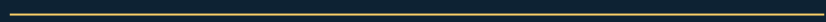




Caving Organizations



A.S.S. 2/15/2024
Jakob Denton





Announcements

- Signups at end of meeting:
 - TAG!!!
 - Peter Sprouse campout
 - Tree planting
 - Star party table
 - BCI online training
 - February 19th- Presidents day
 - Croll, Micro-rack, Hand Ascender, Cowstails





N.S.S.

National Speleological Society

Founded in 1941

Over 8,000 members!

<https://caves.org/>

N.S.S.

Over 250 chapters (Grottos)
Aggie Grotto is a chapter!
Up to 45% discount with expert voice
Ability to buy sick merch (**bat sticker**)
Hosts yearly N.S.S Convention
Membership gets you access to the N.S.S.
newsletter (and much more)



Annual Convention

- Held every year by rotating grottos
- Presentations, networking, workshops, competitions, vendors, partys, caving, garagesale, Cave Sim, and tomfoolery
- Members at the 2022 & 2023 NSS Convention
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/13wKYwjjeHOI3szy2npg5dQUVZINPM9vZ/view>



National Cave Rescue Committee

NCRC is a branch of the NSS

- A branch of the NSS that focuses on the ins and outs of cave rescue including but not limited to standardizing curriculum, training trainers, continually evaluating operating standards and procedures
- Trainings held all over the United States
- All volunteer basis!
- <https://ncrc.info/Courses>


Vertical Training Commission

The VTC is a branch of the NSS

- Puts out safety standards on SRT gear
- Reviews caving accidents and improves upon current standards
 - Working on putting out an official book with standard techniques and practices
- Holds training seminars around the US
- Sponsors a vertical workshop at NSS Convention every year
- <https://caves.org/vtc/>

NSS Education & Outreach

- <https://caves.org/virtualcave/>
- <https://caves.org/education/request-a-speleo-quest/>



Bats: Nocturnal Friends
Animals that make their homes in caves, but return to the surface to feed—including bats, raccoons, swallows, bears, moths, packrats, snakes, and frogs—are bioluminescent. Among these, bats play an important role in the balance of nature. Most North American bats eat insects, and a single small bat can eat 1,000 mosquito-sized insects an hour. Other bats feed on fruit and nectar, pollinating flowers and dispersing seeds. Underground, bat droppings often are the foundation of a cave's food web.

Unfortunately, more than half of American bat species are in severe decline or endangered. This is due to pesticides and land development steadily reducing their food supply, and to a fungal disease called white-nose syndrome (WNS) which has killed millions of bats since 2006. Moreover, cave habitats are being destroyed and cave entrances closed, and people are dropping bat nuisance and hibernation colonies. Worst of all, people who fear or misunderstand the value of bats are deliberately killing them.

You Can Help Protect the Fragile Underground

- Stay out of caves where bats hibernate in the winter.
- Do not disturb or touch bats you find in caves, at any time else.
- Learn about WNS and follow prescribed protocols. Visit caves.org.
- Keep antibiotics free of garbage, sewage, oil, and other contaminants from cave entrances. Keep streams in hardrock clean.
- Do not damage formations, and do not deface or write on the cave walls. Oppose the sale of cave formations.
- Report vandalism and unauthorized entry to proper authorities. The NSS offers a reward for information leading to the successful prosecution of cave vandals.
- Respect Cave Dwelling Animals, and leave their habitats undamaged.
- Leave nothing but footprints in the cave, and stay on established paths.
- Play an important role in conservation and education by donating to the NSS Save the Caves Fund or a cave conservancy in your area.

Cave Safety
Venture safely underground by visiting a "show" cave developed specifically or by the National Speleological Society. Only enter undeveloped, "wild" caves with experienced cavers, and with the proper training and equipment. Join a chapter ("grotto") of the NSS to learn to cave responsibly.

To learn more and join, visit www.caves.org.

Find Out More

Suggested Reading

Living with Caves
by George Vehl, Nancy D'Onofrio, Michael Crawford, et al.
New York: Cowi-gate, 2010

A Guide to the Fragile Cave
available here or at www.nss-speleo.org

Visit www.NSS-Speleo.org for the largest collection of how-to cave sites.

