

Smarter than we thought: Neanderthals hunted in groups, ancient deer skeletons show

A group of Neanderthals used their hand-crafted wooden spears to kill two male fallow deer, both in the prime of their life and heavy with valuable meat and fat.

We know this because those skeletons, with bones bearing the signs the people who killed them, were recovered in 1988 and 1997 in a site called Neumark-Nord. This week, researchers argue in a new paper in [Nature Ecology & Evolution](#) that those punctured bones are the oldest example of hunting marks in the history of homininkind. That would mean that Neanderthals used sophisticated close-range hunting techniques to capture their prey—adding more weight to the argument that they were much smarter than we once gave them credit for.

...

This new research is only the latest in a recent string of studies that indicate Neanderthals were our genetic and perhaps cultural cousins: complex, empathetic hominins. Neanderthals have now been credited with [creating symbolic art](#), producing [geometric structures of broken stalagmites](#) in underground caves and [controlling fire](#) to use on tools and food

...

This is a sea-change from how anthropologists once viewed this group of hominins: as a species doomed to extinction. Such a view meant that researchers were always looking for what weaknesses had set Neanderthals up for failure, rather than the skills that allowed them to successfully survive for so long.

Read full, original post: [Neanderthals Hunted in Groups, One More Strike Against the Dumb Brute Myth](#)