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Late Neolithic and Bronze Age finds from the High Bieszczady Mountains. Discoveries from 2017-2019

ABSTRACT

By 2019 more than 70 sites had been discovered in the area of the High Bieszczady Mountains, most of them located within the Połonina Wetlińska massif. The sites discovered in 2017–2019 constitute two groups: sites represented by (1) single artefacts (Wetlina 56, 57, 58, 59, 61, 63, 64, 65, Bukowska Pass, site 1) and (2) small series of artefacts (Wetlina 54, 55, 60, 62). Both groups include artefacts datable to the Late Neolithic and the Bronze Age. Moreover, there are no sufficient grounds to claim homogeneity of assemblages found in Wetlina 54, 55, 60 and 62. It is possible that at least some of these sites could have been used many times during the Late Neolithic and Bronze Age periods. These finds confirm seasonal use of the High Bieszczady for grazing animals, probably within a system similar to the transhumant pastoralism practiced in European mountains.

KEYWORDS

Bieszczady Mountains, Carpathians, lithic artefacts, transhumance, Neolithic, Bronze Age



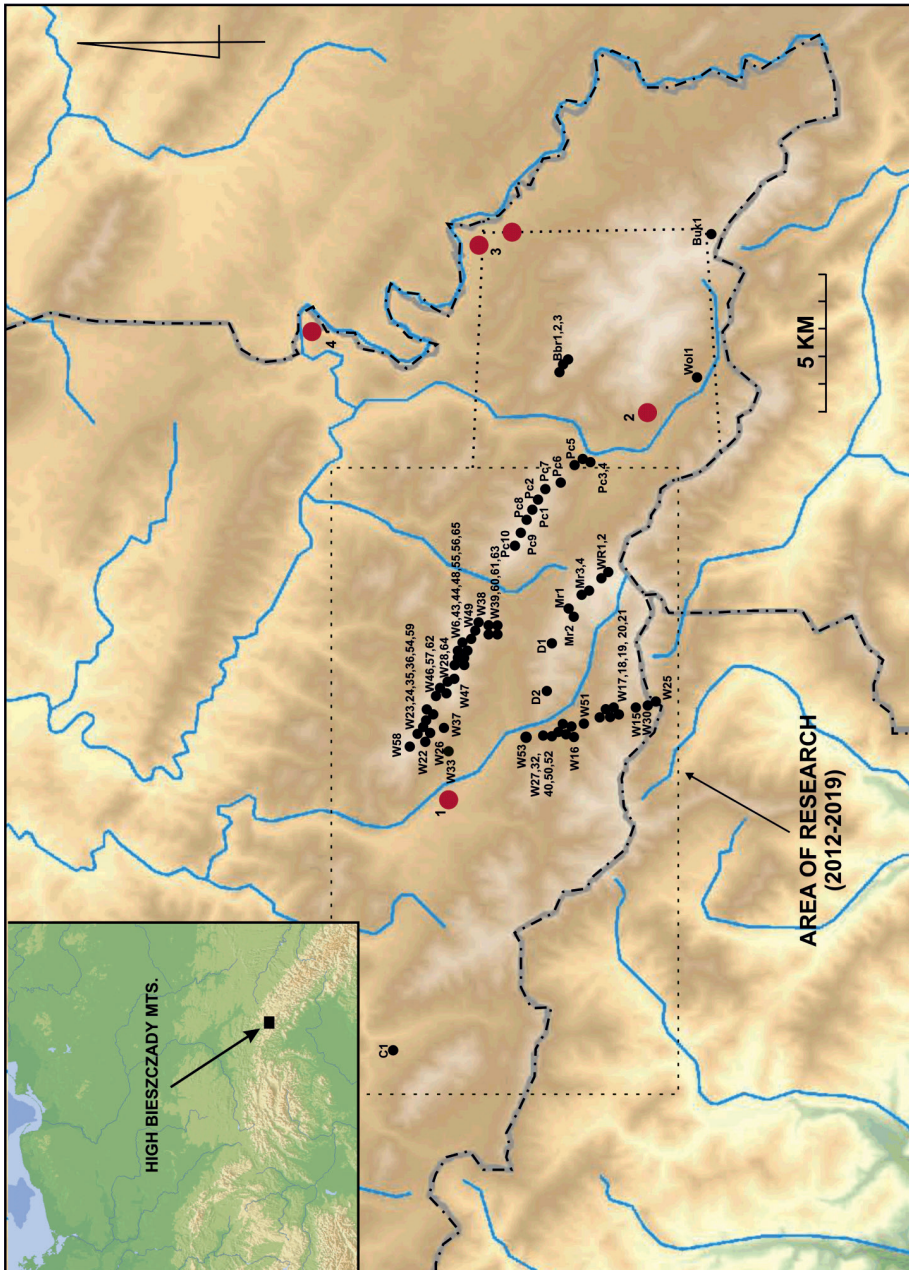


FIG. 1. Archaeological sites discovered in the High Bieszczady Mts. dated to the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age including described in this paper:

C1 – Cisna, site 6; W5 – Wetlina, site 5; Połonina Wetlińska Massif: W6 – Wetlina, site 6; ►

