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The De Nadale Cave (Zovencedo, Berici Hills, northeastern Italy): a small-mammal fauna from near the onset of Marine Isotope Stage 4 and its palaeoclimatic implications

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## Abstract

Marine Isotope Stage 4 (MIS 4; ca. 71-57 ka) is not well documented in European continental contexts and is characterized mainly by minimum summer insolation, producing a maximum extension of the polar ice caps during the Late Pleistocene together with a lowering of the sea level in the Northern Hemisphere. The De Nadale Cave site, located at an altitude of 130 m a.s.l. in the Berici Hills in northeastern Italy, contains a single archaeological layer (Unit 7) dated to MIS 4. In this paper, we present a palaeoenvironmental and palaeoclimatic reconstruction based on small-mammal (insectivore, bat and rodent) assemblages from this layer. Habitat Weighting and Bioclimatic Model methods were used in order to reconstruct the palaeoenvironmental and palaeoclimatic conditions. The results identify a cold climatic period with a

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