CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO
OF THE NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,INC

C.O.G.nizance

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The March meeting will be Friday, MARCH 13, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be at the home of Ann Ault.

Pictures taken during the Jester 2015 Bat Count Trip

Left: A mat of cave myotis

Right: Swabbing a bat for WNS testing

Bottom: Counting bat mats

More on: www.okcavers.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

*The March meeting will be Friday, March 143, 2015 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 DESTRUCTANS*2:

Applications/Products:

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

Submersion in Hot Water: Effective at sustained temperatures ≥50ºC (122ºF) 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 Clean

MINUTES

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO

Minutes of the February 14, 2015 meeting

Host: the home of COG member John and J.T. Van Dyke

Attendees: Anne Ault, Dale Amlee, John and Sue Bozeman, Matt Brasher, Duane Del Vecchio, John Talbot, Dale and Carol Town, John and J.T. Van Dyke, Jon and Kelley Woltz, and The Skillful Ogre.

El Supremo Jon Woltz began the meeting at 7:56

OLD BUSINESS - none

NEW BUSINESS –

- Dale Amlee brought our new fluke to the meeting that he bought during the previous month and received a $115 reimbursement from Treasurer John Talbot upon a vote from the members that he so receive it.

  Sue reported that she received another letter from Joe Looney. She read it to us, in which he states that he wishes for his estate to leave COG all of his caving gear, books, records, and other matter. In return he asks that we memorialize him in a submission we would send to the NSS upon his demise.
- We discussed our upcoming COG bat count, always on the 3rd Saturday of February.
- We heard a trip report about the second survey to Cherylsbad Cavern.

TREASURER'S REPORT

John Talbot gave his treasurer's report. We concluded the meeting sometime that I forgot to record.

TREASURER'S REPORTS

MARCH, 2015 TREASURERS'S REPORT

INCOME			**EXPENSES**		
Dues	$	30.00	EQUIPMENT	$	114.95
Dividends		00.02			
TOTAL	**$**	**42.00**	**TOTAL**	**$**	**114.95**
CASH ON HAND	**$**	**98.09**			
CHECKING	**$**	**563.51**			
SAVINGS	**$**	**2,136.67**			
TOTAL	**$**	**2,798.27**			

TOTAL FUNDS AS OF 3/1/2015

PREPARED BY TREASURER JOHN TALBOT

TRIP REPORT

Jester Bat Count 2015
Date: Saturday – February 14, 2015
Participants: Dale & Carole Town,
John & JT VanDyke, Duane Del Vecchio, Sandy, Bailey, & Jesse Blood
Report by: Duane Del Vecchio

Wow… it turned into a pretty decent day weather wise. It started about mid 40's and was 80 when we got out of the final cave. Nice change from being frozen walking back to the cars! But once again I start in the middle instead of the start! Ten o'clock in the AM…time to meet at the typical Y intersection which we call the Jester parking lot. We came from three separate areas: Altus, Lawton, and Yukon, OK to do not only our annual bat count but also some pre-WNS swabbing of the myotis in the cave to send to scientists to get a baseline of microbes and such growing on our little friends in case we ever do get WNS.

Duane brought three guests; Sandy and her two daughters, Bailey and Jesse. Bailey is taking medical research classes and this project with the swabbing would be a feather in her cap for her class. Jesse was our video camera technician… filming the swabbing both for others to learn how it is done and as reference if needed. She also personally met Mr. Bat face to face (but we'll cover that later!) Both girls have been on other trips with D with kid trips into caves so they were used to it.

Everyone was basically on time this round and we headed into the southern entrance (resurgence) of Jester Cave. We headed into the entrance at 10:55 a.m. Rock temp was 47 F, Air Temp 48 F, and no water nor mud at the entrance. The pool at the entrance was bone dry… actually walked right though it and didn't even get muddy!! (I guess I'll have to admit there's a drought going on after all!) A lot of small mats right at the entrance still in the twilight zone. We finally got about halfway when we got a good mat to take a packing rate. 15x17=255 bats per sq. ft. packing rate. Just before Pip Hall we found 14 dead bats on the ground in the general same area. They looked ok… no telltale signs of WNS nor any damage (other than a few in which cave crickets were feasting).

