

## A Description of Diguet's Site 12, Baja California Sur, Mexico

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In 1895, Leon Diguet published "Notes of the Pictographs of Baja California," in the Paris journal *L'Anthropologie*. In this work, he presented a list of 30 rock art sites between the 23rd and 29th parallels. Many of Diguet's sites are well known, having been described by Campbell Grant (1974), Harry Crosby (1975), Enrique Hambleton (1979), and others.

Diguet described his Site 12 as "Petroglyphs in the Arroyo de las Piedras Pintas, near Mulegé." The only additional information he gave concerning this site was, "The rock sites in the areas designated as Pinta, Pintada, and Piedras Pintas are numerous."

Campbell Grant (1974) lists 102 Baja California rock art sites. Grant's site 66 is apparently Diguet's site 12, although he does not specify this correlation. Grant indicates this site on his 1974 sketch map, showing only its approximate location west of the Mulegé region. In the text, he makes no mention at all of the site. The closest he comes is the statement, "There are many lesser sites, some painted and others pecked, between Mulegé and Loreto, that can be classified as Cochimí Representational" (Grant, 1974:116).

Crosby (1975:124-128) writes about his trek through the Arroyo Potrero (west of Mulegé) and the rock art he saw in this region, but he does not describe (nor even mention) Diguet's petroglyph site in "Arroyo de Piedras Pintas."

Published maps in Crosby (1975) and Hambleton (1979) do not indicate this site.

It appears that the zoomorphs at Diguet's Site 12 have never been described or illustrated. Although Crosby (1980) illustrates an anthropomorph from the Sierra Guadalupe region, I could not locate it at this site. Accompanied by Dr. Michael Ghiselin and Mr. Tom Smith, I visited this site in March, 1989, while on a marine biology research expedition to Mulegé.

This site (Figure 1) is located in the western Sierra Guadalupe, in the vicinity of 26° 45' N; 112° 05' W, approximately 15 km SSW of Mulegé (although the route to the site takes one north of Mulegé). The carvings are on a ridge between 2 arroyos, at the junction of El Potrero and Cañada Piedra Pinta. This drainage system eventually feeds into the Mulegé River. The petroglyphs are located on the vertical west-facing, water-eroded cliff (Figures 1-3) and on basalt boulders strewn over the narrow ridge above the cliff (Figures 4-8).

The motifs at the site are primarily marine. Even though the ridge is inland, most of the carvings depict marine organisms: fish (Figures 3, 6, and 7), turtles (Figure 1), sea lions (Figure 2?), dolphins (Figure 8), and whales (Figure 5). There are a few geometrics (Figure 4) and several small anthropomorphs.

Diguet's petroglyph Site 12 contains motifs similar to those found in nearby sites to

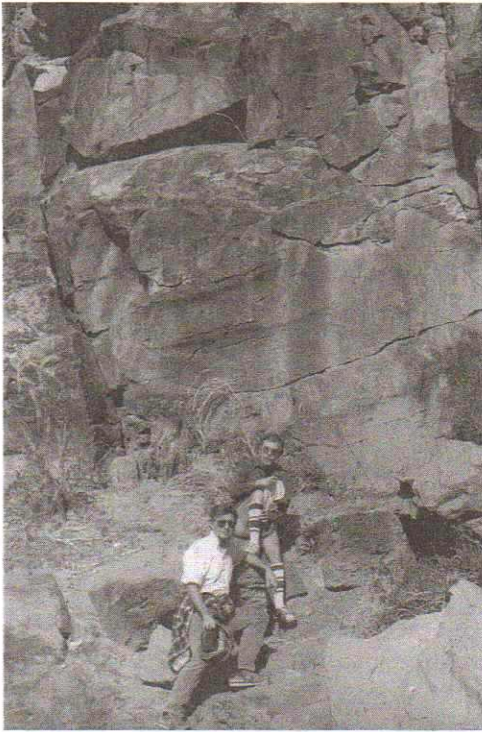


Figure 1. Vertical cliff face at Diguete Site 12; Tom Smith (left) and Michael Ghiselin provide scale. Note fish (upper center) and turtle (right center). North is to viewer's left.



Figure 2. Panel showing possible sea lion carving on the cliff face.

the north at Cueva Huellitas (Ritter, Rector, and Payen 1979), to the east along the beach shoreline of Bahía Concepción, at Bahía Coyote (Brewer 1978, Rector 1981), and in arroyos on the western side of Concepción Peninsula (Ritter, Payen, and Rector 1989). Sites in this region exhibit a large number of marine fish and turtles, and miscellaneous geo-



Figure 3. Lower region of cliff face (lower portion eroded smooth by stream action). Marine animal in upper center of picture (head up, tail down).

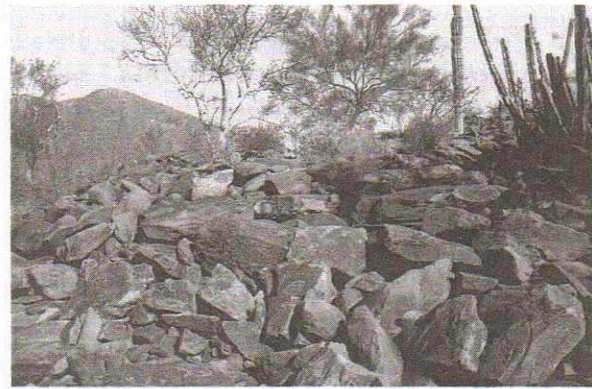


Figure 4. Basalt boulders on ridge above cliff face; geometric carvings on foreground rocks.

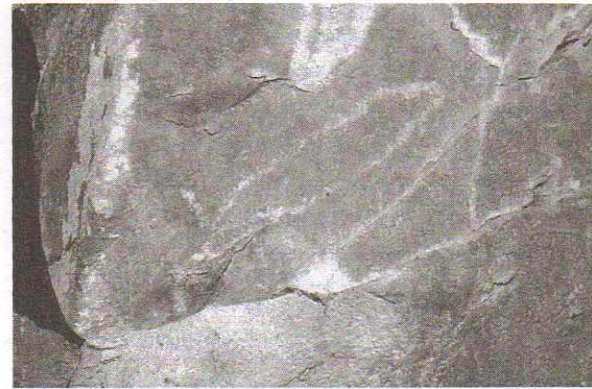


Figure 5. Carving on boulder on ridge top; this drawing may represent a fin whale.

metric designs (see the references cited in this paragraph). Some of these nature carvings are so precise that the species of fish and turtle they represent have been identi-



Figure 6. Marine fish carving on boulder on ridge top.



Figure 7. Marine animal carved on boulder on ridge top (head down, tail up).

fied (Rector and Ritter 1978). Of note at Diguët's Site 12 is the observation that some of the carvings may well depict marine mammals. Figure 5 is probably a representation of one of the large baleen whales (most likely the finback whale, *Balaenoptera physalus*) that frequent the Gulf of California. Figure 8 shows a grinding slick on the lower rock; carved on the upper rock is a bottlenose dolphin, *Tursiops truncatus*. Some of the designs considered to represent fish at the other nearby sites should be re-examined as pos-



Figure 8. Petroglyph on ridge top; bottlenose dolphin above, grinding slick on lower rock.

sible marine mammals.

This site differs from the sites along Bahía Concepción in that it is inland and does not have a view of marine waters. It looks out on the Arroyo Potrero and the distant Sierra San Baltazar.

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