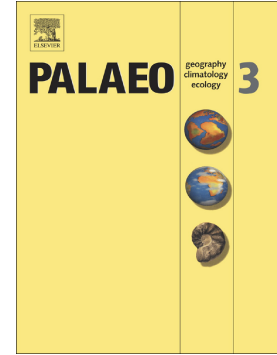


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Regional variation in the browsing diet of Pleistocene *Mammot americanum* (Mammalia, Proboscidea) as recorded by dental microwear textures

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Abstract

Analyses into the feeding ecology of *Mammot americanum* have reconstructed this extinct proboscidean as a forest-dwelling browser that thrived across North America during the Pleistocene. However, the level of variability in mastodon diet that may have existed across its spatio-temporal range remains unresolved. We address this deficiency through comparison of dental microwear textures in a large sample (N = 65) of *M. americanum* teeth from six geographic and chronologically distinct locations from the Late Pleistocene of North America. Mastodon microwear textures correspond to a woody browsing diet, congruent with results from other dietary proxies. However, microwear textures reveal that southern populations from Florida (associated with a cypress swamp habitat) had a slightly softer, tougher browsing diet compared to northern populations (associated with boreal forest and open-pine parkland habitats)

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