CENTRAL
OKLAHOMA
GROTTO
OF THE NATIONAL
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,INC

C.O.G.nizance

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The Next Meeting will be on Friday March 13, 2020 7:30 p.m. at the home of John and Sue Bozeman.

Train Tunnel: A tricolor (pip)
Photo by Duane Del Vecchio

Jester: Big Ear with ears extended
Photo by Duane Del Vecchio

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

*The Next meeting will be Friday, March 13, 2020 at home of John and Sue Bozeman..

WHITE-NOSE SYNDROME DECONTAMINATION PROTOCOL, September 2018

This is the latest formal revision of the national decontamination protocol to prevent spread of the fungus that causes white-nose syndrome. This document is the product of a collaborative effort with multiple federal and state agencies and several non-governmental organizations. Go to this website to view the detailed suggestions listed to help stop the spreading of WNS.
https://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/static-page/decontamination-information

MEETING PLACES FOR 2020

March - Bozies	July/August no meetings	Dec - Bozeman – Christmas Party
April - Dale Amlee	Sept - Jon Woltz	
May - John Van Dyke	Nov - John Van Dyke	
June - The Skillful Ogre	October - Bozeman	

TREASURER'S REPORT

FEBRUARY 2020 TREASURERS'S REPORT

INCOME			EXPENSES
Publication sales	$	43.00	
Postage	$	3.86	
TOTAL	$	46.86	
CASH ON HAND	$	106.05	
CHECKING	$	628.61	
SAVINGS	$	1,416.13	
TOTAL	**$**	**2,150.79**	

PREPARED BY TREASURER JOHN TALBOT NSS#3054RE
2/27/2020

MINUTES

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO MEETING
Date of meeting: February14, 2020

.Host:John Van Dyke
Attendees: John Van Dyke, Jason Talbot, John Talbot, Dale Amlee, John and Sue Bozeman, Jon and Kelley Woltz, S. Beleu

Time we started talking: 8:07; High Potentate Dale Amlee presiding

Old Business -

1. We discussed our summer fun trip to a former salt mine in Kansas; we will make this a 2-day trip
2. We talked about the bat count and how we need to make one last trip to north Jester [this took place the following day]
3. Dale told us about inquires from possible new members
4. We discussed our new Facebook site; and that we need to reimburse our webmaistre Duane $546 that he spent on our old websites this past year. Sue moved that we pay up, I seconded the motion, we voted yes; John Talbot will send the check. We also voted to officially end the non-Facebook Okcavers.com and Okcavers.org websites. But Jon told us that we could nonetheless retain their two *names* for a low yearly fee so that when someone clicks on them during an Internet search they will open our Facebook site. *We took no action about this idea but will at our next meeting.*
5. Andrew Van Dyke gave a trip report for the bat count done in south Jester Cave. Well done, sir!
6. Retired OU Geological Survey geologist Ken Johnson called John Bozeman asking for a contribution from he and Sue and/or other COG members for a publication he's working on about karst in our area.
7. Sue and Jon brought a preliminary map of Prospect Cave. We cast our eyes upon it. Sue drew the draft; Jon drew the improved copy.
8. Treasurer Emeritus John Talbot delivered his reports for December, End-of--year-2020, and January.
9. Sue discussed various possibilities in which we might use our Facebook site to sell COG publications.

We ended the meeting at 9:43

TRIP REPORT

Jester Bat Count – Part II
Train/Homestead/Glade Passages
February 15, 2020
Participants: Dale Amlee, Steve Beleu, Sue Bozeman, Duane Del Vecchio, Jon Woltz
Submitted by Duane

We all agreed on meeting at 11 a.m. at our usual crossroads out in the country. I arrived and soon Jon pulled up. We were talking when we noted a truck coming out of the north gate. We watched it approach and waved and he pulled in. We finally met the new landowner! Nice guy! He was telling us about the floods they had last year after we said it looked like there was a lot of water that came out resurgence. He said they got about eleven inches in four hours back last spring! No wonder the cave had debris on the ceiling! Just then Sue, Steve, and Dale came in. Sue was able to meet the person she had been talking to over the phone. After a little more chat, he left us to do our count.

We went into Train Tunnel first to find a massive log (or should I say Tree) jam across the entrance. After climbing over, we took temperature and humidity readings. A ten-minute exploration ended us with seven Tricolor (pips), two big ear, and one myotis. We go in to, hopefully, get a few big ear counts!

