Mammal Remains from the 1985 Excavation of the Torihama Shell Mound

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This report concerns the mammalian remains from amongst the vertebrate animals excavated at the 1985 excavation of the Torihama shell mound (early Jomon era) at Torihama, Mikata-cho in Fukui Prefecture. The condition of the excavated bones was good.

8,681 bones of vertebrate animals were excavated, the total weight being 204 kg. The quantity of fish and bird bones excavated, as compared with the quantity of mammal bone excavated was very small. The mammals included 5 orders, 11 families and 15 species. Deer accounted for the largest amount at some 2/3 of the total. Wild boar remains accounted for roughly 1/3 of the total. These two mammals, together, accounted for 95% of the total. There were few mammals other than deer and wild boar. At least 53 individual Japanese deer were found and at least 66 wild boars. A great number of deer antlers were excavated without damage. Wild boar vertebrae, including both thoracic vertebrae and lumbar vertebrae existed at a low ratio which was not the case for deer. It can be imagined, then, that the dismembering for these two animals differed. Dogs were excavated in a dispersed condition. According to the size categories described by Hasebe (1952), they belonged to the small-class dogs. These fell into the smallest division of ancient Japanese dogs.