

From the Great Northern War to the Bronze Age. Archaeological field school in the Bay of Greifswald and the Tollense Valley – Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania



Project description and backgrounds

With a coastline of more than 2000km and 18.000km of rivers, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, the north easternmost of the German states provides ideal conditions for the preservation of submerged archaeological sites. In this field school we will combine diving on an **18th Century warship in the Baltic Sea (week 1)** with surveys and excavation in the river Tollense. The 18th Century warship was discovered during a pipeline construction and documented in-situ. As most of the wooden hull remained covered and the ship construction could not yet be analysed it is intended to excavate a small trench through the remains and to record the hull timbers in this area.

The Tollense valley (week 2 and 3) is one large Bronze Age archaeological site in the northern German state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern at the northern edge of the Mecklenburg Lake District. It has been the scene of a large violent conflict around 1300 BC that has left its marks in the landscape. The site, was discovered in 1996 and systematically excavated from 2007 onwards. Since then active excavation in the valley stopped and the focus shifted towards developing a protection and management plan for the area. However, natural processes and erosion affect the river valley and avocational divers still find large quantities of archaeological finds in the river every year. In 2022, the State authority for culture and monuments in Mecklenburg- Western Pomerania together with the Universities of Göttingen, Rostock and Leiden the opportunity to do research on land as well as in the river.

The first field school in 2022 focused on the recording and in-situ protection of a recently discovered logboat, as well as on limited excavation along the river banks. Additionally, a wide variety of finds detected by avocational divers were catalogued and assessed. In 2023 we are going to focus on a site in the river at which erosion has exposed the remains of a wooden construction which is not yet fully understood. The underwater work will be supplemented

with extensive coring, geophysical survey and possibly limited excavation on the riverbank as well.

Project website(s)

<https://english.cultureelerfgoed.nl/latest/weblog/2022/tollense-fieldschool>

<https://english.cultureelerfgoed.nl/latest/weblog/2022/tollense-fieldschool-part-2>

<https://english.cultureelerfgoed.nl/latest/weblog/2022/tollense-fieldschool-part-3>

<https://english.cultureelerfgoed.nl/latest/weblog/2022/tollense-fieldschool-part-4>

<https://english.cultureelerfgoed.nl/latest/weblog/2022/tollense-fieldschool-part-5>

<https://english.cultureelerfgoed.nl/latest/weblog/2022/tollense-fieldschool-part-6>

<https://english.cultureelerfgoed.nl/latest/weblog/2022/tollense-fieldschool-part-7>

<https://english.cultureelerfgoed.nl/latest/weblog/2022/tollense-fieldschool-part-8>

Project leader(s)/director(s)

Prof. Dr. M.R. Manders, University of Leiden, Faculty of Archaeology

Dr. Jens Auer, Landesamt für Kultur und Denkmalpflege Mecklenburg- Vorpommern

Internship period: when and how long

10 to 30th of July 2023

Type(s) of fieldwork planned, as well as relevant activities (e.g. excursions/...)

The students from Leiden will be part of the underwater archaeology team that does the research in the Baltic Sea and the research in the river. Activities are:

- Survey
- Excavating (and working with waterdredge)
- Sampling
- Material analyses
- Geo-Information research and mapping
- Drawing underwater
- Photography underwater
- 3d photogrammetry
- Dive planning and safety
- Reporting
- Writing project plan (before the fieldschool)
- Writing report (after the fieldschool)



Prior knowledge / experiences / professional and personal skills needed?

Preferences are for students that have taken the maritime archaeology course in BA and MA

We take max 6 students, BA as well as MA!

The more affiliation with underwater archaeology , the better.

Dive experiences. This year we will not only be working in the Tollense valley (which is very shallow and some places can even be worked at with a snorkel), but we will also do a survey in the deeper waters (approx. 8 m) of the Baltic (see above). We therefore are looking for students with a dive experience of approx. 50 approved and registered dives. Do not hesitate to contact us when you have less. We will then look at any further possibilities. The project is a cooperation with different universities and therefore you have to be able to work in teams. We stay near the site, which is fairly basic accommodation. Due to the finds discovered and the history of the site, we extra welcome applications of Bronze Age- and osteo-archaeologists.

Professional and personal skills trained during fieldwork

See above. Also, every day, one of the students is day leader, which means that this student is responsible for (dive and archaeological) planning.

Provided facilities, housing etc.

Transport, food and lodging will be provided for.

Costs involved for students (travel, visa, accommodation, food, insurances, vaccination, etc.)

Some travel and dive insurance will do, as well as a dive medical.

Also some private money for the days or nights out. This should be fairly low. There will be an allowance per diem per student. The amount has not yet been established.

Number of students requested

6 max

Health and safety precautions/regulations

Diving

Heat (take sun protection and hat with you)

The river can be causing ear infections if the ears are not rinsed every night.

Visa requirements

None

Cultural aspects that students should be aware of

None

Application method

Write a motivation letter (max. 1 page) and send this with a relevant fieldwork cv to m.r.manders@arch.leidenuniv.nl. An interview will follow.

Selection

Selection will take place based on the amount of students, the motivation in underwater archaeology. This will be done in March.

Application deadline

Please send in your application no later than the 10th of March 2023.