



C.O.G.nizance

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The March meeting will be Friday, MARCH 11, 2016 at 8:00 p.m. The meeting will be at the home of Anne Ault.

Happy St. Patrick's Day



Photos by Carole Town 2016 in Jester Cave



ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Northwest trips are scheduled the third Saturday of every month. Contact Sue or John Bozeman for details.

*The March meeting will be Friday, March 11, 2016 at The home of Anne Ault.

National White-Nose Syndrome Decontamination Protocol - Version 06.25.2012

The fungus *Geomyces destructans* (*G.d.*) is the cause of white-nose syndrome (WNS), a disease that has devastated populations of hibernating bats in eastern North America. Since its discovery in New York in 2007, WNS has spread rapidly through northeastern, mid-Atlantic, and Midwest states and eastern Canada. It continues to threaten bat populations across the continent. For the protection of bats and their habitats, comply with all current cave and mine closures, advisories, and regulations on the federal, state, tribal, and private lands you plan to visit. In the absence of cave and mine closure policy, or when planned activities involve close/direct contact with bats, their environments, and/or associated materials, the following decontamination procedures should be implemented to **reduce the risk of transmission** of the fungus to other bats and/or habitats. For the purposes of clarification, the use of the word "decontamination," or any similar root, in this document entails both the 1) cleaning and 2) treatment to disinfect exposed materials.

Under no circumstances should clothing, footwear, or equipment that was used in a confirmed or suspect WNS-affected state or region be used in a WNS-unaffected state or region. Some state/federal regulatory or land management agencies have supplemental documents¹ that provide additional requirements or exemptions on lands under their jurisdiction.

I. TREATMENTS TO REDUCE RISK OF TRANSFERRING GEOMYCES DESTRUCTANS²:

Applications/Products: The most universally available option for treatment of submersible gear is:

Submersion in Hot Water: Effective at sustained temperatures 50°C (122°F) for 20 minutes

Secondary or non-submersible treatment options (for a minimum of 10 min.) include:

PRODUCTS: Clorox® (6% HOCl) Bleach : Lysol® IC Quaternary Disinfectant Cleaner; Professional Lysol® Antibacterial All-purpose Cleaner

MINUTES

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO

Minutes of the meeting of February 12, 2016

Host: the home of John Van Dyke

Attendees: Dale Amlee, Anne Ault, John and Sue Bozeman, Matt Brasher, John Talbot, Jon and Kelley Woltz, Carol and Dale Town, S. Belev

Guests: Mary Hicks, Ryan and Sandi Williams

The Honorable Jon Woltz began the meeting at 8:17

Sue introduced Ryan and Sandi Williams from Tulsa. Ryan's interest is in bats; he will soon conduct an acoustic survey of bats around eastern Oklahoma caves in Tulsa County.

OLD BUSINESS

We continued our discussion whether COG should buy an emergency beacon. The discussion became heated between proponents for its purchase and members who argued against that purchase. At the end of the discussion we voted to buy it by a recorded voice vote of Yays – 8 and Nays – 2. Jon Woltz will buy it; John Bozeman will register it.

NEW BUSINESS

1. We had a discussion about the intel that Duane Del Vecchio sent us concerning the possibility of western Oklahoma caves becoming a conduit for White Nose Syndrome to move from eastern states to western states and infect their cave-dwelling bats. The discussion became heated when some members said that

we should not help Bat Conservation International (BCI) contact landowners because BCI would get the locations of caves on their lands, and that is something that COG should not enable. Other members argued that helping BCI contact landowners could be in the interest of saving the bats that use the landowners' caves. After a long contentious debate we resolved to invite representatives of BCI to attend one of our meetings and give us a presentation about their concerns and proposals.

2. We discussed the bat counts of the immediately following Saturday for southwestern caves, and the following Saturday for northwestern caves. We also agreed by consensus that we need to move both bat counts to January since the average monthly temperature of February has increased over the last few years due to global warming.

TREASURER'S REPORT

John Talbot gave his report.