Then on to Glade and Homestead entrances. Dale and Duane went down to Homestead while Jon, Steve, and Sue went into Glade. We do Homestead for the same reason as Train, we hope to find some big ears. It payed off with three in a group and one solo later. Meanwhile, Steve has taken the roll of book and Sue and Jon are counting splitting the cave down the middle of the ceiling. There were a few decent mats right in the first opening like usual. Nothing like the wall covering 15 years ago but not too shabby either. They ended up being our only giant-sized mats (a couple of 2 sq. ft. mats) though there were a few smaller ones down in the cave. Packing rate was 270 bats per square foot. (15x18)

It was wetter than normal, and evidence of flooding was everywhere. While the team surveyed the main passage, Dale and Duane took off into the side passages to get the counts in there. Some locations are thirty feet higher than the main passage yet in the ceiling here too, branches and even logs were jammed into any crevasse or crack no matter where… ceiling, wall, floor. LOTS of flooding went through here! Mounds of decades of guano in one of the summer roosts that we always climbed over for decades were gone… down to raw rock once again. The further into the cave we went, the less counts of bat we found in the passages until our last two had zero bats in attendance. But there were limbs the size of my arm on the shelfs next to the ceiling in our high passage, so I wonder if a flood came in the late fall and washed some away? We've never had a zero count in the last passages.

We came out and headed to the back section near the high-water room where we usually end the count and started there and counted back toward the group as our exit was eventually Stovepipe. We met the three just as we got to the Stovepipe passage out. Good timing! We belly crawled out of Stovepipe, hiked back to the cave entrance to get our emergency beacon, and then back to the cars. A little change of clothes and once again we could be seen (and accepted) in public. On to Lugi's in Blair for the celebration of a successful bat count! *Glade/Homestead totals: Myotis 8,682 – Tricolor 36 – Big Ear 4*

2020 TOTALS for Jester Cave (All): Myotis 13,163 – Tricolor 72 – Big Ear 6

POTPOURRI

Wiki on Pips
Submitted by Sue Bozeman

I was trying to figure out how many times the name for pips has changed. Here is what I found in Wiki:

The tricolored bat was described as a new species in 1832 by French zoologist Frédéric Cuvier, who placed it in the genus *Vespertilio* with a scientific name of *Vespertilio subflavus*. The holotype had been collected in the US state of Georgia by American naturalist John Eatton Le Conte. In 1897, American zoologist Gerrit Smith Miller placed it in the genus *Pipistrellus* for the first time as a result of its physical similarities to other members of the genus. Its common name was thus the "eastern pipistrelle". In 1984 its status was reviewed, with H. Menu concluding that it was more similar in appearance to species in the genus *Myotis* rather than *Pipistrellus*, erecting a new genus for the taxon: *Perimyotis*. The name "*Perimyotis*" means "around *Myotis*", alluding to its similarities with the genus. This classification was not immediately accepted, however, with a 1985 study instead grouping it and the canyon bat into the genus *Parastrellus* and a 1987 publication maintaining that the tricolored bat was part of the *Pipistrellus* genus, though they listed *Perimyotis* as one of seven subgenera. However, in 2003, a genetic study concluded that the tricolored bat was distinct from *Pipistrellus* species (and the canyon bat), confirming the validity of the genus *Perimyotis*. Usage of the scientific name *Perimyotis subflavus* is widely accepted as of 2019. Its common name was changed from "eastern pipistrelle" to "tricolored bat" to reflect its revised classification.

SUE: Hence, we usually call it out during bat counts as '1 pip' – but it really should be '1 peri'! One other tidbit: *subflavus* means a little less than yellow. So the whole name, *Perimyotis subflavus*, means 'sort of like a not quite yellow velifer'. Poor thing.

Alabaster Caverns offers number of activities, events

https://www.woodwardnews.net/community/alabaster-caverns-offers-number-of-activities-events/article_d18c36ae-44af-11ea-b2db-fbe7537a9cc9.html

Woodward News
By Dawnita Fogleman Staff Writer
Jan 31, 2020

Along with hiking trails, picnic areas, RV and camping sites, as well as group shelters and more, Alabaster Caverns State Park is offering some new things to visitors and area schools and groups.

Park Naturalist and Historical Interpreter Nicole Denham wears the new mascot costume for Alabaster Caverns new bat ambassador, Luna.

“Another new thing that we have offered at our park is was called Mission Exploration Backpack,” Denham explained. “In those backpacks is about $146 worth of equipment that you or kids can come and check out at the park office. And you take that around the park and kind of explore different things.”

Included in the backpacks are binoculars, microscope, compass, nature guides and more.

