

# sag rag

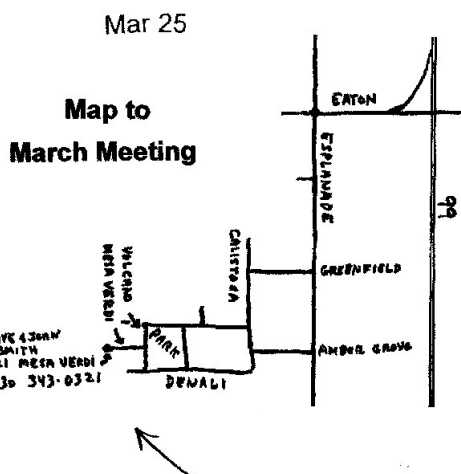
30:1 Jan-Feb 2011



Opilionid from Planetary Dairy, of the genus *Taracus*, with pinchers on steroids. Specimen collected by Dr. Geo Graening, photos taken by Dante Fenolio.

**KMCTF ACTIVITY IN SISKIYOU COUNTY – 2010**

The SAG RAG is published by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Grotto meetings are held at different locations on the fourth Friday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Meeting locations are announced in the SAG RAG. Membership dues are \$6 dollars per year and include newsletter subscription. Original material not otherwise noted is copyright to the SAG RAG. Such material may be copied with credit given to the author and the SAG RAG. For use outside of the caving community, please seek the permission of the author or editor first. Send material for publication any time to Bighorn Broeckel, 2916 Deer Meadows Road, Yreka, CA 96097 or <caverbill@live.com>. For more on SAG, check the web site at <<http://www.caves.org/grotto/sag>>.



#### Instructions to Dave's House:

Come down 99 to Eaton Rd (first exit after 99 becomes freeway in Chico). Turn right on Eaton then left at light onto Esplanade. From Esplanade take 2<sup>nd</sup> right (Greenfield) or 3<sup>rd</sup> right (Amber Grove), then left on Calistoga. Follow Calistoga to its end at Denali, then follow Denali to the park on your right. At the end of the park, turn right onto Volcano, then left onto Mesa Verde. 321 is the white house on your left when you reach the cul-de-sac.

*That should do it.*

Saturday March 26 we will have a guided visit to a cave shelter in the Dye Creek Preserve (Nature Conservancy) north of Los Molinos.

#### SAG RAG SUMMARY

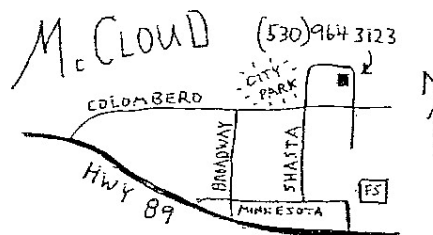
By Bighorn Broeckel

We have some good local grotto material ready about cleanup trips and lava tubing in the Pluto's Cave area. But first we have some KMCTF material that likes to come out in mid-winter, usually in the Jan-Feb newsletter. Last year we were late with the 2009 report. Now it looks like we are getting the newsletter closer and closer to being back on track. We have some great biology reports for KMCTF this year, thanks to the work energy of cave biologist Geo Graening. Two new cave maps also show up here in a timely fashion. Skunks Tail Cave is 66ft long and Hanging Ledges is 102ft. The second cave, however, is also 73ft deep, but the bottom can be reached just with the use of a handline. The KMCTF (Klamath Mountains Conservation Taskforce) is an internal organization of the NSS (National Speleological Society). SAG (Shasta Area Grotto) encourages membership in the cave mother ship (NSS). Hopefully the KMCTF reports are helpful background reading for those hoping to participate in the interesting project caving that goes on.

**BB**

#### CAVERS CALENDAR 2011

- Mar 25 SAG meeting at 7:30 pm, Chico/Redding  
Later – Dye Creek hike to Ishi's Cave
- Apr 29 SAG meeting 7:30 pm at Wolff's, McCloud  
Later – Cave survey trip somewhere?
- May 13-15 Western Region Speleo-Ed Seminar  
Lodgepole CG, Sequoia National Park
- July 18-22 2011 NSS Convention in Glenwood Springs,  
Colorado



#### Apr 29 - McCloud

**KMCTF ACTIVITY – July 4th, 2010** By B. Broeckel

One of the first things that everybody noticed this year was that a huge powerful washout had taken away a segment of trail. The trail was already rebuilt, but you could see lots of exposed gravels, displaced rocks, and uprooted and broken trees. Several KMCTF cavers investigated toward the source of the wash-out. Rich Sundquist wrote the following good report:

*“During the hike out Forrest (Sundquist) jogged up the stream where the trail was washed away. Forrest reports the devastation increased the higher he climbed with house-sized boulders and old-growth trees strewn about and standing trees with the bark knocked off. The headwall is a significant dirt slide. From his description it sounds like a very sudden flood event, possibly a dam failure – perhaps an ice dam or temporary landslide dam. In terms of possible cave Forrest reported numerous holes in dirt and large boulders with diffuse springs spread across the mountainside – not consolidated at one location. Sounds like a big project to carefully check holes in the loose debris.”*

Forrest Sundquist found a new cave on July 4. The next day the Sundquists went back and surveyed the cave (219 ft). I believe this was the only cave surveyed during the July session. When I asked Forrest for a cave name, he said that the newly mapped item of interest was named “Fred”.