We concluded the meeting at 9:27



TREASURER'S REPORTS

FEBRUARY, 2016 TREASURERS'S REPORT



INCOME

Dues	\$	71.00
Dividends		00.02
News letter Sales		18.00

TOTAL \$ 89.02

CASH ON HAND	\$ 89.02
CHECKING	\$ 539.74
SAVINGS	\$ 2,137.78

TOTAL \$ 2,850.09

EXPENSES

TOTAL FUNDS AS OF 3/1/2015

PREPARED BY TREASURER JOHN TALBOT

TRIP REPORT

Trip Report: Greene's Cathedral:
Date: February 20, 2016
Team: Jon Woltz, Dale Amlee, Steve Beleu
Submitted by Steve Beleu



Our data must be combined with that of the other team consisting of S. Bozeman and M. Hicks for a total cave count

This cave trip saw the triumphant return to caving for S. Bozeman and S. Beleu after their respective months of physical therapy and rehab. Thusly do we return to our many glorious years of caving. 5,465 myotis velifer, 5 pips:

Trip Report: Jester
Date: February 20, 2016
Team: Dale and CaroleTown, John and JT Van Dyke
Written by Carole Town



The COG group of Dale and Carole Town along with John and JT VanDyke met on a chilly and windy Saturday morning with trepidation regarding the upcoming bat count. Our fearless leader, Duane Del Vecchio, would not be leading the expedition for the first time in 20 years. When we reached the pool prior to Jester Resurgence we were amazed at the amount of water we encountered, especially considering that it was bone dry the year before. A good barometer on the SW Oklahoma drought. The first Cave Myotis were found within sight of the entrance. Mats were found with the packing rate of 306 per square foot! The largest mat measured 14x19 with an estimated 565 bats, with a total of 3210. We also observed 2 Tri-colors (Pips) in a group and 18 singles. No one ever remembered seeing tri-colors huddling before. We did encounter more water in the cave. After exiting the cave and checking for any phone messages it was discovered that we had been underground when Fairfield had experienced a 5.1 magnitude quake that had been felt even further south than where we were! Talk about an eerie feeling. Luckily we hadn't felt it or saw any falling rocks!!

After we found our way back to the gate on the

road we met a couple who were relatives of the former owner. We explained what we were doing and why. They went to the entrance of Train with us but decided against going in further.

Train had mud on the cave floor and evidence of previous flooding. Carole, John, and JT went in and observed 12 Myotis, 2 Long Ears and 3 Tri-colors (2 of which were in a group again)

We then proceeded to the final cave on our trip. Carole and JT made their way into Glade. There was evidence of recent breakdown. There were only a couple of bats seen in this section, along with more mud.

They then caught up with Dale and John to explore Homestead. We not only found the bats we were looking for, but also boot sucking mud and LOTS of water....COLD water! The guys were nearly hip deep in some of the areas (Carole found shallower routes....girls are smarter). There was also more signs of recent breakdown further into the cave. The packing rate in Homestead was even greater. 340 bats per square foot with the largest mat measuring 16x36 with an estimated 1359 Myotis, and a total of 9281 and 19 Tri-colors and 3 Long Ear bats. Surprisingly, the population in the nursery was much less than experienced in the past. Performing swab sampling was challenging due to all the water and mud, but we persevered and got our 25 specimens. Carole held the bats, JT swabbed, John was in charge of the vials and swab sticks and Dale recorded the information. By the time we were done everyone was chilled to the bone and shivering. Luckily the temperature had risen by the time we emerged.

Of course we had our celebratory end of count calzone at Luigi's in Blair!

Trip Report: Bat Count 2016 -- Greene's Cathedral ... and then a bit of survey and exploration in Cheryl'sbad.

Date: February 20, 2016

Personnel: Dale Amlee, Steve Beleu, Sue Bozeman, Mary Hicks and Jon Woltz

Written by Sue Bozeman

The plan was to do the bat count in Greene's as two sets of counters. One group would go to the back of Greene's and count toward the middle, meeting the other group coming in from the west entrance. Since we had only 5 people, it had to be a group of three and a group of two.

The division ended up being men trooping to the rear and women starting from the front. Mary had done a bat count several years ago, so it didn't take long to get up to speed. However, counting and being scribe ... and not falling between the breakdown boulders took some concentration! We managed. There were a lot of bats in mats right under the first lip of the cave at the back of the entrance room. We also had to do some sightseeing as Mary had not been in Greene's before and there are some interesting formations worthy of viewing.

The mats were toward the center of the cave passage and the clusters were many and small. In comparison to the 13-15 square foot mats of Jester, these are smaller -- more in the 3 to 5 square foot range. There were also several bat cascades -- bats awakened and upset, probably by us trooping through, and grabbing onto each other instead of the rock. These batfalls were 30 to 50 bats in number. Most were just stunned and soon managed to work themselves to a position where they could take off and rejoin a cluster.