“You can go and check out different animals, different animal tracks,” Denham said.

She added that you can also find information about flora and fauna that are special directly to Alabaster Caverns, in addition to birds, mammals and snakes that you may find there.

Denham visited the Senior Circle at AllianceHealth Woodward on Friday. She shared slides about the park’s traveling exhibit. The exhibit is free for demonstrations at schools, church groups, libraries and more, traveling as far as Tulsa. “Ecolocation grotto”

“Since its inception, we have seen almost 16,000 visitors come through and we've traveled almost 6,500 miles,” Denham said. “We will have live bat specimens in that trailer with us. And then we have all kinds of displays throughout the trailer. Some of them are fossils, some are bones, different equipment that we use for research is on display.”

Some of Alabaster Caverns State Park’s upcoming programs and activities are:

Feb. - Heart Smart Trail Hike
March - Kaleidoscope Tours, with a black light flashlight exploring the fluorescents in the cave
April - 7th Annual Bat Wing-Ding and wild caving and cave camping begin
May - Lost and Found Tour, caving through the century, in honor of Floyd Collins
June - National Cave & Karst Day on the 6th
July - Selman Bat Flights, registration only event through the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation
Aug. - Alabaster Skies astronomy event on the 22nd
Sept. - 7th Annual Labor Day Birthday Bash, Alabaster Caverns became a state park on September 1, 1956
Oct. - National Bat Week on the last week of the month
Nov. - Veterans Day event
Dec. - Santa days for the family

Reservations for group tours are required at least two weeks in advance.

Alabaster Caverns is open from 8 a.m. through 5 p.m. seven days a week with daily guided tours from 9 a.m. through 4 p.m. For more information call the park at 580-621-3381.

One blind cave salamander stayed still for a whopping seven years

https://www.cnet.com/news/one-blind-cave-salamander-stayed-still-for-a-whopping-seven-years/

A new study on olms found that one of the unusual aquatic amphibians went 2,569 days without moving.

Bonnie Burton
February 5, 2020 10:26 AM PST

The aquatic salamanders known as olms are blind creatures that barely move, eat or have sex over their astonishingly long lifespans.

Not many creatures can go without food and movement for years. But a cave salamander called an olm (Proteus anguinus) may be the new record holder for doing pretty much nothing for years on end, while still staying alive.

Scientists from the UK and Hungary found that olms living in caves in Bosnia-Herzegovina barely moved -- less than 32 feet (10 meters) in total -- over a span of 10 years. One particular specimen didn't budge for seven years, according to a new study published in the Journal of Zoology.

These blind creatures can live in complete darkness underwater for up to a century, have no predators and can go without food for many years. In fact, olms can slow down their metabolism at such a rate they can survive off of one meal for a decade.

When they do decide to eat, olms nibble on small shrimps and snails, which they find through their acute hearing abilities. Olms also are motivated to move when they mate, usually every 12.5 years.

For over eight years, divers studied the olms in their natural habitat in Herzegovinian underwater caves. To collect data, divers would catch the olms by hand, mark them, then replace them in the same spot they were taken from.

During their research to determine the creatures' movements and spacial patterns, the divers noticed that the unusual amphibians weren't doing much of anything, including moving.

The study also states the importance of better understanding the human impact on fragile underwater ecosystems and creatures, like olms, that live in them.

"The low reproductive activity of the species, together with the reported extreme site fidelity makes this top predator of aquatic cave communities highly vulnerable and a sensitive bio-indicator of habitat-changing human activities," the study says.

White-Nose Syndrome Confirmed in Bat in Texas

March 5, 2020
Media Contact: TPWD News,
Business Hours, 512-389-8030
https://tpwd.texas.gov/newsmedia/releases/?req=20200305a&fbclid=IwAR1hdT5lzFUq0kXnhdUhWzZTxPkODn6W4Hf-U_6cVr048ZNX_KYiW_f6tVs

AUSTIN – For the first time, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) biologists have confirmed the disease white-nose syndrome (WNS) in a Texas bat. Up until this point, while the fungus that causes the disease was previously detected in Texas in 2017, there were no signs of the disease it can cause. WNS has killed millions of hibernating bats in the eastern parts of the United States, raising national concern.

WNS is a fungal disease only known to occur in bats and is not a risk to people. However, bats are wild animals and should not be handled by untrained individuals. The public is encouraged to report dead or sick bats to TPWD at nathan.fuller@tpwd.texas.gov for possible testing.