Fred

On July 3, a sizable group mounted the upper karst and worked on 50 foot radial polar grid surface surveys. Most of these are chained together and can augment GPS entrance locations. Obscure caves can be characterized more exactly, and ultimately a highly detailed map of the upper karst can result, if we can get enough of these things done. Tom Kline is managing this new data base. Also on this trip, Tom placed a temperature logger in Skunk Hollow Cave; the temperature was a steady 38 degrees Fahrenheit.

Geo Graening is a cave biologist who continues to investigate the life forms in KMCTF area caves. Diablo Grotto cavers and others assisted him during this session, and Geo is now beginning to accumulate some information into reports, some of which are included in this newsletter.

There were lots of cavers around, so there were frequent outings in progress every day. Some of the caves visited were Bigfoot, Skunk Hollow, Corkscrew, Frozen Falls, Trail Junction, and Planetary Dairy. Other known and unknown caves were looked at on the upper karst (see further in this newsletter).

One funny anecdote from this speleocamp – Steve Knutson was telling folks around the campfire about how, as KMCTF chairman, he is in some ways considered personally responsible for anything that has to do with caves within at least a 60 mile radius, and how unfair that was and so on. Right then, as if on cue in a play, a ranger lady walks up and says “I need to speak privately with Steve Knutson”. Steve was very deadpan and said “see what I mean?” So there you go, it was the timing that was perfect. It turned out that the ranger had found a trashed pile of cave gear out in the woods. Some of it was marked “KMCTF”. It wasn’t anything real recent. A bunch of cavers volunteered on the spot to go clean it up immediately, which we did, and that seemed to take care of everything, and gave us some things to talk about for awhile, and a good laugh. Long live the KMCTF.

**BB**

**KMCTF TRIP REPORT, JULY 4th, 2010**

By Rich Sundquist

The four Sundquists hiked in near dark Saturday. On Sunday we visited the front section of Horta's Den. Reaching the cave requires a sketchy 12' climb on vertical silt/sand/rocks, and the actual exposure is ~20'. We rigged a rope so only one person would have to do the climb unprotected. The entrance passage is a belly crawl on flat breakdown, which eventually opens up to the only short section of passage where one can stand up. As an interesting note from discussions with various cavers, at least three caves have been believed to be Horta's Den. The definitive characteristic of Horta's Den is the sketchy climb up the cliff on vertical silt/sand to reach the entrance. Additionally the cave is mostly crawlway.

Hortas Den

After visiting Horta's Den we ridgewalked to the south and west and up onto the cliff top. I rappelled several places along the cliff looking for holes while Forrest, Walker, and Midori checked various sinks and cracks. Forrest discovered a crack that he could climb down ~12' where he was able to open a continuing downclimb by kicking down rocks that obstructed the fissure. Total climb-down was ~30', dropping him out in a sizable horizontal vadose cave with an entrance on the cliff.

Fred

We returned Monday to survey Forrest's cave, netting 218.8' of passage and no leads. The cave is very linear, and all passage is vadose, and almost all is walking dimensions (typically 5' wide and 15' tall). One 4" long bone with gnaw marks was observed and set aside. A large fungal growth (on rodent feces that fell from a crack in the ceiling) was also noted and avoided! The cave contains modest flowstone formations and moonmilk. This was the first survey for Forrest and Walker.

After completing the survey, Midori and Walker returned to camp while Forrest and I looked for caves. One consisted of a ~12' belly crawl between breakdown opening into a room ~12' in diameter with a bear's nest. Formations occur at the back right of the room and a short crawl was seen at the back left. Although Forrest loves bears he was keen to exit the cave before the resident returned.

Bear Den

While ridgewalking, Forrest and Rich came upon two large turkey vulture chicks in a cliff nest. The chicks were the size of small turkeys and completely covered with snow white down. Head and beak were black and some black flight feathers were beginning to appear at the wing tips. The chicks displayed poor manners, hissing at their guests, who retreated leaving the chicks in peace. **RS**



*Springtime in July 7-2-10*



**KMCTF TRIP REPORT, JULY 4th, 2010**

By Steve Johnson

On Monday, David Weaver, Geo Graening, Bryan Culbertson, Chuck Lee, Tony Soyka, and myself did some hiking on the upper karst to look for new holes and drop some pits. On that trip, David, Geo, and Bryan dropped Hoyle's Half Dollar Hole, but found the rope too short – we brought 100' but probably 200' is required. However, about 20-30 meters downhill of the entrance to Hoyle's, Chuck Lee noticed a crack that may be worthy of investigation; the sun was at just such an angle to illuminate the crack perfectly, and it appeared to go down and open up a bit after 20 meters or so. It's pretty tight, so it may or may not be passable, but a caver happy with tight vertical work may want to check it out.

Hoyles Half  
Dollar

Later in the day, David, Geo, and Bryan rigged what they believed to be Streamway (not sure if it turned out to be that or a nearby cave), and Chuck Lee and I hiked out. On the way out, we noticed a large pit and pointed it out to the others, who later dropped it and did cursory investigation (but no surveying). It may or may not be a new cave; the features sound similar to Lost Swallet Cave, but the GPS position (which David took) is at least 200 feet from the position he had for Lost Swallet, so follow-up is definitely worthwhile here. **SJ**



*Waterfall near Marble Staircase running pretty high 7-2-10*

**KMCTF TRIP REPORT, JULY 4th, 2010**

By Chuck Lee

David Weaver led a trip to (Trail Junction) and Planetary Dairy with Geo Graening, Tony Soyka, and myself. Geo was collecting bugs and worms and made some significant finds in these caves. We should include a report from him. David Weaver, Chuck Lee (Chairman), and Steven Johnson (Vice-Chairman) are from Diablo Grotto. **CL**

