

NEW RECORDS OF VERTEBRATES FROM CHAMPLAIN SEA DEPOSITS (LATEST PLEISTOCENE) NEAR QUEBEC CITY, CANADA

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Champlain Sea deposits are the result of a brief marine transgression-regression cycle following the northward retreat of the Laurentide Ice Sheet from the St. Lawrence valley in late Wisconsin times. Some fifty vertebrate specimens have been recovered from a regressive Champlain Sea sequence exposed in sand and gravel pits near St. Nicolas, south of Québec City, Canada. Fossils belong to at least six species, including two bottom-dwelling fishes (Atlantic Wrymouth, *Cryptacanthodes maculatus*, and Eelpout, *Lycodes* sp.), two aquatic birds (Thick-billed Murre, *Uria lomvia*, and Oldsquaw duck, *Clangula hyemalis*) and two marine mammals (seal, *Phoca* sp., and White Whale, *Delphinapterus leucas*). The fish and bird records are new for Champlain Sea deposits. Equally noteworthy is the unusually high concentration of avian remains in this sample (>20%). The material consists of well preserved but disarticulated and isolated (mostly postcranial) elements, indicating transport and/or redeposition. The bones, together with a rich invertebrate macrofauna, occur in the upper part of a 5m thick unit of cross-bedded coarse to fine sand overlying marine clays and underlying shallow marine silts and clays. This unit is interpreted as a subaqueous delta-fan formation, based on its sedimentary character and fossil content. In both sample size and taxonomic diversity, the St. Nicolas assemblages rank among the most important Champlain Sea vertebrate localities, being surpassed only by some assemblages from the Ottawa area.