

Archeozoology in Eretz Israel

The term archeozoology, the scientific field that studies animal bones found in archeological excavations, is composed of three Greek words. Archeo – ancient, Zoo – animals and Ology – field of study. In other words, the study of ancient animals. A number of unique findings have been made in excavations in Eretz Israel, including: the bones of a Syrian bear in Tel Hadid dating from the Iron Age (Israelite) (930-586 BCE). The location and period are reminiscent of the biblical story of the prophet Elisha and the bears in Kings II; the bones of a hippopotamus found at Tel Qasile (Napoleon Hill) on the banks of the Yarkon River (10th century BCE) between Tel Aviv and Ramat Gan. The remains of an ancient hippopotamus from the Pottery Neolithic Period (5500-4500 BCE) were also discovered in the Ramat Aviv area of Tel Aviv. The Israel Philatelic Service previously issued a stamp featuring a dinosaur whose fossilized footprints were discovered on the banks of the Tethys Sea, on a kibbutz near Jerusalem.

Elephant

Holon, Acheulean Stone-work

The median Acheulean period belongs geologically to the Pleistocene epoch. The excavations were carried out by Dr. Tamar Noy in 1960. The elephant remains date from the late Lower Paleolithic period – the early Stone Age (1,000,000 – 120,000 years ago). The site is located on the third eolianite ridge east of the sea. The elephant tusk relic is on display in the pre-historic exhibit at the Israel Museum, alongside elephant bones from the Daughters of Jacob Bridge.

Lioness

Jaffa, Late Bronze Age

The Late Bronze Age is also known as the Late Canaanite Age (1200-1500 BCE). Archeologist Dr. Jacob Kaplan believed that the place where the lioness' remains were discovered was a pre-Philistine temple thought to be dedicated to the lion. The remains were dated to the interim

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period when the sea people (including the Philistines) entered Eretz Israel from the south. Until recently, the skull was kept on the top floor of the Jaffa Museum.

Dr. Moshe Sadeh

Archeo-zoologist

Description of the Stamps

Photo of the elephant – Shutterstock. Photo of the elephant tusk courtesy of the Israel Museum. Photo of the Design Museum Holon - Ronen Goldberg. Photo of the lioness - Shutterstock. Photo of the lioness skull courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority. Photo of the Jaffa Clock Tower - Ronen Goldberg.

First day cover drawings - Ronen Goldberg.

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