They were stone cold dead but still had very flexible membranes for their wings with no marking or abrasions apparent. Pip hall was noticeably absent of pips (now called tricolor) but myotis had taken their place. 10 pips and over 200 myotis. Then we found a long ears hanging out… don't remember one ever being counted in this section of the cave! It was the first of many we would find this trip… it is a high of 17 for the entire count which might be the best we've ever pulled out of this count!

Once we hit the room of rest (can't call it rest room – someone may get the wrong ideal!!) <grin> we went over the procedures for the swab samplings to be done. Duane and Carol would hold the bats, Dale would record data, John, JT, Bailey, and Sandy while Jesse filmed the work going on. We had to do 25 swabbings this year. We ended up doing 20 live bats (which all looked in good shape) and took 5 of the dead ones in case

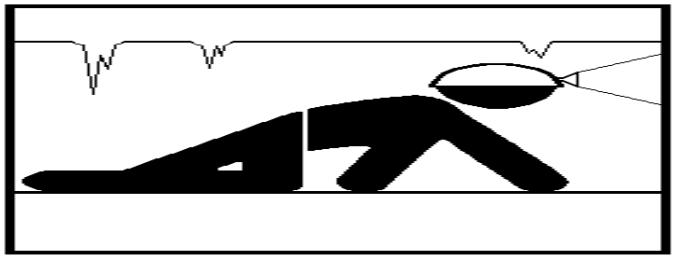
(Continued on page 4)

there was something we didn't readily see! As it was Valentine's Day – one bat decided to give our camera girl a kiss as he flew by… he was just flying by and barely missed John while he was swabbing and crashed right into Jesse's face… held on for about one second and jumped and few off. Of course it freaked her out pretty good but she recovered soon after! Job finished, we left the cave at 12:45 p.m. and like normal, everyone wondered where the road went!

Back at the cars we split up… John and JT would go do Train Tunnel, the rest would go to Glade and start. Last year the rancher had the gate open for us to drive but alas, not this year. So we hiked down and split at Glade. Duane went with Bailey and JT down the sliding slope into Homestead entrance. We found 12 long ears in there. 1 p.m. Rock 50F Air 54 F Humidity 23%. We then joined the others in Glade and formed two groups again… most stayed in the main tunnel and counted and Duane, Bailey, & JT went on all of the side passages and off-shoots to get counts and down to the (non-existent) waterfalls. We all exited out together at 3:15 and made our way back to the cars. Clean up a bit and then on to Blair for the obligatory Lugi's Calzone & bat feast celebration.

Final counts: Myotis 9,274 – Tricolor (Pip) 18 – Long Ears 17 – GRAND TOTAL: 9,309

Full Report, data sheet, and movies on the C.O.G. Webpage – http://www.okcavers.com



Greene's Cathedral Bat Count 2015
Date: Saturday – February 20, 2015
Personnel: Jon Woltz, Matt Brasher, Steve Beleu
Report by: Jon Woltz

We had a good caving day. On Friday, I thought we'd have to head for home right after the bat count to avoid the winter weather predicted for Saturday afternoon. But the bad weather held off and we were able to do the bat count and do some more exploring in Cherylsbad too.

We started the bat count a little after 11:00 and spent about an hour and a half counting. There were quite a few bats, but I really couldn't say whether there was a significant change in the numbers from last year. The bats looked healthy: no dead bats and no signs of disease. Matt brought his DSLR and took some photos of the bat clusters and Greene's selenite formations.

Since we thought we wouldn't have time to survey Cherylsbad after the bat count, we didn't have the survey instruments. (They're still at Dale's.) We went back into the right hand passage to take another look at the side passages we poked into last month. I discovered that I could wriggle my way out of that skylight that Matt and Dale had looked at in January. Like we thought then, it opens into one of the sinks we explored

We went back into the right hand passage to take another look at the side passages we poked into last month. I discovered that I could wriggle my way out of that skylight that Matt and Dale had looked at in January.

when we were looking for Cherylsbad. The sink has a very steep leaf-covered slope that terminates in a hole that drops straight down into the passage. I had to move a couple of rocks to make the skylight big enough for me, but it may not be possible for anyone with wider shoulders to get out.

Matt and I also pushed the low stream passage until it started getting mucky and tight. There's still passage down there to be explored on a future trip, but we were all getting tired and concerned about the weather, so we called it a day a little before 4:00.

