

3 THINGS YOUR MOTHER SHOULD KNOW BEFORE YOU BECOME AN ARCHAEOLOGIST

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When a non-archaeologist listens to my answer to his/her question about what I do as my day-job, they always say: **What a beautiful job!** or (even worse) **Wow! Like Indiana Jones!**

But in the life of a field archaeologist, you have to deal with strange, dangerous, and even awkward situations that common people and some students can't really guess.

That's the reason why we want to share with all of you some of these anecdotes that really happened to us during the course of our work as a small archaeological company here in Spain: [Lure Arqueologia](#).

BULLFIGHTER FOR A DAY

In some places in Spain (I hope there are not similar places out there) you can easily find loose fighting bulls, and sometimes (not just a few as we desire) a group of archaeologist have to survey those beautiful fields without knowing that there are those kinds of animals around.

This is a true story that happened to us in the north of Madrid. On that sunny winter day we were about to start some surveying in a yard full of signs warning us of lovely black, fighting bulls. For our own tranquility, the landlord told us that it was just cows and no bulls, but he suitably informed us that we have to be very careful all the same.

We ended up digging with the car nearby as close as we could park it, with all the doors open wide. As we were two archaeologists, one was surveying while the other was watching trying to keep an eye on the black, fighting cows.



You might think that our caution was rather excessive, and that it wasn't that dangerous.

The situation seemed to be under control until a group of 20-30 fighting cows with their small, young, cute fighting bulls showed their faces behind a little hill 100 meters away from us. Finally nothing happened and we could finished the work, but what if?

DO YOU REALLY LIKE BARKING DOGS?

You may say, of course, "yes". And we do love dogs, too. But when you are alone in the middle of nowhere, far away from the nearest isolated town, and a dog (or a few) run to you barking, as a fool you change your mind and start hating dogs all of a sudden.

It was a few years ago, in a small town in Jaen, in the south of Spain. We were surveying in an olive grove in a torrid August day among old twisted branch olive trees.

We were trying to figure out if some stones we had just found were just a natural arrangement, or if they could be some kind of building foundations.



All happened in a second: suddenly we started to hear a resounding noise close to us, and saw an undefined number of wild dogs barking and growling (I now know that they were a couple of mastiffs). We were paralyzed, far away from our car, armed only with our cameras and surveying rods, trying to find a quick solution to this dilemma: which part of my body is less necessary?

I ordered my colleague to climb the nearest olive tree and find the GPS location in order to call the authorities who surely would find our dead bodies eaten by wild dogs. In that moment I decided that my left arm was the perfect part to get sacrificed for the archeology cause.

We still didn't see them, but we could listen perfectly even their breathing and the indescribable sound of their teeth gnashing one with another! I brandished my surveying rod ready to deal my strongest archaeological blow when we finally saw them.

I was in a shake mode. All things around me just disappeared and it was a weird silence surrounding us. Time went by so slowly trying to figured out why they didn't attack me yet when I barely opened one eye trying to see the dammed dog and all I could see was two enormous dogs behind a metallic fence we didn't realize was there before.

Of course after that experience we didnt keep on working that day. We'd rather go have some beer to heal our badly damaged archeological faith.

BEING ATTACKED BY WILD PIGS

Little more I have to add, isn't it? This is something incredible, but...this has happened to me twice in recent years.

The first time, we were digging in the mountains of the Almería's desert (SE of Spain), each archaeologist on one side of a gorge. We were walking, careless and happy, when I began to hear a strange noise in front of me. Suddenly a herd of wild pigs appeared in front of me running as quickly as a wild pig can do (believe me when I tell you that this is more fast than you're surely thinking right now) heading directly toward my colleague.



As usual, we were armed only with our camera and our so handy surveying rod. I shouted her to be careful and she started to scream like a fool trying to scare the animals. In the meantime, completely paralyzed, I turned my head, and just a few meters away from me, I could see the biggest wild pig I had never seen in my life (well, until then I'd never seen a wild pig before), running fast and furiously at me. I started screaming, and hit the surveying rod on to the ground (yes, I broke it).

Fortunately nothing happened because the pigs ran away, but when all finally ended, we were trembling. In that moment we started running away trying to reach the car as soon as possible wishing to arrive at a civilized place as soon as possible.

The second time I encountered wild pigs was in the Basque Country, digging with our colleagues of Suhar Arkeologia. Suddenly I started to hear a strange sound and when I turned my head...(no, not again, oh my god!) I saw a herd of wild pigs running around us. My colleagues had joked since that time about my desperate expression "*Companions, Take Care!*" (I can't confirm that version because honestly I do not remember it).

As you can see, surveying in remote places can be really dangerous.

And to end the article we want to show you a photo that doesn't need further explanation. What do you think we should expect to find here?



This article is dedicated to all of you, archaeologists who love this poorly understood profession but keep on fighting to make archaeology public. **Happy #DayofArchaeology!**



This is me enjoying my job