Planetary Dairy  
Trail Junction**CAVE BIOLOGY REPORT – KMCTF ACTIVITY JULY 4th, 2010**

By Dr. G.O. "Geo" Graening, Adjunct Professor,  
Department of Biological Sciences, California State University, Sacramento

I am late in mentioning that Ryan Baker and I found a rare cave-adapted insect on the canvas cache bag that was located at the bottom of the Big Room in Bigfoot. May I request, in the future, that before such rotten material is hauled off, that it be carefully checked for cave insects, and then either brush them off gently or collect them in a vial with alcohol. Believe it or not, old muddy canvas functions as a food event in the energy-poor regions of such caves, and may attract cave life like a baited trap. While I am still waiting on identifications from specialists on the few specimens of cave life I collected over the last KMCTF outing, let me briefly summarize the findings (I'll follow later with a better report, and hopefully photos):

Bigfoot

1) There is at least 1 new species of cave-adapted (troglobiotic) white millipede in the majority of the caves (esp. the lower karst), and you no doubt have seen them cruising the walls while doing your exploring and mapping.

2) The aforementioned rare insect on the canvas cache bag is a new species of cave dipluran (family Campodeidae, "two-pronged bristletail"), which is a wingless ancestor of insects that is highly adapted to the cave environment, and surely found only locally.

3) There is at least 1 new species of groundwater-adapted (stygobiotic) flatworm in some of the pools of the local subterranean streams, particularly in Planetary Dairy and Trail Junction Caves. I have no doubt that it also occurs in Skunk Hollow as the KMCTF has previously reported.

Planetary Dairy  
Trail Junction

4) There is an opilionid (harvestman, daddy-long-legs) of the genus Taracus in several of the caves, and my colleague Dante Fenolio photographed a specimen I sent to him; not sure if this is a new species or a range extension of a known species, but it is a fierce predator of things smaller than itself as you can see.

5) Many other species of spiders, beetles, springtails, and other arthropods were encountered; not sure yet if any of these are cave adapted or a new species. Not all arthropods need to be blind and unpigmented to be troglobionts.

This brief bioinventory event demonstrates the enormous potential of this area to contain world-class cave life, commensurate with its world-class karst landscape. Thank-you for sharing this fabulous underground wilderness with me, and I pledge to keep this resource location secret and sufficiently vague while attempting to explore and protect its biodiversity. I hope to receive more reports and photos of cave life you've encountered on your trips into the region, and I will continue to compile a checklist and train anyone interested in this bioinventory effort. **GG**

**KMCTF ACTIVITY, JULY 4th, 2010**

By Tom Kline

Steve Knutson and I hiked in Thursday morning and then went out to Hanging Rocks entrance area to draw polar surface features. Friday we went to Crystal Drains and Roto Rooter and I drew surface features there. We also went north to Tag 004 Cave, but it was snow-covered. Steve re-found a hole on the way and I will figure out what cave it is from the GIS work I'm doing. On the way back we looked at Hissing Stream and stream sink (unnamed) to see what the water was doing. Looks like it changed. On the way in Thursday, I had marked the mudslide on the trail and it is the same drainage as Hissing Stream is on, just 0.77 miles away. We also looked for another cave but could not find it. I went out on Sunday to the little valley to see how GIS plots compared to actual cave locations. A black-colored bear was in the meadow. Geo put my datalogger in Skunk Hollow. Intervals are 2 minutes, and shows a constant 38 degrees. I hope to put the datalogger in Bigfoot Discovery Entrance next time to see how air affects temp. **TK**

Skunk Hollow

**KMCTF ACTIVITY, JULY 4th, 2010**

By Steve Knutson

We did a good session working on the GIS mapping that Tom Kline is doing, going from RP8 to RP7 with a sketcher every 50ft. This seemed to work (not plotted up yet) and if it does, will give us a handle on the upper karst. But a lot of work will be needed – that area is bigger than one remembers.

We are now entering the GPS/GIS era. Tom Kline is the man. If his system works, we can map the surface in detail, and be able to use GPS to position caves. You all can make cave maps and the GIS should handle the updating, and the valley map will be in GIS software, and be more accurate overall. Updating can start up again. Forgive me for some of the recent small caves that didn't get included, but it was clear to me that a GIS system was needed.

(continued next page)



*Horse packer heading home after dropping off caver's gear 7-2-10*



I think the thing for me to work on, now, is adding interior info to the Bigfoot map. Info needs to be added to the other autocad cave maps, and maybe some of you can take on jobs like that. The survey notes on the major caves have all been digitized by Tom and so are readily available. Cave maps should be computer maps, so they can be readily expanded if breakthroughs occur, but hand drawn can be scanned and added, as well. On the computer, use whatever software suits you. I like autocad but there are others. Other projects needing to be done are a bio survey and a formation inventory. Louisa Hooven has been trying to get a bio survey going, and with Geo getting active, maybe she and Geo could continue.