I. INTRODUCTION

The idea of undertaking archaeological research in the High Bieszczady Mountains arose in 2012. It was inspired by palynological evidence of human activity recorded in the pollen diagrams from peat-bogs in the vicinity of Smerek, Wołosate, and Tarnawa in the Bieszczady Mountains (Ralska-Jasiewiczowa 1969; 1980) and the discovery of an artefact made of black menilite chert on the ridge of Połonina Wetlińska in the mid-1970s (Valde-Nowak 1991, 58). Until 2012 it remained the sole prehistoric find known from the area (cf. Valde-Nowak 1988). Archaeological field surveys began in 2013. Parallel with that action, information on accidental discoveries made by local mountain guides and residents was being gathered, and it was verified during the surveys. It should be underlined that all these discoveries were made by people perfectly familiar with the area, who were able to precisely describe the location of the discovered artefacts. As a result, all these accidental finds have gained the status of reliable and valuable archaeological materials. As of 2019, 72 archaeological sites dated to the Neolithic and Bronze Age had been found in the High Bieszczady (Pelisiak 2014; 2016a; 2016b; 2016c; 2017a; 2017b; 2017c; 2018a; 2018b; 2018c; Pelisiak, Maj 2013; Pelisiak, Maj, Bajda 2015; Raczak 2018). This paper focuses on the discoveries from 2017-2019 (Fig. 1). All the sites are

◀ W22 – Wetlina, site 22; W23 – Wetlina, site 23; W24 – Wetlina, site 24; W26 – Wetlina, stan, 26; W 28 – Wetlina, site 28; W33 – Wetlina, site 33; W 34 – Wetlina, site 34; W35 – Wetlina, site 35; W37 – Wetlina, site 37; W38 – Wetlina, site 38; W39 – Wetlina, site 39; W43 – Wetlina, site 43; W44 – Wetlina, site 44; W46 – Wetlina, site 46; W47 – Wetlina, stan, 47; W48 – Wetlina, site 48; W55 – Wetlina, site 55; W56 – Wetlina, site 56; W57 – Wetlina, site 57; W58 – Wetlina, site 58; W59 – Wetlina, site 59; W60 – Wetlina, site 60; W61 – Wetlina, site 61; W62 – Wetlina, site 62; W63 – Wetlina, site 63; W64 – Wetlina, site 64; W65 – Wetlina, site 65. Moczarne Region: W16 – Wetlina, site 16, W17 – Wetlina, stan, 17, W18 – Wetlina, site 18, W19 – Wetlina, site 19, W20 – Wetlina, site 20, W21 – Wetlina, site 21, W27 – Wetlina, site 27, W32 – Wetlina, site 32, W40 – Wetlina, site 40, W50 – Wetlina, site 50, W51 – Wetlina, site 51, W52 – Wetlina, site 52, W53 – Wetlina, site 53, W53 – Wetlina, site 53; Przełęcz pod Czerteżem: W25 – Wetlina, site 25, W30 – Wetlina, site 30. Wielki Dział: Wd 1 – Wielki Dział, site 1, Wd2 – Wielki Dział, site 2. Mała Rawka: Mr1 – Mała Rawka, site 1, Mr2 – Mała Rawka, site 2, Mr3 – Mała Rawka, site 3, Mr4 – Mała Rawka, site 4. Wielka Rawka: WR1 – Wielka Rawka, site 1, WR2 – Wielka Rawka, site 2. Połonina Caryńska Massif: Pc1 – Połonina Caryńska, site 1, Pc2 – Połonina Caryńska, site 2, Pc3 – Połonina Caryńska, site 3, Pc4 – Połonina Caryńska, site 4, Pc5 – Połonina Caryńska, site 5, Pc6 – Połonina Caryńska, site 6, Pc7 – Połonina Caryńska, site 7, Pc8 – Połonina Caryńska, site 8, Pc9 – Połonina Caryńska, site 9, Pc10 – Połonina Caryńska, site 10. Bukowe Berdo: Bbr1 – Bukowe Berdo, site 1, Bbr2 – Bukowe Berdo, site 2, Bbr3 – Bukowe Berdo, site 3. Buk1 – Bukowska Pass, site 1; Wol1 – Wołosate, site 1. Large points – pollen diagrams: 1 – Smerek, 2 – Wołosate, 3 – Tarnawa Wyżna region, 4 – Zakole

located in the broad ridge zone of the Połonina Wetlińska massif. Some general information concerning these sites has already been published. This paper contains more detailed data about the finds themselves, their locations, and the archaeological and landscape context.

II. DISCOVERIES

Wetlina, site 54. On the gentle, SSW slope of the Orłowicz Pass, altitude approx. 1100 m a.s.l. Coordinates: N: 49°10'46.74"; E: 22°29'47.92" (Pl. 1).

Material: One flake fragment or chunk with irregular one-sided retouch on one edge (backed knife?), crushed, dimensions 37 x 18 x 6 mm (Fig. 2: 1); one fragment of irregular flake of technical chunk with one edge regularly retouched on one side and crushed, and the other edge forming a natural back, dimensions 30 x 18 x 8 mm. Both artefacts of black menilite chert.