Betty wasn't feeling well in the afternoon, so we didn't get to see her before we left. (We saw her in the morning when we went by to get the key to the ranch house.) We stopped at the cafe in Seiling to eat before splitting up.

Totals for the day courtesy of Steve Beleu

Myotis velifer – 21,311

Pips – 2

Shempbat - 1

POTPOURRI

Israeli spelunkers find cache of 2,300-year-old coins and other rare objects

Published March 09, 2015
FoxNews.com

About a month following the discovery off the coast of Caesarea of the largest trove of gold coins in Israel, spelunkers have unearthed another treasure, this time in one of the country's largest and well-hidden northern stalactite caves. Father and son members of the Israeli Caving Club Reuven Zakai and Hen Zakai, as well as their friend Lior Zhalony, discovered a cache of rare coins and silver and bronze objects that date back 2,300 years, according to a release from the Israel Antiquities Authority.

The Zakais and Halony were prepping for a caving club expedition to the cave, investigating the area for several hours. The younger Zakai, 21, crawled through one of the cave's narrowest passageways when he found two silver coins that were later identified as being minted during Alexander the Great's reign. Alongside the coins was a cloth pouch containing items of silver jewelry like bracelets and earrings.

The three men reported the discovery to the IAA's Unit for the Prevention of Antiquities Robbery. This past weekend, IAA officials and members of the caving club entered the cave, stumbling across other artifacts like pottery vessels. They found numerous objects, some dating back to the Chalcolithic period (6,000 years ago), the Early Bronze Age (5,000 years ago), the biblical period (3,000 years ago), and the Hellenistic period (2,300 years ago).

The combination of archaeological find and stalactite cave is unique, according to the IAA. Geologists will be able to analyze stalactite development, while archaeologists now have an easy marker to date some of the objects, given that a few of the pottery vessels bonded with limestone sediments. This gives researchers a way to trace when the stalactites formed as well as determine the artifacts' age.

"After the gold treasure from Caesarea, this is the second time in the past month that citizens have reported significant archaeological finds and we welcome this important trend," said Amir Ganor, director of the Unit for the Prevention of Antiquities Robbery. "Thanks to these citizens' awareness, researchers at the Israel Antiquities Authority will be able to expand the existing archaeological knowledge about the development of society and culture in the Land of Israel in antiquity."

Discovery of Rare Bats Doubles World's Known Population

January 19, 2015
Discovery News
http://cavingnews.com/20150119-discovery-rare-bats-doubles-worlds-known-population

The discovery of several new roosts of Wroughton's Free-tailed Bats (*Otomops wroughtoni*) in a number of Indian caves has increased the number of known individuals of the rare species to nearly 200.

Previously limited to a single breeding colony in southwestern India, as well as two single individual bats recorded in Meghalaya, India and Cambodia, the new colonies were found in caves of the Jaintia Hills of Meghalaya in northeastern India during the Caving in the Abode of the Clouds Project in February 2014.

During the study, whose results were published recently in the Journal of Threatened Taxa, researchers identified thirty potential bat caves. Of those thirty caves, Wroughton's Free-tailed Bats were observed in two. Some 82 visible individuals were counted in a cave near Pynurkba, and another 15 in a cave near Umlatdoh.

In a third cave, near the village of Thangsah, the characteristic loud and audible screams emitted intermittently by alarmed Wroughton's Free-tailed Bats were heard coming from a tight crevice, however the bats could not be located.

While these discoveries are encouraging as they considerably extend the geographic range of the species and give hope that the population may be even larger, the researchers are now even more troubled about severe and ongoing degradation of the regions caves.

Caves in the Jaintia Hills are under threat of from unregulated limestone and coal mining, and the forests, the bats foraging areas, from logging. Unfortunately, although the bats themseleves are protected under national laws, their habitat is not.

The researchers are now urging for a protection plan that would include more extensive surveys and a strict conservation policy to protect this vulnerable species

WHAT BATS TALK ABOUT

Bat 1: Did you hear it's daylight saving's time?

Bat 2: Really? Does it matter? We Sleep all day anyway.

Bat 1: Well, we wouldn't want to miss dinner.

Lil 2015

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 13, 2015.

Central Oklahoma Grotto
Monk in chains copy shed
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