On the Internet


The National Speleological Society
www.nss.org

The National Caves Association
www.caves.org

The Conservation International
www.caves.org

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE Cave and Wet Program
www.nps.gov/npd/npdpublications/caveandwet.htm

Discovering Caves
Fragile Underground




NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The National Speleological Society (NSS) is the largest organization in the world dedicated to exploring, studying, and protecting caves. The NSS, the Cave Point, and other programs provide essential funding for cave conservation and education, field research, equipment training, and educational programs. For more information visit the NSS web site or contact the NSS office.

National Speleological Society
601 Franklin Pike
Huntsville, Alabama 35890
Tel: 256-962-3300
800-899-9999 | www.nss.org

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NSS Cave and Wet Committee, May 2010

www.caves.org



The Cave Preservation Network (CPN)

HOW TO HELP

Public support for our mission is crucial for the long term preservation and conservation of caves. Contributions can be made through the show cave round-up campaign or directly by mailing: learnmore@caves.org

THE CAVES

Partner Show cave owners have made the vision possible by assisting in public outreach and fundraising. We are also looking for additional cave owners to join our initiative. If you have a "wild" cave and want assistance or would like to participate in CPN, we have programs for you.

Who We Are

The Cave Preservation Network is a collaboration between many fantastic organizations who care about caves. Cave explorers, cave owners, and the public all have a vested interest in protecting these fragile places. To do this, we are working together to educate the public about the importance of caves and karst lands, increase funding for cave related research, and fund the creation of new cave preserves. These efforts will not only protect caves but also protect the ability of people to visit them for future generations.

Our Mission:
To Protect Caves, and learn more about them.

- Add new caves to The National Preserve System
- Educate the public
- Fund targeted cave research
- Promote low-impact caving

MORE INFORMATION

Additional information on The Cave Preservation Network, educational materials, and public initiatives can be found at: learnmore.caves.org

NSS News

- <https://caves.org/nssnews/>
- Put out roughly every month by volunteers
- Mails hard copies or digitally available for members through caves.org





S.C.C.i

Southeastern Cave Conservancy

- Founded in 1991
- Largest land conservancy dedicated solely to cave and karst landscape conservation in the entire world
- Manages 170+ caves in 7 U.S. states
- Pioneered the electronic permit system
- <https://saveyourcaves.org/>

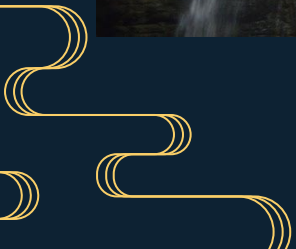


Manages Awesome Caves Such as:

Steven's Gap (Alabama)



Valhalla (Alabama)



More scicaves

Limrock Blowing Cave



South Pittsburg Pit Preserve





SCCi resources:

<https://saveyourcaves.org/learn/geology.html>



N.C.K.R.I.

National Cave & Karst Research Institute

“created by the US Congress in 1998 in partnership with the National Park Service, State of New Mexico, and the City of Carlsbad to be a nexus of research, stewardship, information and outreach for caves and karst while fostering interdisciplinary collaborations.” (*nckri.org*)

Headquarters located in Carlsbad NM
Publishes and produces cave-related
research/literature
Offer grants to those pursuing cave
research projects
<https://nckri.org/>



NCKRI Education & Outreach

- Devra Hayer
 - Education Program Director
 - <https://nckri.org/karst/about-karst/>
- <https://nckri.org/events/sinkholecleanup/>





T.C.M.A.