Wetlina, site 55. On the gentle SEE slope of the Srebrzysta Pass, altitude approx. 1155 m a.s.l. Coordinates: N: 49°09'51.93"; E: 22°32'04.07" (Pl. 2).

Material: One fragment of probably sidescraper made of chunk, with a partly broken semi-steep front, one side edges crushed, length 22 mm, width 22 mm, thickness 7 mm (Fig. 2: 2); one technical chunk with traces of flaking and both edges crushed, length 38 mm, width 28 mm, thickness 23 mm (Fig. 2: 3); one irregular flake with splintering traces similar to a backed knife, one edge natural, crushed, the opposite edge in the form of a back partially shaped by steep retouch, length 51 mm, width 23 mm, thickness 13 mm (Fig. 2: 4). All artefacts made of black menilite chert.

Wetlina, site 56. On the gentle SEE slope of Połonina Wetlińska, altitude ca. 1155 m a.s.l. Coordinates: N: 49°09'52.47"; E: 22°32'03.19" (Pl. 2).

Material: One bifacial heart-shaped arrowhead made of Volhynian flint with straight edges, sharp tip concave semi-trapezoidal base, and slightly asymmetric wings – one sharp, the other (shorter) possibly broken at the edge. Bifacial surface retouch. Dimensions: maximal length 14 mm, length at the base 12 mm, width 13 mm, thickness 2 mm (Fig. 2: 5) (Raczak 2018, 111, Fig. 2).

Wetlina, site 57. On the E slope between Hnatowe Berdo and Osadzki Wierch, altitude approx. 1155 m a.s.l. Coordinates: N: 49°10'00.92"; E: 22°31'08.36" (Pl. 3).

Material: Bifacial heart-shaped arrowhead made of dark-brown chocolate flint, slightly burnt. The sides shaped with bifacial surface retouch, the base slightly concave and rounded, pointed tip, the barbs straight, symmetric, and

slightly rounded. Dimensions: maximal length 19 mm, length at the base 17 mm, width 17 mm, thickness 3.5 mm (Fig. 2: 6) (Raczak 2018, 111, Fig. 3).

Wetlina, site 58. On the gentle, SE slope of Smerek Mountain on the Połonina Wetlińska Massif, above the Orłowicz Pass, altitude approx. 1180 m a.s.l. Coordinates: N: 49°10'58.60"; E: 22°29'13.19" (Pl. 1).

Material: One piece made of unidentified siliceous rock with technical negatives, length 21 mm, width 8 mm, thickness 10 mm.

Wetlina, site 59. The S slope of the Orłowicz Pass, altitude 1010 m a.s.l. Coordinates: N: 49°10'42.24"; E: 22°29'12.56" (Pl. 1).

Material: One chip or fragment of flake made of brown chert or black menilite chert, dimensions: 10 x 7 x 3 mm (Fig. 2: 7).

Wetlina, site 60. On the SW slope of Połonina Wetlińska, altitude approx. 1100 m a.s.l. Coordinates: N: 49°09'27.31"; E: 22°32'49.11" (Pl. 2).

Material: One chunk with technical negatives (splintered piece fragment?) made of black menilite chert, dimensions 12 x 15 x 11 mm (Fig. 2: 8); one chunk with technical negatives made of dark brown chert, dimensions 16 x 13 x 12 mm (Fig. 2: 9).

Wetlina, site 61. Gentle SW slope of the Połonina Wetlińska range, altitude 1120 m. a.s.l. Coordinates: N: 49°09'27.81"; E: 22°32'52.42" (Pl. 2).

Material: One piece of black or dark brown chert with technical negatives, length 16 mm, width 12 mm, thickness 7 mm (Fig. 2: 10).

Wetlina, Site 62. On Połonina Wetlińska, on the gentle, SEE slope of a local culmination, altitude 1110 m a.s.l. Coordinates: N: 49°10'35.66"; E: 22°30'25.45" (Pl. 1).

Material: One fragment of truncated blade or regular blade from single-platform core, dimensions 17 x 12 x 3 mm (Fig. 2: 11); one burnt medial part of regular bladelet from "microlithic" single-platform core, one edge crumbled, dimensions: length 14, width: 8, thickness 2 mm (Fig. 2: 12); one chip, diameter 4 mm. All artefacts made of dark chocolate flint.

Wetlina, site 63. On the gentle, SE slope of the Połonina Wetlińska massif, altitude approx. 1100 m a.s.l. Coordinates: N: 49°09'27.28"; E: 22°32'44.54" (Pl. 2).

Material: 1 splintered chunk made of black menilite chert, largest diameter 16 mm (Fig. 2: 13).

Wetlina, site 64. On Połonina Wetlińska, near point no. 479 of the Bieszczady National Park, altitude approx. 1200 m a.s.l. Coordinates: N: 49°09'58.91"; E: 22°31'48.62" (Pl. 3).

