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## Reassessment of the Neandertal fossil collection from Abri Suard (La Chaise de Vouthon, Charente, France)

*Les Néandertaliens de l'Abri Suard (La Chaise de Vouthon, Charente, France) :  
nouveaux fossiles, nouvelles données, nouvelles perspectives*

**Christine Couture-Veschambre, Diego López-Onaindia, Nohemi Sala, Mikel Arlegi, Antoine Balzeau, Isabelle Crevecoeur, Bruno Maureille, Jean-François Tournepiche and Asier Gómez-Olivencia**

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**Electronic version**

URL: <https://journals.openedition.org/bmsap/6982>  
ISSN: 1777-5469

**Publisher**

Société d'Anthropologie de Paris

**Electronic reference**

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*Les Néandertaliens de l'Abri Suard (La Chaise de Vouthon, Charente, France) : nouveaux fossiles, nouvelles données, nouvelles perspectives*

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- 1 Abri Suard is one of the sites localized at La Chaise de Vouthon in Charente. La Chaise is a well-known prehistoric place, historically and archaeologically as it preserved long stratigraphic sequences documenting Lower to Upper Palaeolithic human occupations. A substantial number of Neandertal human remains have been discovered in a sedimentary unit associated to MIS 6-5 (250-120 kya) from Abri Suard, which makes them some of the earliest Western European Neandertals. Although most of the Neandertal human remains have been published, there are still unpublished ones. In this work, we present the new human fossils from the collection, a first assessment of the differential anatomical representation and the minimum number of individuals of the entire collection. The “new” fossils include the posterior diaphyseal fragment of a left femur, the medial diaphyseal fragment of a left tibia, an almost complete right tibial diaphysis, a proximal radial extremity presenting articular pathology, the diaphyseal fragment of a left ulna, fragments of three different occipital bones and a sub-adult right temporal bone. As a whole, the collection comprises 60 fossil remains, most of which belong to the cranium, a few long bone remains and the complete absence of other postcranial parts. The most represented bone in the collection is the left parietal accounting for a minimum number of six individuals: at least three sub-adults and three adults (one of them showing gracile cranial features). In sum, this new reassessment of the collection provides evidence of the importance of this assemblage

in the interpretation of the first Neandertal representatives of Western Europe. These preliminary results set the starting point to the new interdisciplinary project where we will evaluate the relation of the Neandertal fossils from Abri Suard to those from Western Europe and the Near East in the time comprising from MIS7 to MIS3.

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## AUTHORS

### **CHRISTINE COUTURE-VESCHAMBRE**

PACEA UMR 5199, CNRS, Université de Bordeaux, Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Pessac, France  
christine.veschambre-couture[at]u-bordeaux.fr

### **DIEGO LÓPEZ-ONAINDIA**

Dept. Geología, Facultad de Ciencia y Tecnología, Universidad del País Vasco-Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea (UPV/EHU), Leioa, Spain

### **NOHEMI SALA**

Centro Nacional de Investigación sobre la Evolución Humana (CENIEH), Burgos, Spain

### **MIKEL ARLEGI**

Centro UCM-ISCIH de Investigación sobre Evolución y Comportamiento Humanos, Madrid, Spain

### **ANTOINE BALZEAU**

UMR 7194 HNHP, MNHN-CNRS-UPVD, Département Homme et Environnement, Musée de l'Homme, Paris, France

### **ISABELLE CREVECOEUR**

UMR 7194 HNHP, MNHN-CNRS-UPVD, Département Homme et Environnement, Musée de l'Homme, Paris, France

### **BRUNO MAUREILLE**

Department of African Zoology, Royal Museum for Central Africa, Tervuren, Belgium

### **JEAN-FRANÇOIS TOURNEPICHE**

Musée d'Angoulême, Angoulême, France

### **ASIER GÓMEZ-OLIVENCIA**

Sociedad de Ciencias Aranzadi, Donostia-San Sebastián, Spain