Texas Cave Management Association
Founded in 1986

Oldest Cave Conservancy in Texas

If you went to Whirlpool this semester you are a member (wow)
Manages Aggie Grotto favs such as Whirlpool and Deep & Punkin
Jenna is youngest member of Board of Directors
<https://www.tcmacaves.org/>



T.C.M.A. Caves

Whirlpool Cave (Austin)



Punkin Cave (Carta Valley)

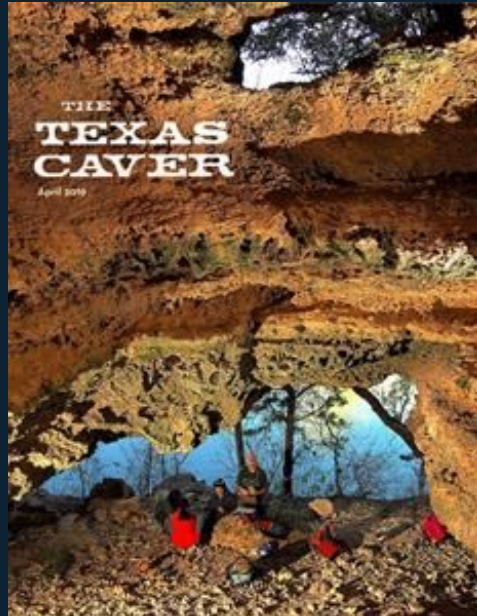




Texas Caver Magazine



- Included with TCMA membership
- This magazine is published annually and contains articles on caves, caving, equipment, and techniques, as well as trip reports, TSA business, and other items of interest to cavers.



T.S.A.

Texas Speleological Association

Founded in 1956

Non-profit

Internal organization of the N.S.S.

Membership gets you a subscription to *The Texas Caver* magazine

Hosts Texas Caver's Reunion & TSA Spring convention

Josie is the *Treasurer ooh aaaah*

<https://www.cavetexas.org/>



Texas Cavers Reunion



Speleolympics!



Awards!



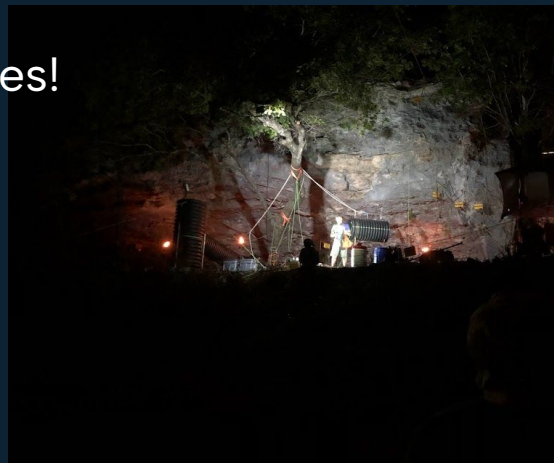
Silliness!



Mud wrestling!



Raffles!



TSS Spring Convention



- Various trainings offered
 - Survey
 - Vertical safety
- Speakers!
 - Presentations on ongoing cave projects
 - These presentations were held in a cave last year *oooh aaah*
- Networking opportunities!

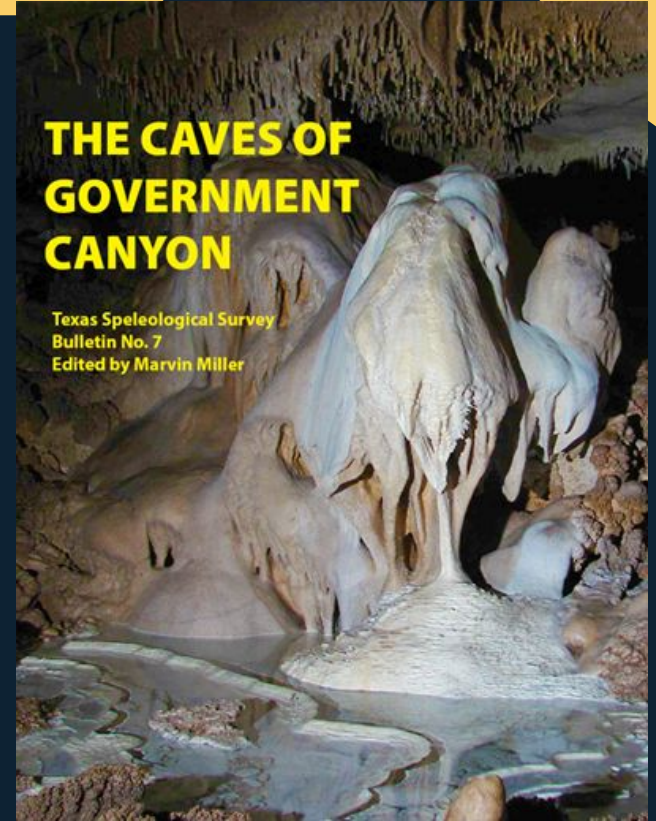




Texas Speleological Survey (TSS)



- Amazing resource for Texas caving
- Publications
- MAPS
- An NSS affiliated Texas caving library





N.P.S.