When the big weekends come, and there are over 25 folks in camp, we need some to insist you are primarily a small group (eg., Shasta Area Grotto), and not KMCTF. The KMCTF is really an information sharing entity. The original philosophy required it, and it has worked very well for us, everyone working together. If you participate in the valley and share your info, you are in. You all showed that the KMCTF is alive and well, and anyone can contribute. The surface mapping can go on just as we did it, and anyone can do it. There are still leads to be done in caves, but not much easy to get to. I have the feeling there are still caves to be found. Don't overlook the fact that many caves have not been entered in 15-20 years, and some of these may go, with minimal effort. **SK**



*Becky Broeckel and her old tired dog Daisy rest near Marble Staircase 7-2-10*

#### **KMCTF AREA TRIP REPORT AUGUST 7-8, 2010**

By Mark Fritzke

Matt Titre, Marsha Davenport, and I hiked to my Drystream campsite Saturday. Matt and I worked on the "Burnt Doug" dug entrance I started looking at last year. We made significant progress moving toward voids below, following the path of rolling pebbles, about 30 feet below the surface. We surface surveyed to Sisyphus Cave, where I have previously traversed to the Upstream Cave entrance. This will allow me to plot the relationship between Burnt Doug and the current terminus in Drystream Cave that I have been extending since 2001. At the end of Sisyphus, the distant sound of a tumbling cascade inspires us ... **MF**

Burnt Doug



**KMCTF TRIP REPORTS, SEPTEMBER LABOR DAY, 2010**

By Bill Broeckel

Not all the cavers present are directly connected with KMCTF. Different groups have their own leadership, and collaborate to greater or lesser degrees. It becomes important to realize that several small groups are camping independently, even though they may benefit from the presence of the KMCTF during an active field session, and vice versa. Individual, educational, or grotto groups often come with separate agendas and goals parallel to KMCTF project activities.

Thielson Lebo, Oliver Light, and Jeff Leskos went to Skunk Hollow and Trail Junction Caves. They were recent high school graduates from Southern Oregon. Thielson's senior project was to start up a caving club at his school, and to map a new cave in the KMCTF area of interest.

Ethan and Lindsay Donahue, Kara Edwall, Charissa Blattner, and Tim and Ben Turley were a group of college-age cavers who enjoyed trips to Upstairs-Downstairs, Trail Junction, and Bigfoot Caves. They found a new route in Trail Junction that may provide a usable bypass to the major pit in the cave.

San Francisco State Geology Professor Jerry Davis brought up seven students, and they visited Upstairs-Downstairs and Trail Junction Caves as part of their field experience curriculum. Jerry has a special interest in the geology of these caves and has conducted academic teaching and research here for many years.

Geo and Guy Graening continued biological research in Frozen Falls and Upstairs-Downstairs Caves. Among other creepy little things, they found more of the common cave-adapted millipedes which are most probably a local or endemic species.

Roger Jones and Cat McAdams looked for suitable meditation sites. Roger was playing a Native American pentonic flute, while he also brings a wealth of knowledge about the natural history, the caves, and the surrounding mountain areas.

Mark Fritzke and Marsha Davenport were pursuing caves in the lower karst at an entrance known now as Burnt Doug, and probably some other spots as well.

Louisa Hooven and Rich Sundquist were limited by a skin rash and an infected knee, respectively. They did some ridgewalking anyway, as did the rest of the Sundquist family (Midori, Forrest, and Walker), Mark Harder, and KMCTF Chair Steve Knutson. On Sunday (Sept. 5) the ridgewalkers found a small phreatic tube, and it was mapped two days later (see further on Skunks Tail Cave). Also on Sunday evening, Ethan Donahue, Rich and Forrest Sundquist, and I dashed up the karst on a wild goose chase and Forrest found a new cave which we surveyed on the spot (see further on Hanging Ledges Cave). We got in after midnight.

On Monday (Sept. 6) KMCTF continued the detailed surface survey project, running overlapping 50ft radial sketches from Monkey River to RP6. Arley Kisling was helping us that day as well. On Tuesday (Sept. 7) a storm was blowing in, as they do, from the southwest, and everybody left in the valley hiked out. **BB**

By Dr. G.O. "Geo" Graening Adjunct Professor, Dept. of Biological Sciences  
California State University, Sacramento

**FAUNAL CHECKLIST FOR CAVES OF THE MAJOR KMCTF INTEREST AREA**

<b>Higher Taxon</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Adaptation</b>
<b>Phylum Arthropoda</b>			
<b>Class Arachnida</b>			
Order Acarina			
Family Rhagidiidae	<i>Foveacheles auricularia</i>		Epigean
Order Araneae			
Family Amauroiidae	<i>Pimus sp.</i>	Hacklemesh Weaver Spider	
Family Hahniidae	<i>Calymmaria sp.</i>		Troglophile
Family Hypochilidae	<i>Hypochilus kastoni</i>		
Family Linyphiidae	species not determined	Sheetweb Weaver Spider	
Family Lycosidae	species not determined	Wolf Spider, undetermined	
Family Pimoidae	<i>Pimoa sp.</i>	Sheetweb Weaver Spider	Troglophile
	<i>Pimoa sp. nov.</i>	Sheetweb Weaver Spider	Troglophile
Family Theridiidae	species not determined		
Order Opiliones			
Family Phalangiidae	<i>Leiobunum exilipes</i>	Daddy Long Legs	Trogloxene
Family Sabaconidae	<i>Sabacon sp.</i>		Epigean
	<i>Taracus spinosus</i>	Harvestman	
Order Pseudoscorpiones			
Family Undetermined	species not determined	False Scorpion, undetermined	
<b>Class Chilopoda</b>			
Order Geophilomorpha			
Family Undetermined	species not determined	Centipede, undetermined	
<b>Class Diplopoda</b>			
Order Chordeumatida			
Family Caseyidae	<i>Opiona sp. or gen. nov.</i>	Millipede, new species	Troglobiont
Family Conotylidae	<i>Lophomus sp. or gen. nov.</i>	Millipede, new species	Troglobiont
Order Polydesmida			
Family Xystodesmidae	<i>Harpaphe haydeniana</i>	Almond-scented Millipede	Epigean
<b>Class Entognatha</b>			
Order Collembola			
Family Entomobryidae	<i>Tomocerus sp.</i>	Springtail	
Order Diplura			
Family Campodeidae	<i>Haplocampa?</i>	Two-pronged Bristletail	Troglobiont
<b>Class Insecta</b>			
Order Archaeognatha			
Family Undetermined	species not determined	Jumping Bristletail	
Order Coleoptera			
Family Carabidae	species not determined	Ground Beetle, undetermined	
Family Curculionidae	species not determined	Weevil, undetermined	Epigean
Family Elateridae	<i>Limonius pictus</i>	Click Beetle	Epigean
Family Staphylinidae	<i>Quedius planus</i>	Rove Beetle	
Order Diptera			
Family Culicidae	species not determined	Mosquito, undetermined	
Family Mycetophilidae	species not determined	Fungus Gnat, undetermined	
	species not determined	Webworm, undetermined	
Family Tipulidae	species not determined	Crane-fly, undetermined	

