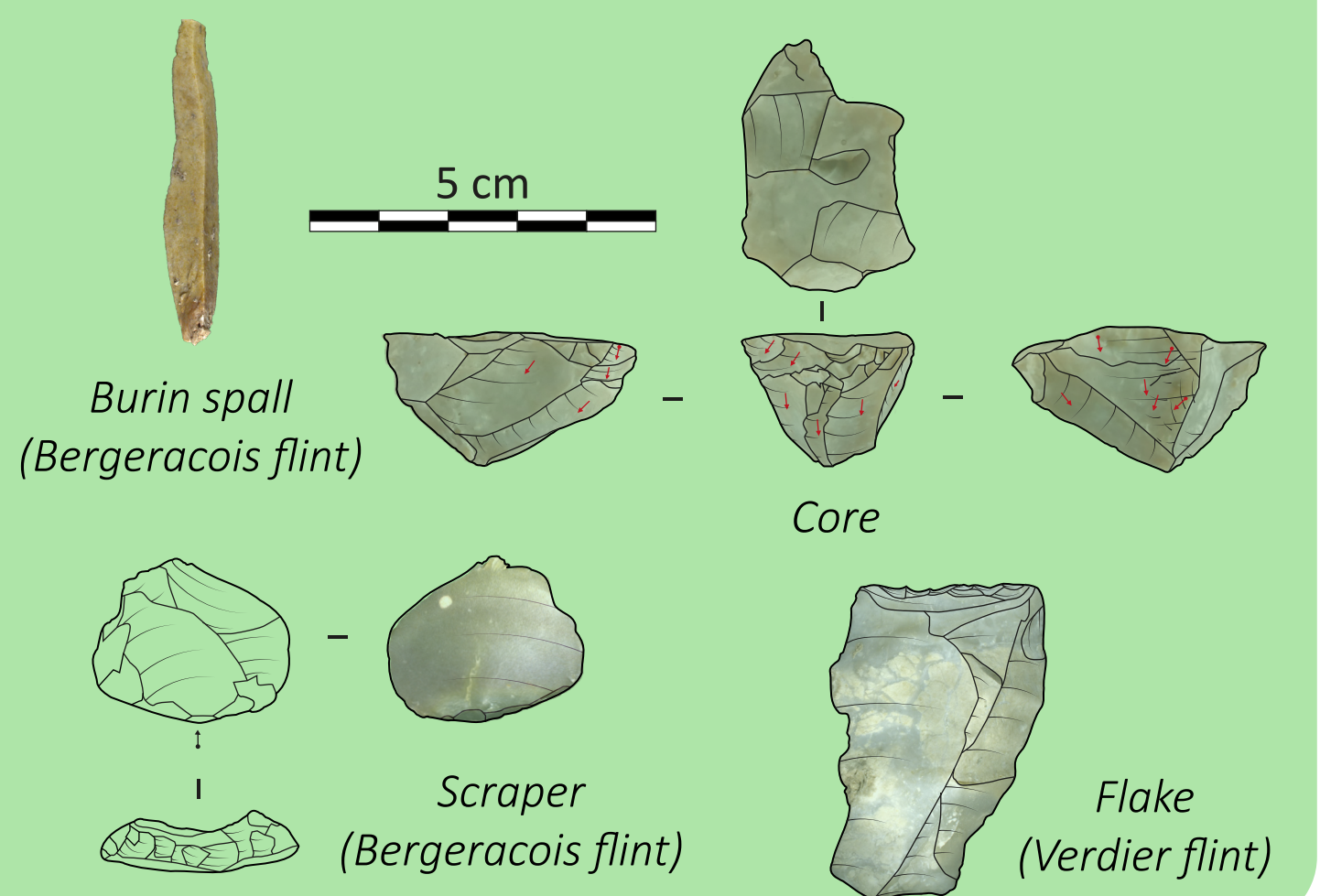
Lithic Markers



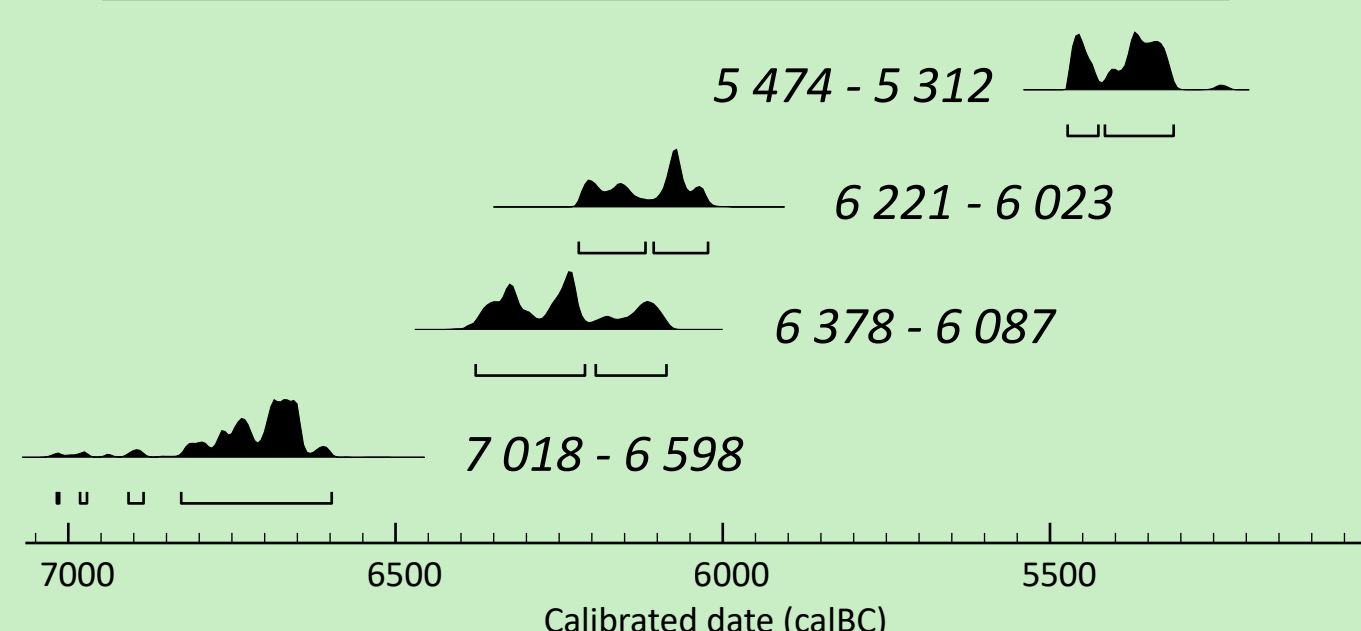
Early Mesolithic



Upper Palaeolithic (Magdalenian ?)



First radiocarbon dates from Jonquilles Cave (arrows), compared with nearby Mesolithic sites. Jonquilles dates span both Early and Late Mesolithic periods (OxCal IntCal20).



Raw material procurement

- Late Mesolithic :**
→ Mainly regional (Aquitaine Basin, Senonian flint)
→ Some nearby sources (Bajocian flint and a few Tertiary alluvial sources)
- Early Mesolithic :**
→ Mostly nearby sources (Bathonian and Bajocian flint)
- Upper Palaeolithic :**
→ Some allochthonous material (Bergerac and Verdier flint), ~80–100 km away