National Parks Service

Manages the parks (caving and other) we all know and love

Carlsbad Caverns, Mammoth Cave

Many job opportunities (Jenna interned here)



N.P.S. Cave Parks

Carlsbad Caverns (she is perfect)



Mammoth Cave (we love her too just a little less)



Organizations that work alongside the NPS

- Environment for the Americas
- Scientists in Parks
- Cave Research Foundation
- Bat Conservation International
- iSwoop
- eBird
- https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/osip_cave.htm
- <https://www.scientistsinparks.org/>
- Lechuguilla Cave Project





B.L.M.

Bureau of Land Management (federal)
Not a cave-specific organization, but manages caves on
B.L.M. lands

Manages nearly 800 caves mostly in karst (limestone)
regions

Application for permits very similar to TCMA

<https://www.blm.gov/programs/recreation/recreation-programs/caves-and-karst>





B.C.I.

Bat Conservation International

Founded in 1982

Works to protect and research bats across the world

Many job opportunities (Dr. Amanda Adams)

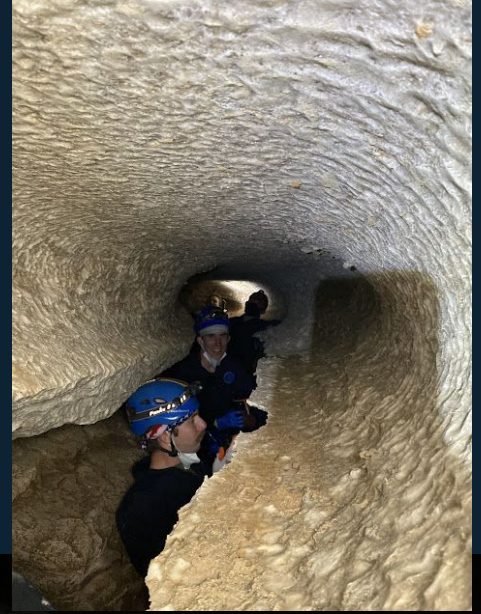
We worked with them over spring break last year!

Headquarters in Austin

<https://www.batcon.org/>



Funny looking cows!



Cave Research Foundation

- Headquartered in Hamilton Valley, Cave City, Kentucky
- <https://www.cave-research.org/>
- Facilitates relationship between cavers and the park service
- Has helped get cavers volunteer opportunities
- Has gained survey, exploration, and photography opportunities throughout the U.S.
 - Mammoth Cave (primary)
 - Carlsbad Caverns NP
 - Lechuguilla



