

HISTORIC FAUNAL AND MACROBOTANICAL REMAINS

A diverse assemblage of faunal (animal bone) and macrobotanical (floral) remains recovered at Wingo's provides important information about foods consumed, subsistence practices, possible consumer activities carried out by site residents, and environmental change.

FAUNAL REMAINS

A total of 4,986 faunal remains were counted from Wingo's contexts. They were nearly evenly divided between animal bone and eggshell.

Four hundred twenty six bones could be assigned to family or species. The most common animals that were able to be identified to family or species (here ordered by count) were *Sus scrofa* (pig), *Gallus gallus* (chicken), *Sylvilagus florindanus* (eastern cottontail rabbit), and *Bos taurus* (cow). Estimates of the amount of meat each species provided indicate that *Sus scrofa*, *Bos taurus*, *Odocoileus virginianus* (white tailed deer), *Gallus gallus*, and *Sylvilagus florindanus* provided the greatest part of the meat diet. Four other families or species of edible mammals found at Wingo's include *Ovis/Capra* (sheep/goat), *Marmota monax* (groundhog), *Didelphis marsupialis* (opossum), and *Sciurus sp.* (squirrel). In addition to chickens, birds included members of the *Anseriformes* (goose, swan, duck) and *Passeriformes* (song bird) families. *Osteichthyes* (bony fish) and *Testudines* (turtle) were also consumed. A member of the *Anura* (frog) family may have been eaten. *Canis familiaris* (dog) and *Peromyscus* (deer mouse) were present but were not eaten.

Enslaved people managed herds of cow, pig, and sheep at Wingo's for meat, dairy products, and fiber for the use of Jefferson's family. Jefferson provided a portion of the meat from these animals to plantation overseers as part of their salary and to the enslaved as provisions. The parts of the pig skeletons found at the site indicate that these animals were slaughtered at Wingo's rather than provisioned as salt meat from other sources. Cow bones offer less clear evidence, but bones that formed part of the axial (vertebra, rib cage and skull) and forequarter regions (front legs) of the skeleton suggest that cattle were slaughtered on site as well.

While eggshell found in the fill of the subfloor pits proved impossible to identify, a study of poultry raising and egg consumption at a later Poplar Forest slave quarter indicates that by the 1840s and 1850s, enslaved people raised and ate chickens, ducks, geese, guinea fowl, and turkey, and ate passerines and game birds as well. The documentary evidence is also clear that enslaved women and some men raised poultry in the 18th century and sold eggs. The amount of eggshell, and its widespread distribution at the site, indicates that enslaved people at Wingo's relied on eggs as a dietary staple. Chickens and perhaps other birds were probably raised in the fenced area south of the house.

MACROBOTANICAL REMAINS

While meat was an important aspect of diet, enslaved people also prepared and consumed a variety of fruits, vegetables and edible wild herbs and greens. Archaeologists collected soil samples that they processed through fine mesh screen to capture nut shells and large, heavy seeds. Sediment containing light-weight seeds was put in a tank filled with water. The seeds that floated to the surface were collected for analysis. The results yielded an assemblage of 4,668 seeds and plant parts from 46 taxa, and a diverse assemblage of wood and grass stems

(Henderson and Trigg 2012). Only charred seeds were analyzed to rule out contamination by modern seeds.

Plant remains include seeds of tobacco, clover, flax and wheat, associated with commercial plantation crops and cover crops; corn, beans and cow peas that enslaved residents might have grown in a garden or might have acquired from the plantation; peaches and pear from a nearby orchard; and wild species including blueberry, sumac and grape gathered from field edges or woodlands. Nuts from hickory or black walnut and the seed of a Kentucky coffee tree were also recovered, as well as chenopodium, dock, purslane, wild grass, goosegrass, and knotweed. Unidentified burned starchy material, possibly from potato or burned flour, was also found.

There is strong documentation for tobacco production at Poplar Forest during the late 18th century, yet the tobacco seed found there is the only one to have been recovered at on the property to date. The rarity of seeds is due to the practice of removing the flowering portion of most plants to encourage the growth of large leaves for harvesting.

In 1774, Jefferson ordered 10 bushels of flax-seed and 10 of hemp seed (Bear and Stanton 1997:383). In 1790 he urged his plantation manager, Nicholas Lewis, to get underway with the production of hemp, cotton, flax and wool “for the negroes” (Betts 1944:152). Years later, he wrote that “flax is so injurious to our lands, and of so scanty produce, that I have never attempted it” (Betts 1987:252), yet he grew it in small quantities from time to time (Betts 1987:250-251). Enslaved people at Jefferson’s Elk Hill plantation grew cotton in the 1770s, and it is possible that site residents grew flax at Wingo’s for their own use.