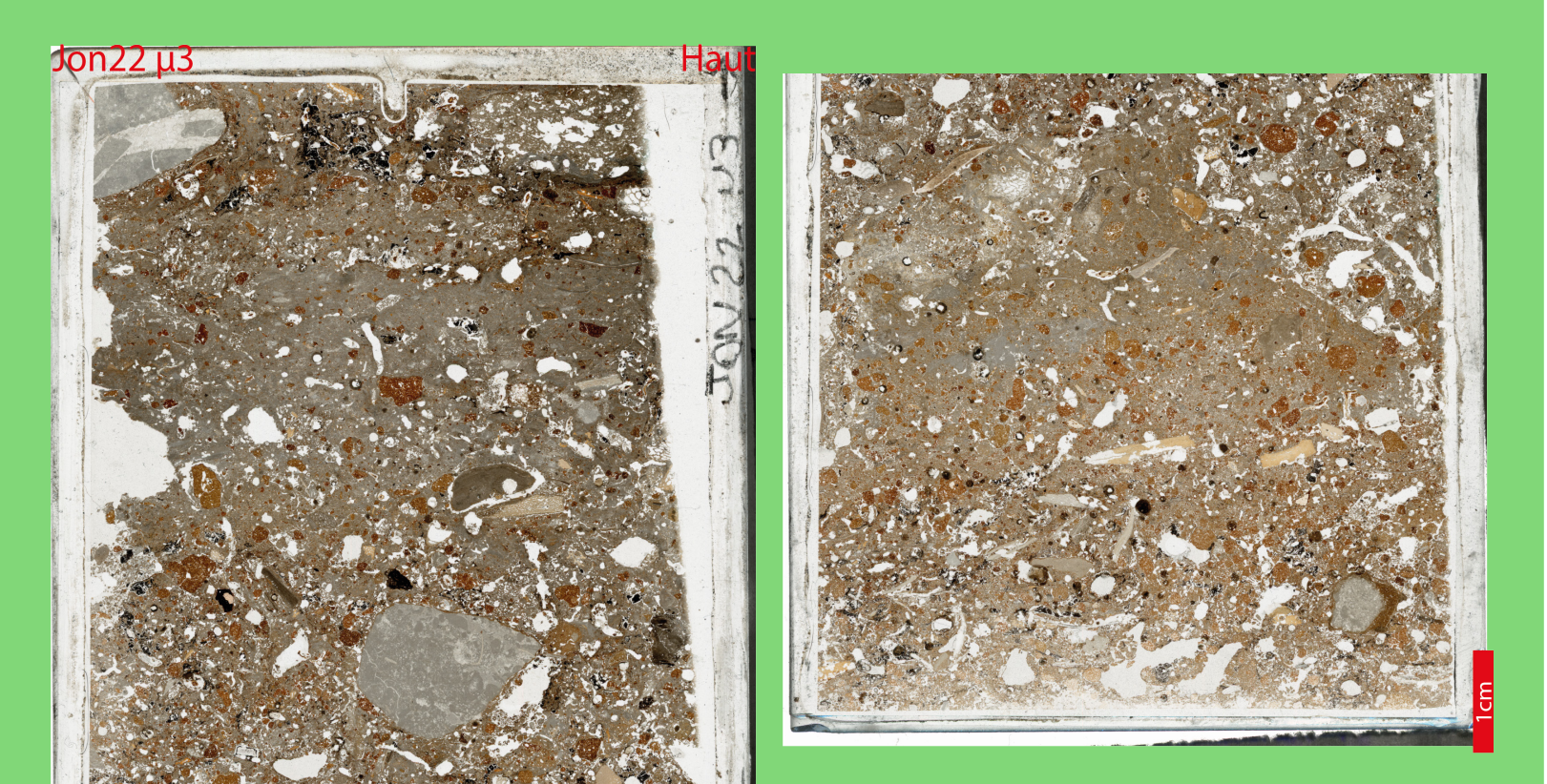
Archaeozoology

- Most remains are fragmented and burnt.
→ Dominated by wild boar, red deer, roe deer, and aurochs.
→ The presence of foetal remains may indirectly indicate the hunting of pregnant females.
→ Current data suggest a summer occupation.

Mesofauna & Microfauna

- More diverse mesofauna: badger, pine marten, red fox, wildcat, hedgehog, red squirrel, and brown hare.
→ These taxa are consistent with Holocene archaeofaunas from nearby sites, including Cuzoul de Gramat and Escabasses, close to the Jonquilles.
→ Assemblage poor in microfauna and aquatic species (fish and amphibians very scarce)

Micromorphology



- Sedimentation dominated by colluvial inputs of rounded aggregates.
→ Alternation of carbonate-rich ash deposits and reddish sandy aggregates, locally reworked.
→ Strong bioturbation (burrows, roots, gastropods) mixing some layers.
→ Occasional runoff and carbonate precipitations locally altered sediments.