Material: One unidirectional flake with one edge partly retouched on the

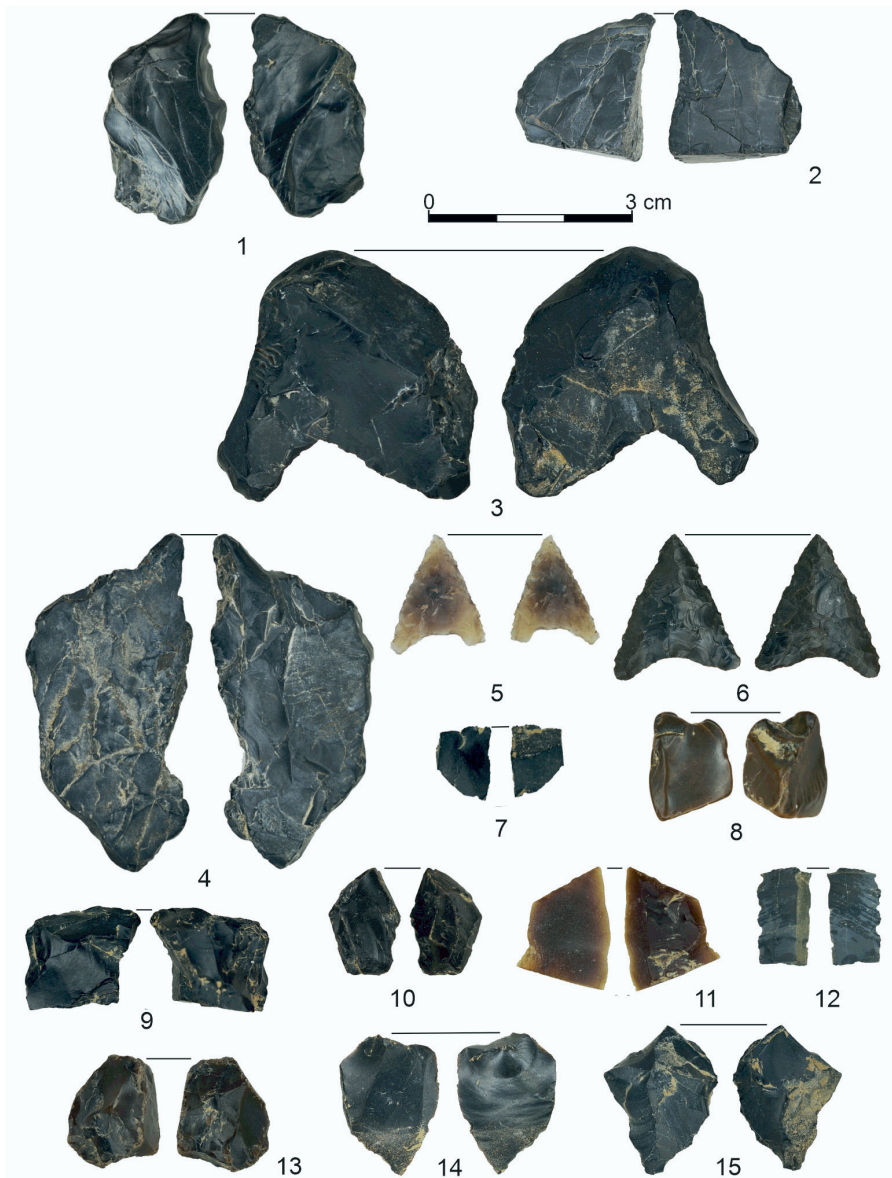


FIG. 2. Selection of the finds from the sites located on the Połonina Wetlińska massif

1 – W54 (fragment of irregular flake of technical chunk with one edge regularly retouched and one side crushed, the other edge forms natural back, black menilite chert), 2 – W55 (fragment of endscraper on chunk, part of the semi-steep scraping edge broken, side edges crushed, black menilite chert), 3 – W55 (1 technical chunk with traces of splintering and both edges crushed, black menilite chert), 4 – W55 (1 irregular flake with splintering traces, ►

ventral face, made of dark chocolate flint, length 19 mm, width 14 mm, thickness 5 mm (Fig. 2: 14).

Wetlina, site 65. On the gentle EEN slope of Połonina Wetlińska, between Hnatowe Berdo and Osadzki Wierch, altitude approx. 1150 m a.s.l. Coordinates: N: 49°10'08.05"; E: 22°31'05.08" (Pl. 3).

Material: One fragment of splintered piece with crushed edges, one of them with fine one-sided retouch, of black menilite chert, length 20 mm, width 17 mm, thickness 8 mm.

Bukowska Pass, site 1. On the SE slope near the tourist trail to Rozsypaniec. Altitude approx. 1130 m a.s.l. Coordinates: N: 49°03'11.29"; E: 22°46'15.30" (Pl. 4).

Material: One fragment of flake made of black menilite chert with irregular retouch of one edge on the dorsal side, strongly curved, convex percussion bulb; length 12 mm, width 11 mm, thickness 3 mm (Fig. 2: 15) (Raczak 2018: 111, Fig. 4).

III. NOTES ON CHRONOLOGY

The sites themselves reveal some specific features, as do the finds discovered in the High Bieszczady Mountains. All the sites are represented by single artefacts or small series of lithic artefacts discovered on the surface of the ground. In terms of typology most of them refer to the so-called Orava type (Valde-Nowak 1986a; 1986b). Moreover, certain typological features of these materials offer opportunities, albeit usually very limited, for precise cultural and chronological classification.