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Order Grylloblattodea			
Family Grylloblattidae	species not determined	Rockcrawler	
Order Hemiptera			
Family Undetermined	species not determined	True Bug, undetermined	
Order Hymenoptera			
Family Formicidae	species not determined	Ant, undetermined	
Order Lepidoptera			
Family Geometridae	<i>Triphosa haesitata</i>	Twilight Moth	Trogloxene
Family Noctuidae	species not determined	Owlet Moth	
	<i>Scoliopteryx libatrix</i>	Herald Moth	Troglophile
	species not determined	Clothes Moth	
Family Tineidae			
Order Orthoptera			
Family Rhabdophoridae	<i>Ceuthophilus sp.</i>	Cave Cricket, undetermined	
<b>Class Malacostraca</b>			
Order Amphipoda			
Family Undetermined	species not determined	Sideswimmer, undetermined	
<b>Class Symphyla</b>			
Order Undetermined			
Family Undetermined	species not determined	Pseudocentipede, undetermined	
<b>Phylum Chordata</b>			
<b>Class Actinopterygii</b>			
Order Salmoniformes			
Family Salmonidae	<i>Oncorhynchus sp.</i>	Salmon or Trout	Epigeal
<b>Class Amphibia</b>			
Order Caudata			
Family Salamandridae	<i>Taricha granulosa</i>	Rough-skinned Newt	
<b>Class Mammalia</b>			
Order Carnivora			
Family Canidae	<i>Canis lupus</i>	Gray Wolf	Epigeal
Family Mustelidae	species not determined		
Order Chiroptera			
Family Vespertilionidae	<i>Corynorhinus t. townsendii</i>	Townsend's Long-eared bat	
	<i>Myotis sp.</i>	Myotis Bat, undetermined	
Order Rodentia			
Family Aplodontiidae	<i>Aplodontia sp.</i>	Mountain Beaver	Accidental
Family Muridae	<i>Neotoma sp.</i>	Woodrat	
<b>Phylum Mollusca</b>			
<b>Class Gastropoda</b>			
Order Stylommatophora			
Family Arionidae	<i>Ariolimax sp.</i>	Banana Slug	Epigeal
Family Bradybaenidae	<i>Monadenia churchi</i>	Klamath Sideband	
<b>Phylum Nemata</b>			
<b>Class Nematoda</b>			
Order Nematoda			
Family Undetermined	Nematoda	Roundworm, undetermined	
<b>Phylum Platyhelminthes</b>			
<b>Class Turbellaria</b>			
Order Tricladida			
Family Undetermined	species not determined	Cave Flatworm, undetermined	Stygobiont





*Entrance to Skunks Tail Cave measures 20 inches by 20 inches 9-7-10*

### **SKUNKS TAIL CAVE** By Bill Broeckel

One day (9-5-10) I was out ridgewalking with Rich Sundquist, Midori Sundquist, Forrest Sundquist, Walker Sundquist – yes, the entire Sundquist family – and Steve Knutson, just poking around and looking for caves. It was a very nice day, and we traveled light. We kept sending runners back to camp for this or that. The runner was mostly Forrest. I carried no water, little food, and one tiny flashlight. We came across a 1x2 ft phreatic tube opening in the face of a small cliff. I went in a short distance, then pushed back out feet-first. It looked like the cave kept going. Later on we found out this was a re-discovery – more about that forthwith.

The cave was solo surveyed on 9-7-10. Steve Knutson, Mark Harder, and Louisa Hooven were my spotters, even though the cave was only 66ft long. Photos were taken along the way through the crawlway (see photo essay). Here is a written description. The cave has two entrances. The main entrance is easy to reach, thanks to a handy ledge. This portal is 20in high and 20in wide. Most of the cave is 1ft high and 2ft wide, just like most of the lava tubes I find. The first obstacle is a hip poking blade where the cave first bends left, and forces the crawler up on a rough popcorn slope. Squeeze through that, then come upon the shore of a lake of rodent droppings. The pellets were large and cylindrical, and quite dry. The thought was maybe porcupine, but there were no quills. Maybe raccoon, marmot, or aplodontia (mountain beaver). I actually sent a stool sample to Geo, with identification still pending at this time.

Next the ceiling gets seriously low. But you can work your way under the low spot by plowing a furrow through the droppings. As you inch along, you can feel the ceiling push your chest deeper and deeper into the scat. Cough-inducing dust keeps rising up out of the powdery dry material, bringing up thoughts of hantavirus, histo, and such things. Sometimes you have to wonder why we do the things we do.

