

Newly discovered human bones bring evolutionary timeline into question

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Two controversial discoveries from two caves in south-west China threaten to overturn our understanding of what it means to be human. One appears to be a primitive human species, which most closely resembles the earliest human species, *Homo habilis* and *Homo erectus*.

But while these lived about 2 million years ago, this new species lived just 14,000 years ago, says Darren Curnoe of the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia, who lead the team behind the discoveries. This would make it the most recent human species to have gone extinct.

“If true, this would be rather spectacular and it would make the finds of truly global importance,” says Michael Petraglia at the University of Oxford, who wasn’t involved in the discoveries.

The work is excellent, he says, but is likely to leave many in the field unconvinced.

One of the most exciting pieces of evidence in the story is a hominin femur found in Muladong cave in south-west China, alongside other human and animal bones. It shows evidence of having been burned in a fire that was used for cooking other meat, and has marks consistent with it being butchered for consumption.

Read full, original post: [New species of human may have shared our caves ? and beds](#)