Flint arrow-heads constitute the most diagnostic group among lithic artefacts. They have been found on several sites in the High Bieszczady Mountains

◀ one edge natural, crushed, the opposite edge in form of the back partially shaped by steep retouch, black menilite chert), 5 – W56 (arrow-head, Volhynian flint), 6 – W57 (arrow-head, dark chocolate flint), 7 – W59 (chip with partially natural surface of black menilite chert or burnt chocolate flint), 8 – W60 (chunk with technical negatives, brown chert), 9 – W60 (chunk with technical negatives, black menilite chert), 10 – W61 (1 chunk with technical negatives, black menilite chert), 11 – W62 (fragment of truncated blade on regular blade detached from single-platform core, chocolate flint), 12 – W62 (burnt medial fragment of regular bladelet detached from single-platform core, one edge crumbled, chocolate flint), 13 – W63 (splintered chunk, black menilite chert), 14 – W64 (flake with irregular one-sided retouch, dark chocolate flint), 15 – W65 (splintered piece with crushed edges, one of them with fine one-sided retouch, black menilite chert) (Photo by J. Błaszczuk)

(Pelisiak 2016c, Fig. 2: 3; Pelisiak, Maj, Bajda 2015, Fig. 2: 1) including recent discoveries of the bifacial heart-shaped arrowhead made of Volhynian flint from Wetlina site 56 and the bifacial heart-shaped arrowhead made of dark brown chocolate flint from Wetlina site 57. Heart-shaped flint arrow-heads are one of the most typical elements of chipped assemblages of populations archaeologically reflected by the Corded Ware culture. They have been recorded, in various numbers, in hundreds of CWC graves (e.g. Budziszewski, Tunia 2000; Machnik, Pilch 1997; Machnik *et al.* 2009; Pelisiak 2017d; 2019; Włodarczak 2006). The following artefacts could also be attributed to CWC: One fragment of truncated blade or regular blade from single-platform core; one burnt medial part of regular bladelet; and one chip, all these artefacts made of dark chocolate flint, from Wetlina, site 62; and maybe one unidirectional flake with one edge partly retouched made of dark chocolate flint from Wetlina, site 64. Such artefacts occur in the vast majority of graves of this culture.

The chronology of several lithic artefacts can be established on the basis of their formal characteristics as the Bronze Age. They are as follows: One retouched flake or chunk similar to backed knife of dark brown chert, and one retouched flake or chunk similar to backed knife of dark brown chert, and one retouched flake or chunk also made of dark brown chert from Wetlina, site 54; One technical chunk with traces of flaking and both edges crushed, length 38 mm, width 28 mm, thickness 23 mm; one irregular flake with splintering traces similar to backed knife, made of dark brown chert from Wetlina, site 55. Nevertheless, such dating of these artefacts is not fully certain (e.g. Kopacz 2001; Kopacz, Valde-Nowak 1987; Valde-Nowak, Gancarski 1999; Valde-Nowak 2003)

The third group is that of artefacts which can be dated only within wide chronological frameworks of the Neolithic-Bronze Age, without cultural affiliation. These are as follows: One fragment of end-scraper made of chunk, with a partly broken semi-steep front from Wetlina site 55; one piece made of unidentified siliceous rock with technical negatives from Wetlina, site 58; one chip made of chert from Wetlina, site 59; two chunks with technical negatives from Wetlina, site 60; one piece of black or dark brown chert with technical negatives from Wetlina, site 61; one splintered chunk made of black menilite chert from Wetlina, site 63; one fragment of splintered piece with retouched one side made of black menilite chert from Wetlina, site 65; one fragment of flake made of black menilite chert with irregular retouch of one edge from Bukowska Pass, site 1.

IV. FINAL REMARKS

The sites discovered in 2017-2019 form two groups: (1) sites represented by single artefacts (Wetlina 56, 57, 58, 59, 61, 63, 64, 65, Bukowska Pass, site 1) and (2) those where small series of artefacts were found (Wetlina 54, 55, 60, 62). Both groups include artefacts datable to the Late Neolithic and the Bronze Age. Moreover, there are no sufficient grounds to claim homogeneity of assemblages found in Wetlina 54, 55, 60 and 62. It is possible that at least some of these sites could have been used many times during the Late Neolithic and the Bronze Age periods.

All the sites are located in a high landscape zone at altitudes between 1000 and 1200 m a.s.l, on wide ridges of the Połonina Wetlińska and Połonina Bukowska massifs. The sites discovered on Połonina Wetlińska are located close to springs of fresh and salt/mineral water within zones where artefacts dated to the Neolithic and the Bronze Age had already been found (Pelisiak 2018). These finds confirm seasonal exploitation of the High Bieszczady for grazing animals, probably within a system similar to the transhumant pastoralism practiced in European mountains (cf. Bartosiwicz, Grenfield 1999; Mocci *et al.* 2006; Walsh, Mocci 2011; Walsh *et al.* 2003; Walsh *et al.* 2007).