Despite these processes, charcoal, lithics, gastropods and bones are exceptionally well preserved.

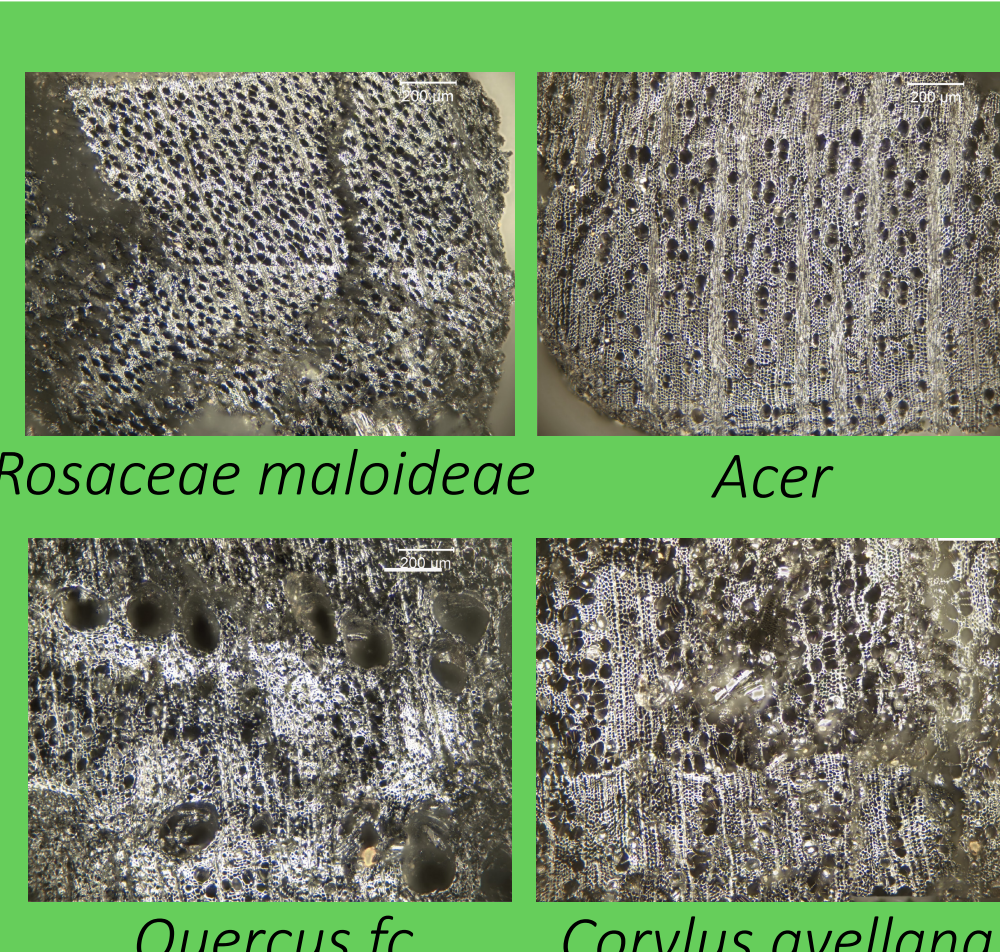
Carpology



- hazel (*Corylus avellana*; dominant)
→ vetches/peas (*Vicia/Lathyrus sp.*)
→ Fabaceae, raspberry (*Rubus sp.*)
→ plum (*Prunus sp.*)
→ grapevine (*Vitis sp.*)

Results highlight the predominance of hazelnuts and the use of other edible plant resources

Anthracology



- Well established deciduous oak forest during the Late Mesolithic, with hazel, maples, Prunus (cherry/plum), Maloideae and elm.
→ coherent from a paleoenvironmental perspective
→ Taxonomic choices are not clearly perceptible

Hearth-related concentrations may indicate preference for oak



And numerous snails (complete or fragmented)