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of geology in East Anglia, and holds meetings throughout the year.



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## **BRECKLAND MERES AND PALAEOLITHIC ARCHAEOLOGY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*A brief review of the Breckland meres is presented, with particular attention paid to their geology. The significance of the meres in relation to four historic Palaeolithic sites in Breckland is noted and the interpretation of these sites as locations of dolines in the Chalk bedrock is proposed and discussed in detail.*

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**SKERTCHLY'S 1876 REPORT ON BRECKLAND PALAEOLITHIC IMPLEMENTS  
OF INTERGLACIAL AGE: COMMENTS AND INTERPRETATION IN RESPECT  
OF THE HISTORY OF BRECKLAND**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Skertchly's evidence for the interglacial age of man, reported in 1876, is examined in detail, with especial reference to the interpretation of sections in the dry Broomhill valley NE of Brandon. His interpretation appears correct, but only if the term interglacial is used in a lithological, not climatic, sense. The study raised questions about the origin of the loam in Skertchly's sections. Examination of the local Broomhill landscape suggested that the valley, originally a valley across the Chalk escarpment, became an overflow from the Wissey tributary in the West Tofts area. This occurred when the Wissey was blocked by ice of the mid-Wolstonian Tottenhill glaciation, and waters drained to the Little Ouse and thence eastwards to the Waveney Valley and the North Sea. The loam is interpreted as sediment of lakes ponded in the escarpment valleys by the ice. In the Broomhill valley, Skertchly recorded Palaeolithic artifacts in the loam in the vicinity of Botany Bay; this appears to be the site of an ancient doline and a place of Palaeolithic occupation, in common with other Palaeolithic sites in Breckland. Two conclusions are drawn from the study. First, that the Breckland sands are derived from the massive sandy sediments deposited in the escarpment valleys, redistributed after deglaciation through deflation and aeolian dispersal. Secondly, that flooding of the chalkland at the time of ponding is likely to have affected landscapes up to c. 30 mOD., degrading surfaces by thermal erosion in a periglacial climate.*

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**‘ANTHROPOCENE’ FORMATION OF HARD IRON PAN, DERSINGHAM BOG  
NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE, WEST NORFOLK**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The formation of extensive iron-pan deposits in the northern part of Dersingham Bog NNR is attributed to human ‘stimulus’ about 100 years ago, within the wider time-scale of consideration for a newly designated Anthropocene Epoch. It is likely that during a very dry summer in the 1920s, sparks emitted by a steam train set part of the dried out peat bog alight. The loss of the peat cover exposed underlying non-indurated iron deposits to insolation drying, forming a plate-like surface pan.*

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