Next comes the major cave junction. Two joints appear to cross here on diagonals. Left is way too small. Straight goes out to the other entrance. You can see a little light at the end of that tunnel. The passage is just big enough to get through, but there are some problematic blades and stray rocks complicating matters, so I never actually went through it. The small cave exemption was invoked, and this short passage was added to the survey.

(continued)

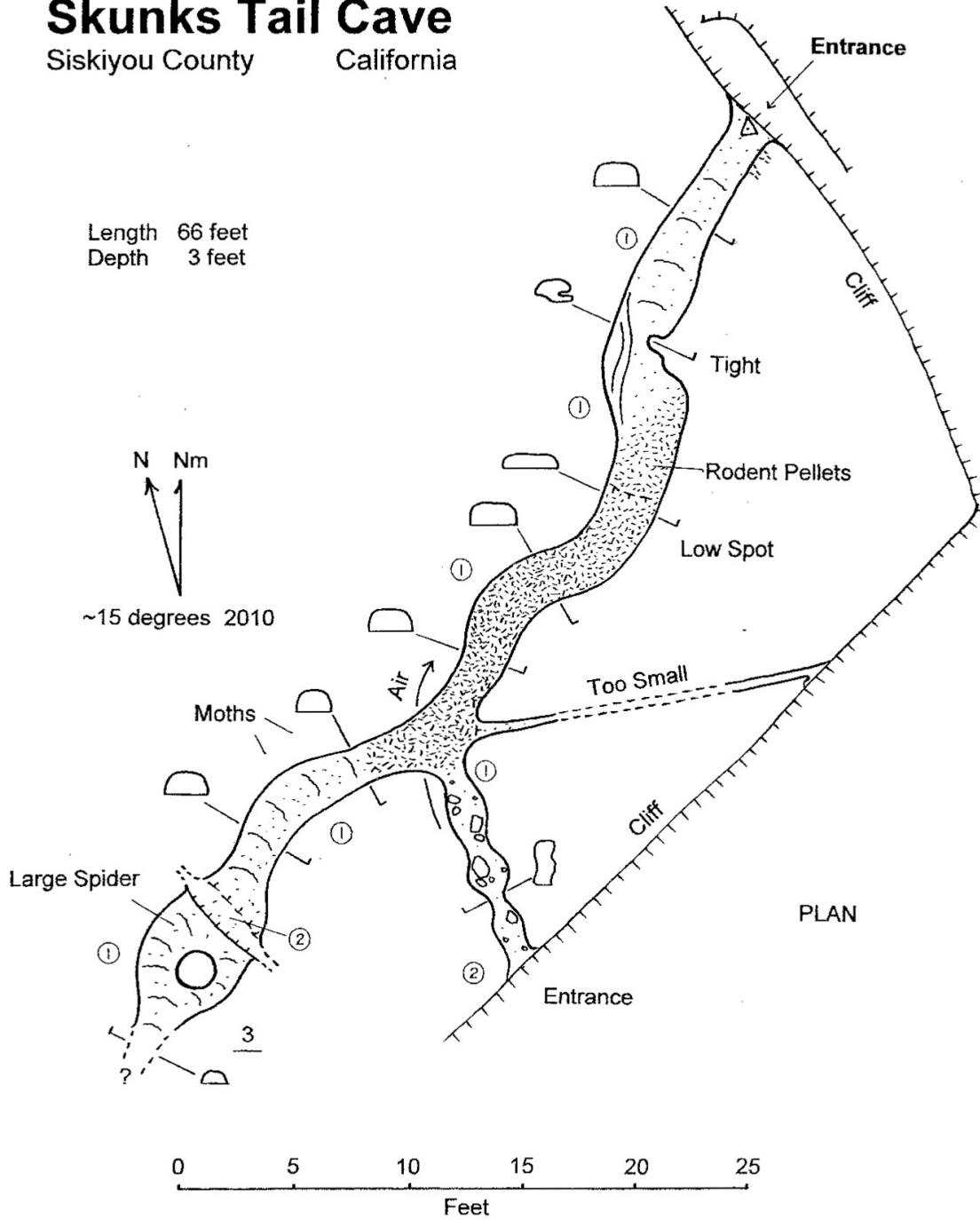
# Skunks Tail Cave

Siskiyou County California

Length 66 feet  
Depth 3 feet

N Nm

~15 degrees 2010



Small phreatic tube in Lower Karst marble.  
Tape, Compass, and Clinometer survey: 9-7-10.  
KMCTF, National Speleological Society.  
Cartography/Copyright 2011: Bill Broeckel.

Map: Skunks Tail Cave



*First bend to left in Skunks Tail Cave 9-7-10*



*Low spot with rodent pellet fill covering floor 9-7-10*

The right passage was the main continuing phreatic trend. Soon the far shore of the pellet pool was reached, thankfully, and on went the cave with nice clean surfaces. It turned left, and it turned right. Then things changed. The floor suddenly rose 1ft under a ceiling crack. Ahead the tube divided around a squat pillar up on the ledge. Left was too small, right maybe just big enough. However, it was defended by a humongous live specimen of the infamous and feared Klamath Mountain Speleo Death Spider (*arachnosaurus speleus rex*). It was ominously black in color, and was tense with anticipation, clicking its fangs and gathering up its venom. I definitely did not want to tangle with this beast in close quarters, and I backed right out of there expeditiously. It would probably be possible to turn around there at that ledge, if there were no spiders. As it was, this time I was perfectly happy to feet-first it back back back back around those bends, and again into that familiar scrunchy fill material. The spider can actually be seen in my disposable camera shot.

I was able to turn around at the grand cave junction spot by stuffing my legs into the alternative entrance

(continued next page)



passage discussed previously, and swinging my curled upper body on around. Then I was head first again for that yucky low spot, and made it on out OK. Wow, great new cave. Very horizontal. Actually, it wasn't so new.