The infected bat was a cave myotis (Myotis velifer) found dead in Central Texas (Gillespie County) on Feb. 23. The specimen was sent to the USGS National Wildlife Health Center for testing and was confirmed positive for WNS through skin histopathology and also tested positive for the fungus.

While the fungus was detected for the first time in Texas in early 2017 in the Panhandle, the first detections from Central Texas were in 2018. In 2019, biologists reported finding high levels of the fungus on cave myotis at several Central Texas locations. It has now been found in 21 counties across the state.

"Finding WNS in Central Texas for the first time is definitely concerning," said Nathan Fuller, Bat Specialist at TPWD. "Biologists had hoped that white-nose syndrome, a disease that thrives in cold conditions, might not occur in warmer parts of Texas. We're following up on several other reports to determine whether this was an isolated incident or if the impacts are more widespread. We recently received a report from site in Bell County of five cave myotis that we suspect were infected as well. We should know more in the next few weeks."

White-nose syndrome is caused by the cold-adapted fungus Pseudogymnoascus destructans and has been rapidly spreading since its discovery in New York in 2007. It is thought to have been introduced from Europe where bats appear to be resistant to the fungus. In parts of the United States there have been declines in winter bat numbers of greater than 90 percent. Bats are very long lived and because many produce just one offspring per year, researchers are concerned it could take many decades for some populations to recover from a major decline.

Through support from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, TPWD has funded research projects with Bat Conservation International (BCI), the Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute, and Texas State University to study bats, the fungus, and possible treatments.

A locator map of fungus detections in Texas in 2019 is available online at https://flic.kr/p/TFu1f9

Mystery surrounding dinosaur footprints on a cave ceiling in Central Queensland has been solved-

https://www.heritagedaily.com/2020/02/mystery-surrounding-dinosaur-footprints-on-a-cave-ceiling-in-central-queensland-has-been-solved/125733

The mystery surrounding dinosaur footprints on a cave ceiling in Central Queensland has been solved after more than a half a century.

University of Queensland palaeontologist Dr Anthony Romilio discovered pieces to a decades-old puzzle in an unusual place – a cupboard under the stairs of a suburban Sydney home.

"The town of Mount Morgan near Rockhampton has hundreds of fossil footprints and has the highest dinosaur track diversity for the entire eastern half of Australia," Dr Romilio said.

"Earlier examinations of the ceiling footprints suggested some very curious dinosaur behaviour; that a carnivorous theropod walked on all four legs.

"You don't assume T. rex used its arms to walk, and we didn't expect one of its earlier predatory relatives of 200 million years ago did either."

Researchers wanted to determine if this dinosaur did move using its feet and arms, but found accessing research material was difficult.

"For a decade the Mount Morgan track site has been closed, and the published 1950s photographs don't show all the five tracks," Dr Romilio said.

However Dr Romilio had a chance meeting with local dentist Dr Roslyn Dick, whose father found many dinosaur fossils over the years.

"I'm sure Anthony didn't believe me until I mentioned my father's name – Ross Staines," Ms Dick said.

"Our father was a geologist and reported on the Mount Morgan caves containing the dinosaur tracks in 1954.

"Besides his published account, he had high-resolution photographs and detailed notebooks, and my sisters and I had kept it all.

"We even have his dinosaur footprint plaster cast stored under my sister's Harry Potter cupboard in Sydney."

Dr Romilio said the wealth and condition of 'dinosaur information' archived by Ms Dick and her sisters Heather Skinner and Janice Millar was amazing.

"I've digitised the analogue photos and made a virtual 3D model of the dinosaur footprint, and left the material back to the family's care," he said.

"In combination with our current understanding of dinosaurs, it told a pretty clear-cut story."

The team firstly concluded that all five tracks were foot impressions – that none were dinosaur handprints.

Also the splayed toes and moderately long middle digit of the footprints resembled two-legged herbivorous dinosaur tracks, differing from prints made by theropods.

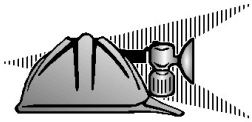
"Rather than one dinosaur walking on four legs, it seems as though we got two dinosaurs for the price of one – both plant-eaters that walked bipedally along the shore of an ancient lake," Dr Romilio said.

"The tracks lining the cave-ceiling were not made by dinosaurs hanging up-side-down, instead the dinosaurs walked on the lake sediment and these imprints were covered in sand.

"In the Mount Morgan caves, the softer lake sediment eroded away and left the harder sandstone in-fills."

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 meeting will be Friday,
March 13, 2020
At John and Sue Bozeman.



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