

## **Chenopod cuisines: Spatial and temporal explorations of *Chenopodium* use among western North American societies**

Charred *Chenopodium* seeds are often among the most ubiquitous taxa at archaeological sites throughout western North America. Once overlooked as markers of environmental disturbance, it is only within the last decade that archaeologists in this region have begun actively exploring the ways chenopods functioned in within past socio-economies. This region is geographically, culturally, and biologically diverse, and many questions still remain regarding chenopod use and consumption. Presentations in this session will explore *Chenopodium* trends across space and time, which species were consumed and where, archaeological and experimental approaches to chenopod preparation, signs of human-aided selection, and chenopods as an option for contemporary food security.

We welcome case studies or synthetic papers that highlight and reframe the ways these plants functioned in the past, adding to continental and global conversations surrounding this versatile genus. We offer the following questions as a starting point for consideration:

- How did these plants fit within past societies?
- What trends do we see across space and time in *Chenopodium* use?
- What species were consumed? How were plants prepared?
- Are there any signs of human-aided selection within the seeds themselves?
- Can we refine the depositional pathways for *Chenopodium* seeds throughout the region?
- How does *Chenopodium* use vary between foraging and agricultural societies?
- How and why do chenopods differ between western and eastern North America?
- How does the “grey literature” of cultural resource management improve or otherwise affect our collective paleoethnobotanical knowledge of this genus?
- Is this a traditional food source that could be explored for future food security?

These questions are offered to spark ideas and conversations, and the session welcomes presentations and papers at any stage and any interest.

If you are interested in being part of next year’s talks, please let us know before August 8th. You can contact Molly at mc143 AT uark.edu. At that time, we will forward a session code to enter in the SAA portal system to submit your abstract. Please reach out if you have any questions, and hope you are interested in contributing to the chenopod conversation!