The other day I was telling Arley Kisling about this "great" new cave, and he says "Oh yeah, we know about that one, Billy boy". You have to know Arley to get the intonations right. "Well, Arley, you could tell us about these things ahead of time, so we wouldn't have to beat the bushes so much trying to rediscover stuff." Anyway, it turns out that many, many years ago, Arley and Claude Smith (founding members of SAG) came upon the entrance to Skunks Tail Cave. Claude scooted in to check it out. After a while he returned and had just three words to say. "It pinches out". That was the end of that. Claude always did have a way with words. **BB**



*Skunks Tail Cave continues past junction area 9-7-10*



*End of Skunks Tail Cave, note giant spider on ceiling 9-7-10*

**HANGING LEDGES CAVE** By Bill Broeckel

The sun was going down as we set out for the upper karst. Even by KMCTF standards, this was a late start. We laid 200' of rope on the broad shoulders of Forrest Sundquist and took off on a tear up the mountains, hoping to find my cave entrance before dark. This is the one that has been patiently waiting for the survey tape this last couple years. Alas, caves can be so elusive at dusk, and this one got shy on us. It was about dark and we somehow ended up at the Breathing Entrance to Bigfoot Cave.

Suddenly Forrest came up with a substitute cave. We all decided "Why not?", and went over to check it out. The entrance sinkhole was small-to-medium size, with a cave passage climb-down at one end, dropping into a perfectly roomy and comfortable entrance chamber. Forrest was intent on a sharply descending crevice. You could see down in there, but it looked kind of small. We started pulling some rocks out, and I'm thinking this is already more of a cave than some that I map up. This might be a pretty quick little survey trip and we can go sit around the fire. Now we start repositioning some bigger rocks, working down in perfect stepwise fashion. We could loosen one rock at a time. Soon we had Forrest by the legs as he was head down in the crevice, wrestling with a 50 pound rock. We were hoping not to lose the rock, or Forrest, or both into the hole.

Finally we were down to one last rock. We had a piece of webbing wrapped around it. We could spin it, but we couldn't dislodge it from the grip of the crevice. So we rotated it into its best position and stabilized it there. It became a useful climbing hold. We were in. This was starting to get interesting. We had a new cave to explore, but first it was time to rig the coming drops and start the survey. Rich sensed what we were in for, and decided to head back to camp at a reasonable hour. This was a smart move on his part. Remember, he was nursing a bum knee. Losing Rich weakened our team, but we decided to carry on. We rigged off the neck of a big speleogen we called "The Dragons Head". Ethan Donahue showed me a cool way to rig the long rope. There were two lengths of rope off the rig knot. One length was about 65 feet long and the other was about 125 feet. First we dropped the short end down the hole. Ethan and Forrest climbed down using the rope as a handline. They were pushing the cave on survey, so I got to hang back and make notes in the book. They got through just fine, and found another smaller hole. This one went straight down. The handline reached a floor down past the second hole, so down they went further, and reported back that the cave kept going. I realized at this point that I would need to go down too if I wanted to keep on the survey of this exciting new cave. We switched to the longer rope.

The first hole was easy, but the second was snug around my chest. It was close, but I found I could exhale and let gravity do its thing. I made it down. Here we found a little bit of normal cave passage. This soon led to the top of a nice dome pit. There were two slabs of rock hanging over the pit like diving boards. One was above the other, with about 3ft of space in between. The upper one had a fingerlike projection at the end that just barely contacted the far wall of the dome pit. The lower one didn't reach at all, it just hung out there. It was hard to judge how stable these things were. These were the hanging ledges of Hanging Ledges Cave.

We found we could sneak around the left side of the first hanging ledge, cross over to the other side by crawling between the two ledges, and then climb down the rest of the way on the wall of the pit. We still had the handline. We all made it to the floor of the dome pit, all very comfy and secure down there, except for those diving board slabs up above hanging over our heads. We finished the survey, and admired a couple small blobs of mineralization on the walls. There was a lead, a crack going deeper, and heading in toward the mountain. However, it was too narrow in at least two spots and did not look very easy or promising. There was not much airflow in this cave, either. We decided we were done.