The research in the High Bieszczady Mountains has not yet been completed.

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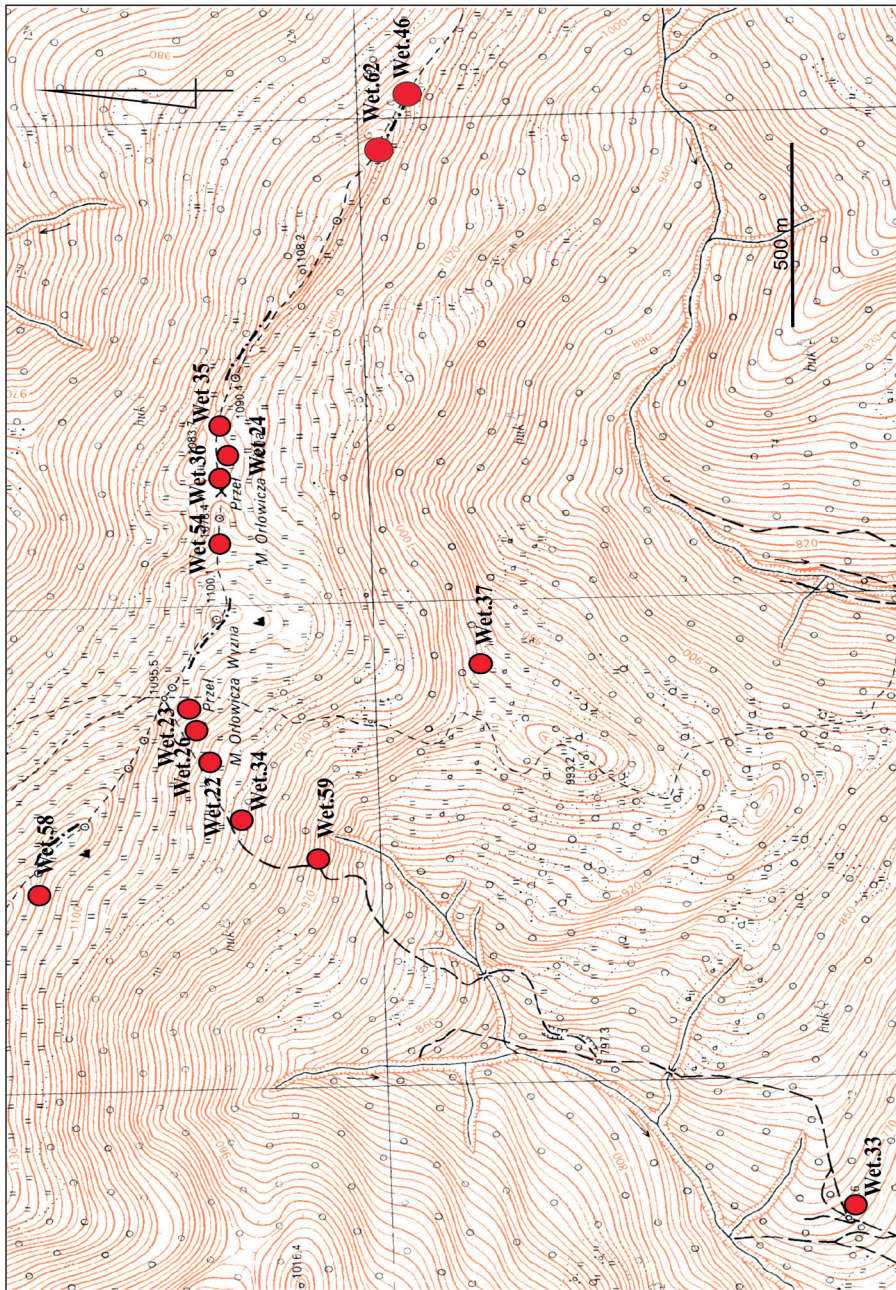
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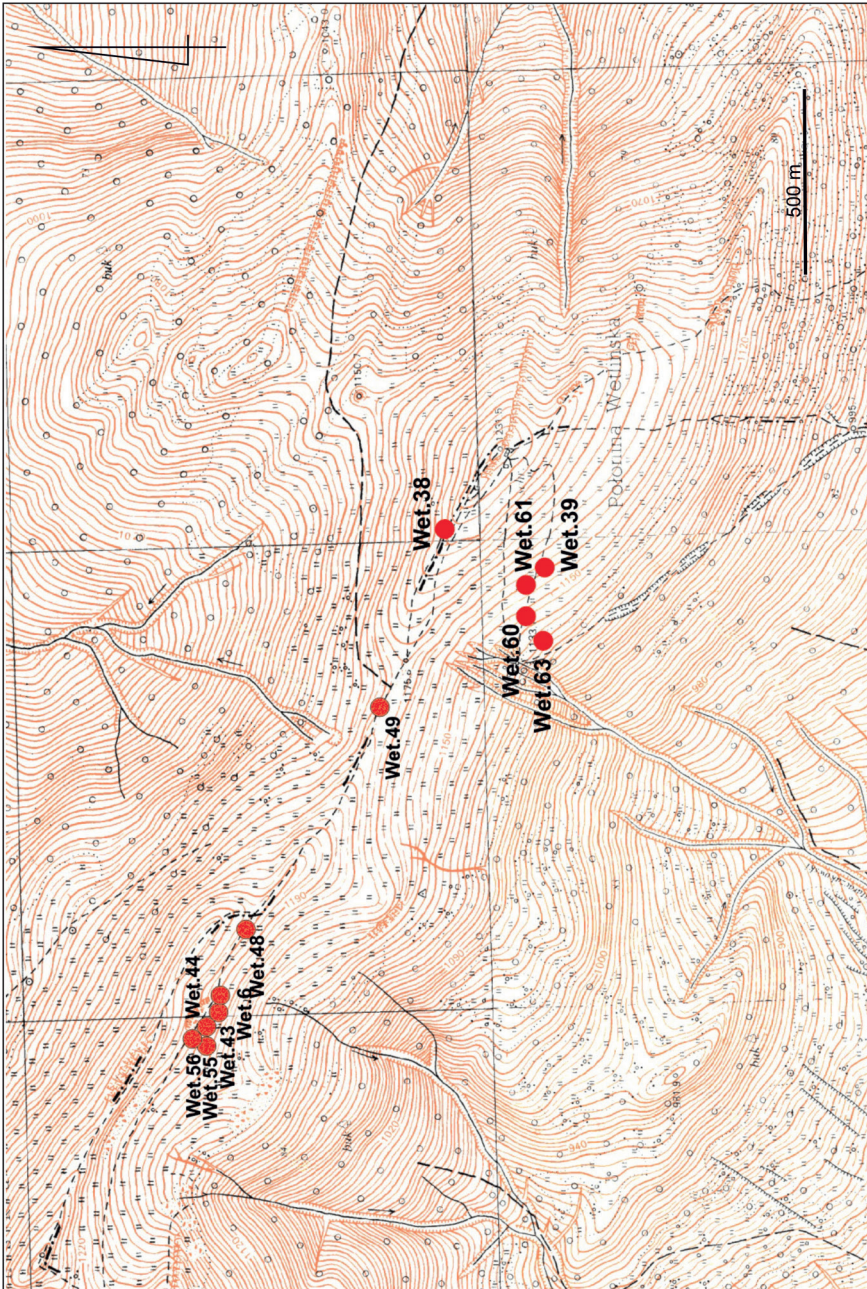
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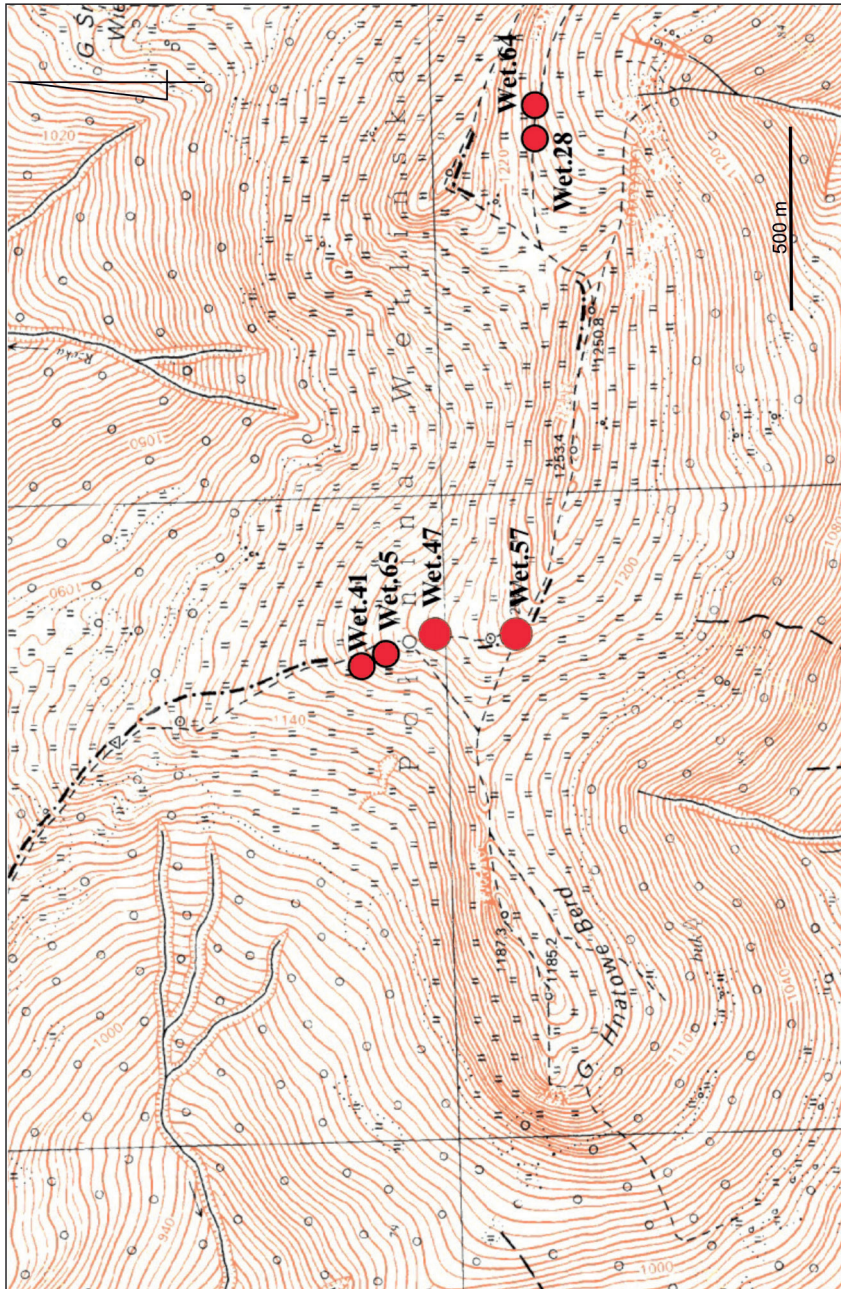