Cow peas, like clover, added nutrients to exhausted soils, and Jefferson incorporated them into his crop rotations. Peas also may have been grown in kitchen gardens. Enslaved men and women gathered clover seeds, and from the late 1760s to the early 1780s, Jefferson purchased seeds from them by the pint and the quart, along with goosegrass and wild grass seed (Bear and Stanton 1997:40, 79-81, 145-150, 208, 258-259, 265, 293, 286, 294, 471, 521).

FOODWAYS

By the 1790s, Jefferson had begun to record provisioning practices for his Albemarle County plantations that included cornmeal and salt fish. An undated provision list also includes allotments of beef (Jefferson in Betts 1987:51,53,56). In an undated memorandum he noted:

a barrel of flour yields 17. pecks of flour, & the labourers prefer receiving 1. peck of flour to 1 1/2 peck of Indian meal.

a barrel of fish, costing 7.D. goes as far with the laborers as 200. lb of pork 14. D

and added that two pickled and barreled herring constituted a ration (Jefferson in Betts 1987:77-78). In her study of slavery at Monticello, Lucia Stanton (2000:29) characterized the weekly food allotment for enslaved adults as a half pound of pork or pickled beef, four salt fish, and a peck of cornmeal. Given the scarcity of provisioned foodstuffs, it is not surprising that enslaved people used their after-hours time to hunt and trap, to grow and gather fruits, vegetables, nuts and edible herbs, and to visit local stores and markets for supplies. Rabbits, squirrels, opossums, and

groundhogs could be shot or caught in traps, an efficient way to procure food for people faced with workdays that stretched from sun-up to sun-down. Passerine birds could be netted or hunted in the evenings or on Sundays, when people were not required to work for the plantation. Frogs, turtles and small fish were easily captured from nearby streams and wetlands. Deer could be hunted, and larger birds like ducks, geese and swans were raised alongside chickens in the house-yard, or hunted if wild.

Corn, wheat and rye could be stored as kernels or ground into meal or flour. Corn was both a plantation and a garden crop, and the presence of both cupules and as kernels indicates that enslaved people typically had access to entire cobs. The presence of corn stalks at Wingo's supports the interpretation that enslaved people grew corn for themselves, or that they had ready access to plants from plantation fields. Macrobotanical analysts typically interpret other grains (barley, oats, rye, wheat) as provisioned. The presence of identifiable grains from these plants at multiple quartering sites throughout the Chesapeake suggests that some common method of distribution was in use, rather than unique circumstances at each site resulting in their preservation. Henderson (2013:50) argues that their presence may be a result of the distribution of "seconds," roughly ground flour that retained unprocessed grains within it. If this were the case, the widespread use of seconds for provisioning, alongside the distribution of inferior sizes of salt fish, is an example of the way that slave owners sought to impose racial boundaries through everyday practices during this period (Klippel, Synsteliën and Heath 2010). Franklin and Mullins have argued that African America practices of poultry raising, oystering, fishing, and the consumption of small game animals that occurred across the Chesapeake also became associated with race by the 19th century, if not earlier (Mullins 1999; Franklin 2001:100-103).

Other plants were gathered and consumed fresh, dried, or preserved to provide nutrients and seasonal variety. Subfloor pits provided storage space for crops like squash or potatoes that preserve best in cool, dark environments with near-constant temperatures (Samford 2007). Enslaved residents may have stored preserved and dried in bottles and jars made of glass, stoneware and coarse earthenware placed within pits. At Wingo's, foods were boiled, fried or stewed in cast iron pots and skillets, or roasted in open fires. Residents served food with a mixed lot of tin-enameled hollow and flatwares, plates and a hollow ware made of fashionable creamware and pearlware, and colonoware bowls and a jar. Beverages were served in stoneware and creamware tankards, or possibly in a leaded glass goblet or drinking glass. The small size and mixed variety of ceramics and glassware present at the site suggests piecemeal acquisition, with vessels ranging from high quality, stylish, beaded and sprig-molded creamware to locally made, unglazed or lead glazed coarse earthenwares.

Many of the wild herbs and fruits consumed at Wingo's had medicinal qualities, and could be used to treat snakebite, skin irritations, burns, swelling, sores, worms and a variety of other internal disorders (Heath 2001; Mrozowski et al. 2008). These plants must have been carefully prepared in teas and tinctures, with some being dried for later use and mixed to create salves and ointments.

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