

METHODS FOR MACROBOTANICAL SORTING
(Flotation samples from Southern Veracruz)

LIGHT and HEAVY FRACTIONS

1. Get an analysis form, and fill out the provenience information on the top half of the form.
2. Weigh the sample and record the sample weight on the form.
3. Pour the sample in an EMPTY CLEAN set of geological sieves (2.0 mm, 1.4 mm, [0.7 mm for light fractions] and the pan), and agitate the sieves.
4. Remove each size-sorted section of your sample from the sieve set and into separate plastic containers (or plastic Ziploc bags). Make sure that corresponding provenience information is written on paper tags and placed in each container/bag, along with information on which sieve size it comes from (e.g., 2.0 mm, 1.4 mm, 0.7 mm, pan).
5. Begin sorting the 2.0 mm size under the microscope.
 - a. Remove bone material and weigh (record weight on form and bag separately).
 - b. Remove carbonized plant material and sort into like groups.
 - c. The remaining non-carbonized plant, non-bone materials are classified as contamination (contam) and weighed and bagged separately.
6. Begin sorting the 1.4 mm size under the scope.
 - a. Remove bone material and weigh (record weight on form and bag separately).
 - b. Remove carbonized plant material and sort into like groups.
 - c. The remaining non-carbonized plant, non-bone materials are classified as contamination (contam) and weighed and bagged separately.
7. Begin sorting the materials from the 0.7 mm under the scope.
 - a. Remove bone material and weigh (record weight on form and bag separately).
 - b. Remove carbonized plant material and sort into like groups.
 - c. The remaining non-carbonized plant, non-bone materials are classified as contamination (contam) and weighed and bagged separately.
8. Scan the pan for small seeds
 - a. From this sieve size, you only remove small seeds, but you remove ALL small seeds. Also if you come across other taxa that were not identified in the 2.0, 1.4, or 0.71 sieves, you remove those as well.
 - b. The remaining materials from these sized-sieves are classified as residue and weighed and bagged separately.
9. At this point, you have Dr. VanDerwarker check all your work and confirm your identifications.
10. Then it is time to record your identifications
 - a. Wood charcoal is weighed but not counted
 - b. Small seeds are counted but not weighed (this is because they are generally too small to actually register a weight on the scales)
 - c. All other taxa (e.g., corn, hickory, etc.) are counted AND weighed.