Temperatures were in the 40's and 50's. And the numbers were decent, but there were an awful lot of flying bats by the time the two groups met in the center of the cave. The count didn't take even two hours!

After finishing up with the count, we regrouped at the guest house and then headed for Cheryl'sbad to finish up one arm and hopefully find a secondary exit. Mary, Jon and Dale went inside to finish up the survey and see if they could find an exit. Steve and I went in the direction the arm was heading -- on the outside -- and brought implements with us to remove dirt and rock of anything that looked promising.

Steve and I walked past three entrances -- only

one looked truly negotiable. One that might have been enterable was already occupied. It was in the 70s, sunny and boded well for snakes. As I headed into one mud funnel, I was greeted with a very unhappy rattle. Never saw the complete snake, just the substantial rattle raised above the grasses like a castanet. Best estimate was about a 7 year old diamondback, 3 foot long and 1.5 inches thick. Nice spring venom would really make for a nasty bite -- the pit remains unplumbed!

The furthest pit would require that Steve use his still-healing arm to hoist himself up and perhaps let himself down -- which we chose not to do. Instead, we went to the middle entrance, cautiously winding down into the sink, tossing pebbles and whacking the weeds, looking for extenuating circumstances that made noise! Nothing. So we emptied the little entrance of debris and discovered that if this was the internal groups exit, we didn't need to dig anything -- air was out-blowing and the cavers would be able to exit without difficulty. We stayed there, sometimes thinking we heard internal conversations or thumping noises, but never did we make contact nor see anyone come out.

Internally, from their later report, the threesome finished up the arm in a couple of survey shots and could go no further as that arm pinched out and got too low. They went back to the big Stadium room and squirreled around there for several hours, seeing 37 dead velifer and many mats on the under sides of the breakdown. A large puddle of water disguises any further passageway. In a connection to the other cave in the area, Idiot, then it remains unfound. They finished the exploration and exited the cave about 6 p.m.

This was the first trip that Steve had been on in nearly a year, having hurt his shoulder -- and rehabbing it over the interim. And the first cave trip for me since my November heart attack exiting Cheryl'sbad! All is well.

Bat Count 2016 totals submitted by Sue Bozeman

Greene's Cathedral	21,087	Myotis velifers
	5	Pipistrelles
Jester	12,116	Myotis velifers
	42	Pipistrelles
	5	Long-eared Corynorhinus

POTPOURRI

**From "Bat Caves" to "Alabaster Caverns" :
a History of the Use and Conservation
of Alabaster Caverns State Park**

Written by Bryant, Ammie Christine

<https://shareok.org/handle/11244/11071>

The history of the human use and exploration of Alabaster Caverns reflects the emergence of American environmentalism during the twentieth century. The progression of the management of Alabaster Caverns from exploitation and resource extraction to conservation, preservation, and education also mirrors the public's evol-

ing beliefs, attitudes, and actions regarding environmentalism. The community's exploitation and extraction of natural resources in the caverns, and their attitudes of appreciation of the park, have often overlapped and sometimes worked against one another. Alabaster Cavern's story of human exploration, exploitation, and conservation emerged throughout the twentieth century and continued into the twenty-first along with the American environmentalism movement.

(continued on page 5)

Central Oklahoma Grotto is a non-profit organization and a chapter of the NSS (National Speleological Society), Cave Avenue, Huntsville, AL., 35810. Dedicated to cave conservation and safety, C.O.G. published general information in a monthly newsletter (\$6.00/year) and detailed cave surveys and related Speleological items in a yearly publication, The Oklahoma Underground (\$3-\$8/issue) Membership is by sponsor and is \$12 per year for adults, \$6 for spouses and students, and \$3 if under 18. Central Oklahoma Grotto meets once a month on the second Friday of each month. For information, write Lil Town, 25692 Mosier Circle, Conifer, CO 80433: All submissions to the newsletter should be sent to the editor: Lil Town, 25692 Mosier Circle, Conifer, CO 80433: Telephone: (580)471-1238: E-mail: cavemoose@gmail.com. The deadline for submissions for any particular month's issue is the 20th day of the previous month. If you wish material returned. Please include a SASE with submission. All materials in this newsletter is available for reproduction, provided proper credit is given with the article when you print it. Trade publications are welcomed. Cave softly and safely! Website: <http://www.okcavers.com>

The March meeting will be
At Anne Ault's house,
Friday, March 11, 2016.



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