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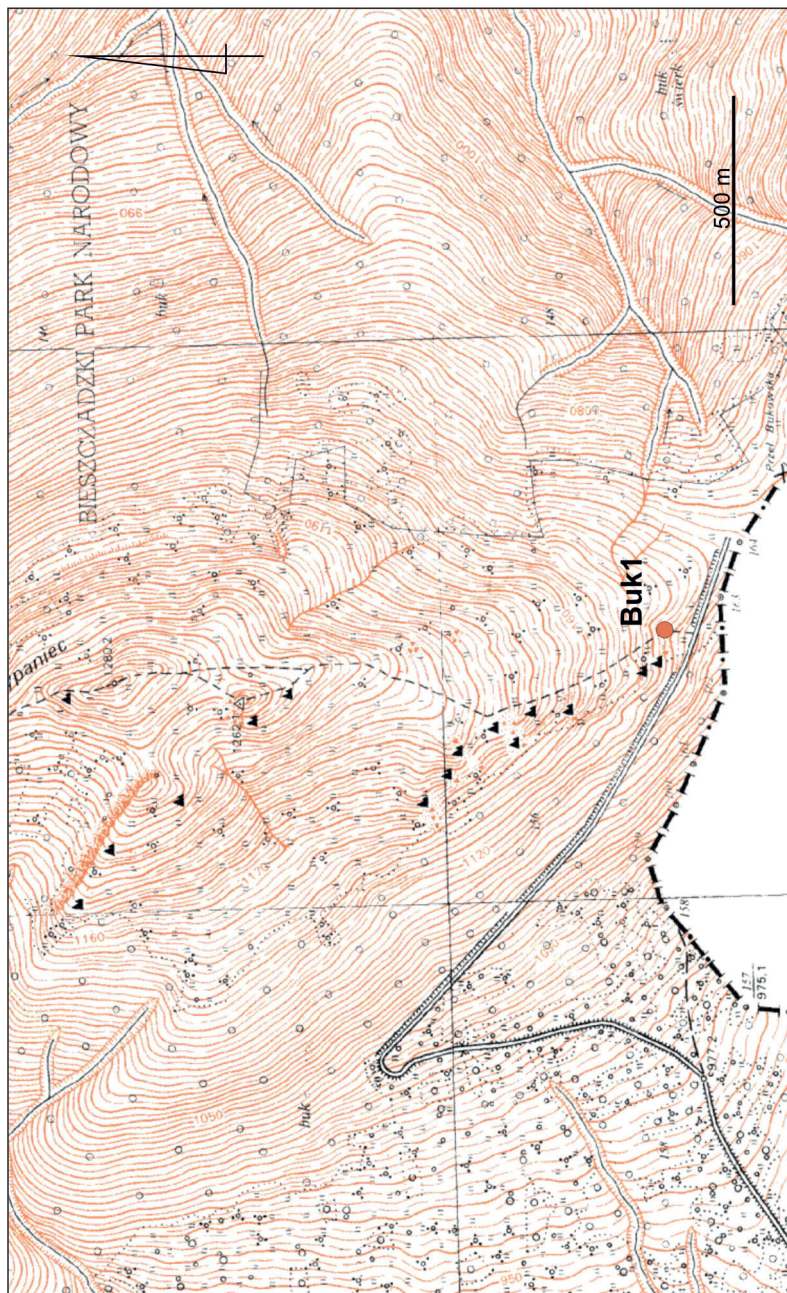
Pl. 1. Połonina Wetlińska massif. Sites located on the area of Orłowicz Pass and its surroundings. W54, W58, W59, W62 – sites discovered in 2017-2019. Symbols as on the Fig. 1



Pl. 2. The sites located on the SE part of the Połonina Wetlińska Massif. W55, W56, W60, W61, W63 – sites discovered in 2017-2019. Symbols as on the Fig. 1



Pl. 3. Połonina Wetlińska Massif. The sites located on the area between Hnatowe Berdo, Roh, and Osadzki Wierch. W57, W64, W65 – sites discovered in 2017-2019. Symbols as on the Fig. 1



Pl. 4. Buk 1 – Bukowska Pass site 1 in the Rozsypaniec massif

