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Compositional variability of Pleistocene land snail assemblages preserved in a cinder cone volcano from Tenerife, Canary Islands

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Abstract

A Pleistocene land snail rich scoria sequence was studied to determine if it was influenced by taphonomic bias, climate change, or both, using a multifaceted approach that combines taphonomic, ecological, body size, and stable isotope data. Shell assemblages were sampled from two layers (Units A and B) in a cinder cone volcano of southern Tenerife (Canary Islands), dated to the glacial interval MIS 8 (~299-302 ka). The two units differed in taphonomy, species composition, and abundance, with the upper unit B showing higher diversity, abundance, and lower alteration than the lower unit A. Larger bodied species dominated Unit A and were better preserved than smaller species. These mismatches likely resulted from physical differences in the sediment matrix surrounding fossils, with larger scoria grains of Unit A enhancing destruction rates and thus favoring preservation of larger (more durable) taxa than smaller scoria grains of Unit B. Comparisons with modern assemblages from

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