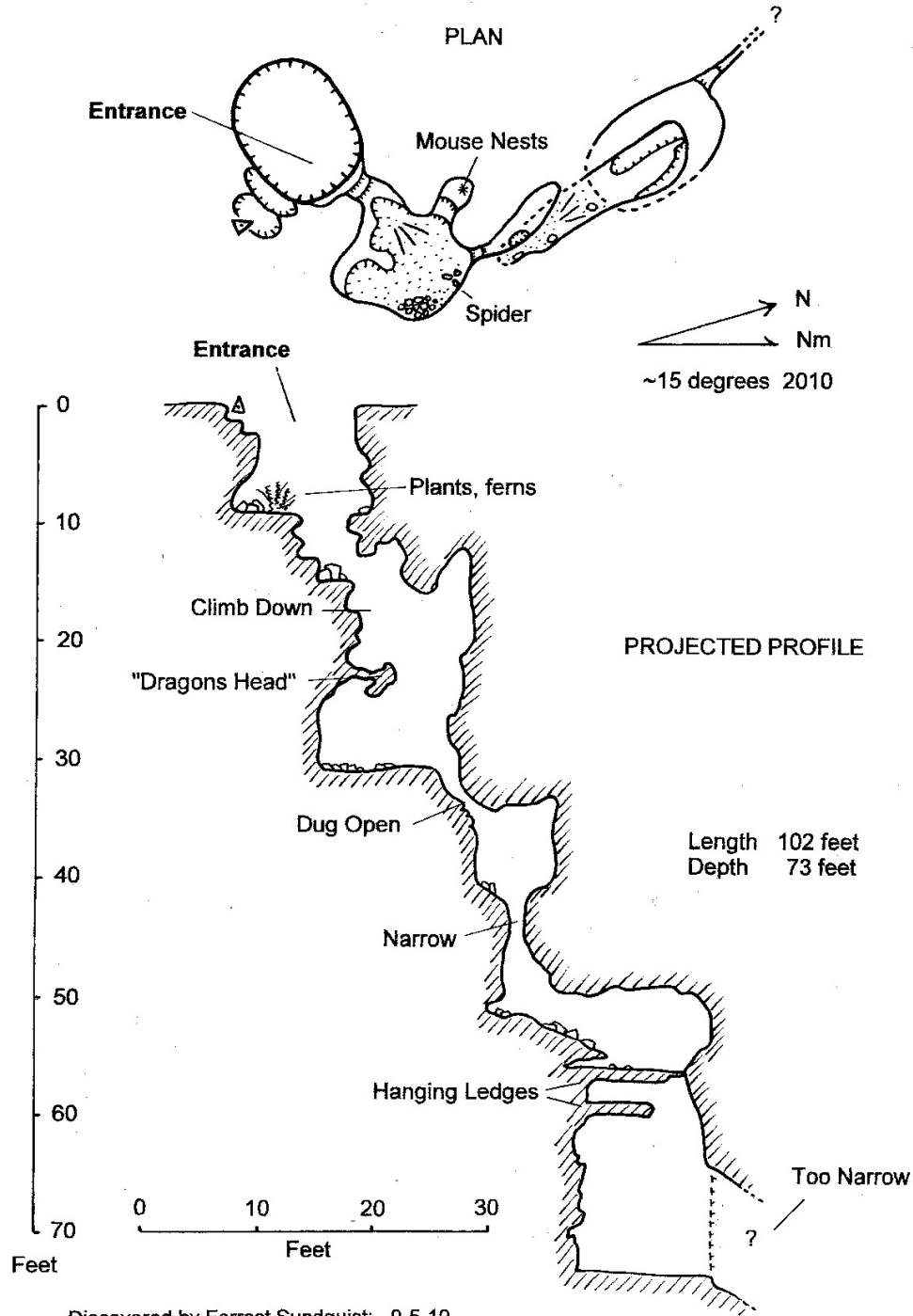
Now all we had to do was get back out, carefully. I decided to go first up the small hole. There was a narrow ledge, so I could push with my legs and try to get my chest through. Unfortunately, when I pushed real hard, my feet slipped off the ledge. For a moment I just hung there by my chest like a cork in an upside-down bottle. I tried a couple more times, then had Ethan and Forrest hold my feet on the ledge, exhaled, pushed, and the chest popped up and through the narrowest spot. Needless to say, I was relieved to get my 14 stones of 55 year old part-dead weight up and out of that hole.

(continued)

# Hanging Ledges Cave

Siskiyou County

California



Discovered by Forrest Sundquist: 9-5-10  
Tape, Compass, and Clinometer survey: 9-5-10  
KMCTF, National Speleological Society. Bill Broeckel,  
Ethan Donahue, Forrest Sundquist, and Rich Sundquist.  
Cartography/Copyright 2011: Bill Broeckel.

Map: Hanging Ledges Cave





*Dragon's Head rig point in  
Hanging Ledges 9-5-10*



*Ethan Donahue in the normal cave passage  
in Hanging Ledges Cave 9-5-10*

The rest was easy. We switched the rope from long back to short before the last guy came up the hole. Then we pulled the short end and coiled up the rope. No snags, no tangles, the rope management went very smoothly. The cave was in the book, we were safely topside, and it was a beautiful night in the mountains. A beautiful middle of the night. We headed back to camp on one of those routes you only do in the dark. The main problem was that the young guys were still checking for caves. Forrest found one that we all went in quite a ways, actually the best cave I saw on the trip. He called it Snow Canyon Cave. It might be one of those caves that is darker at night. This one needs to get checked again sometime.

Ethan returned safely to his loving wife Lindsay, Forrest rejoined his family, everybody could now relax, and I was very happy to duck in my tent and get some hours of sleep. Hanging Ledges is a pretty cool cave, but I don't think it will be real popular with tourist crowd. **BB**



*Ethan Donahue emerges from first hole in Hanging Ledges 9-5-10*



*Decorated area in Hanging Ledges 9-5-10*



*Entrance sinkhole to Hanging Ledges Cave 9-7-10*

**KMCTF AREA TRIP REPORT OCTOBER 31, 2010** By Mark Fritzke

Last Sunday I made a late season logistics trip. There was a trace of snow at Lovers Camp, and a few inches in the Drystream area. Rainfall from the previous weekend's storm had filled up the lower karst, flooding Sinking Stream Cave until the entrance became a spring. Melting snow and rain from an upper drainage was flowing past Upstream and beginning to fill the dry stream bed below the main confluence. Most interesting of all – Sisyphus Cave (in the dry stream bed) was a flowing spring, almost certainly from the underlying Bigfoot/Brokedown Palace system. **MF**

Sinking Stream

Sisyphus



*Breathing Entrance to Bigfoot Cave 9-7-10*



*Mark Harder (L), Steve Knutson (M), and Louisa Hooven (R)  
Skunks Tail Cave spotting team 9-6-10*

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