Lechuguilla Cave Project

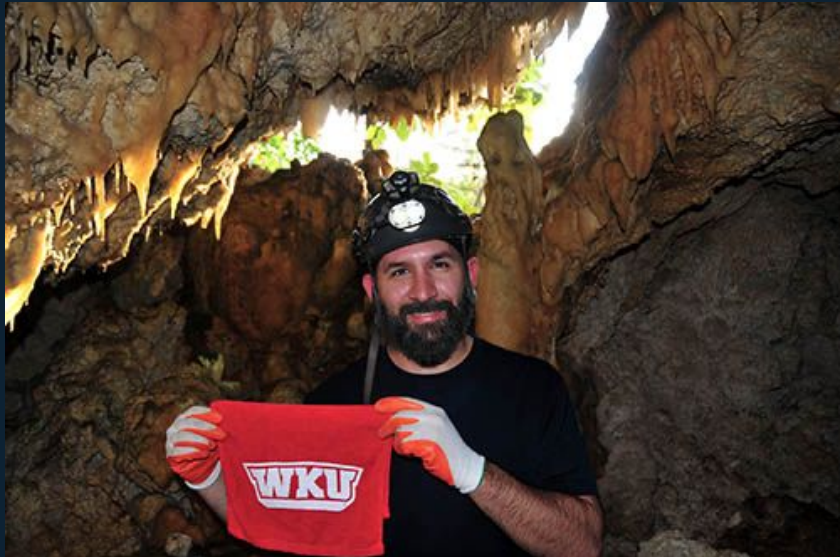
- Works with Carlsbad Caverns National Park to continue exploring and surveying the 9th deepest cave in the world, Lechuguilla Cave
- Is an avenue to help continue to keep cavers in Lechuguilla, where we belong
 - *Why do we belong?* When people cave in a way that aligns with the park's mission we can be a great instrumentation for knowledge, data, and help interpret our nation's wonderful resources.
- <https://vimeo.com/334703425>



"Cave Schools"

Western Kentucky University

- Bowling Green, Kentucky
- Earth, Environmental, & Atmospheric Sciences
 - Dr. Pat Kambesis, Dr. Leslie North, Dr. Jason Polk, Dr. Chris Groves
- Karst Field Studies
 - <https://www.karstfieldstudies.com/>
- <https://www.wku.edu/geology/>



New Mexico Tech

- NMT Earth and Environmental Science
- <https://www.nmt.edu/academics/ees/caves.php>
- <https://www.nmt.edu/research/Presentation%20slides.pdf>
- Partnered with NCKRI
- Carlsbad, New Mexico



University of Kentucky

- Louisville, Kentucky
- <https://www.uky.edu/academics/masters-doctoral/geological-sciences-graduate>





Why are these orgs important
for caves and cavers?





Acquisition & Protection

Some of these organizations focus on acquiring caves through membership, donations, and grants to ensure their protection. These same organizations work to ensure proper management.





Community & Networking

These organizations and their events help cavers
find friends and job opportunities!

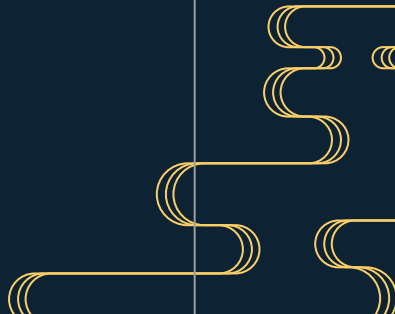




Local Volunteer, outreach,
and bat survey opportunities



Tree Planting	Invasive Plant Pull	Education and Outreach	Bat Walk	BCI Training
February 20th 3-6pm	March 9th 9am-noon	March 1st 7pm-10pm	April 5th 6pm -9pm	Bat Ambassador Training, Online, On your own time. roughly 4-10 hours
February 22nd 3-6pm	March 23rd 9am-noon	March 23rd 9am-noon	April 19th 6pm-9pm	
	April 13th 9am-noon	April 5th 6pm -9pm		(Really cool summer opportunities)
		April 19th 6pm-9pm		
		April 20th (Bioblitz) 9am		
		May 11th 9am-noon		





Tree Planting



Star Party Table



BCI Online
Training



Peter Sprouse Camp Out

2.23.24-2.25.24





TAG info again (condensed)

Sign-up per cave

Within 48 hours receive confirmation for caves

Must be vertically checked off by the last
pre-TAG meeting

Must complete treadmill test by the day before
we leave

Camping; campground will have showers and
potable water



Horizontal

Horizontal/Vertical

Advanced Vertical

Spring Break ASS Style

TAG stands for Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia the heart of the Eastern caving community. TAG is a symbolic region for the American style of caving and is home to many *classic* pits.

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Drive	Cedar Ridge Crystal	Fox Mountain-Rusty's & Cemetery Pit	Hang em high	Steven's Gap	Tumbling Rock	Drive
Drive	Neversink	Blue Springs	Mayapple & Meander	Balcony Sink	Valhalla	Drive

TAG signup

