

## **The plant foods of Mesolithic hunter-gatherers at the river dune site of the Yangtze Harbor near Rotterdam.**

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**Abstract.** Plants are important for human life. They provide food, fuel and raw material. So it is now and so it was for Mesolithic hunter-gatherers who lived around 7000BC on the river dune site of the Yangtze Harbor near Rotterdam. The great diversity of plant foods available to and used by the hunter-gatherer groups who made recurrent visits to the same location during the early Holocene is the subject of this presentation. These Mesolithic hunter-gathers explored various ecological zones, from the forest through the wetland and into the open water, in their search for edible plants. They collected various fruits and berries, seeds, nuts, roots and tubers. The presence of charred remains of roots and tubers (also known as charred parenchyma) is especially intriguing to us as this indicates the gathering and processing of starchy root foods at the site. The charred remains of archaeological parenchyma also indicate that starch was a significant dietary energy source in Mesolithic Europe.