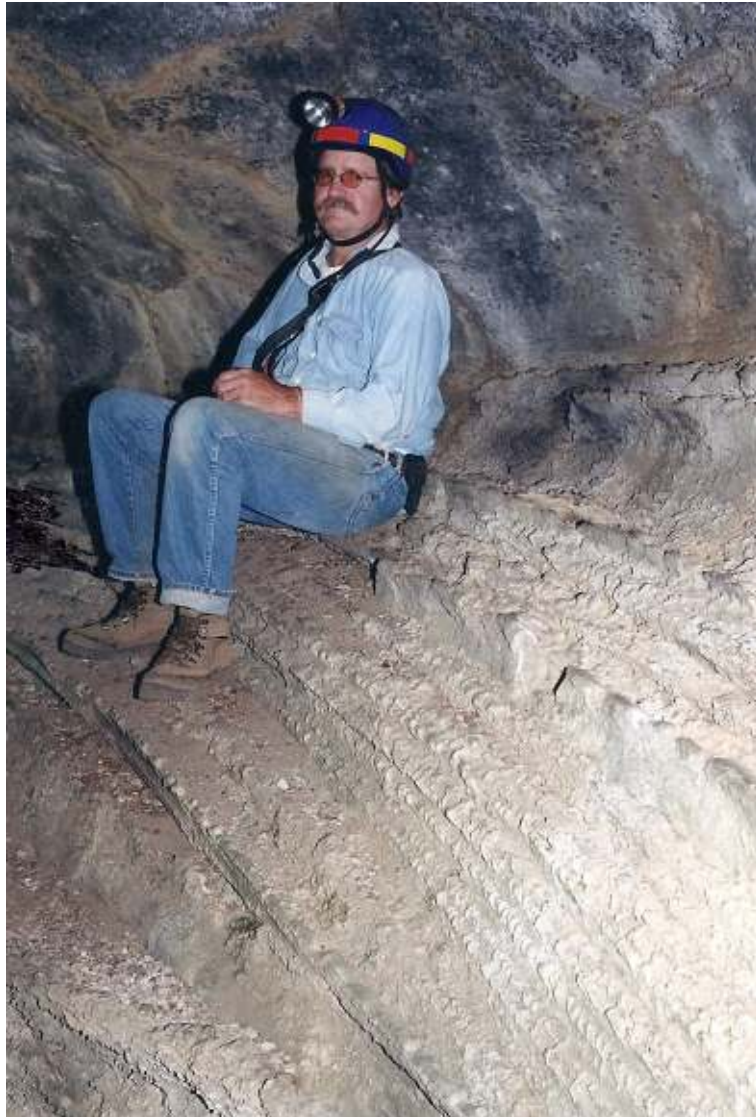


sag rag

31:4 July-Aug 2012



Jim Wolff and flow lines in Roadside Complex Cave #1

Medicine Lake Highlands Update

Correspondence: Dave Smith, Doug Viner, Liz Wolff will attend SAR/SAG cave rescue practice in Oct.

Old Business: Last month the grotto patches were finally rec'd, but they were for the Parkers Area Grotto so Steve had to return them. Our patches should arrive the first week of September. The Marble Pack trip: the horses will leave Fri. Aug. 31 at 8:00 am and we return Mon. Sept. 3 with horses arriving at 10 am.

New Business: Pre planning for the SAG/SAR cave rescue practice on Sat. Oct. 13, 2012. Can we build on last year's training or will it be a repeat? Will we have the same people or more or new members? We need to focus on working quickly and accurately on patient packaging, litter handling, and belaying techniques. Discuss in-cave movement, hasty search, gear management etc. Dr. Bill will give a short talk on Hypothermia prevention, signs and treatment in rescuers and patients. Melanie is to find out what SAR wants. We may not do much different than last year depending on SAR attendance. Rudi Hendricks has a Mountain Hardware cave suit for sale for \$100.00.

Calendar:

Sept. 14-16 – MLG trip to LABE

Sept. 28-30 – Western Regional in Stanislaus Area

Oct. 12 – SAG meeting at Wolffs' Preparation for next day

Oct. 13 – Rescue training with Siskiyou SAR (Pluto's Cave)

Oct. 26 – Manzanita Ridge Cave Trip? Chris Kennedy Weaverville Date may change (TBA)

Dec. 7 – SAG Meeting Steve Hobson's Redding, local cave trip

Trip Reports:

Bill Broeckel, July 30 resurvey of Roly Poly Cave. Aug. 14 Medicine Lake track GPS locations. New caves in water area. Aug. 18 Hat Creek Survey closed due to fire. Aug. 19 attended Barnum Cave trip with NFS. Rechel kids at the last cave meeting at Natural Bridges. The following week Chris Kennedy and Jed Medin explored more.

August 19, 2012 Ray Miller, Liz Wolff, and local biologists Mary Ellen Coleburg and Julie York spoke to 37 people at Barnum Cave regarding Bats, Mines, and Caves as part of Nature Watch/connecting people with nature education program presented by USFS & USFWS.

July 27-29 Wayne and Melanie attended the MLG 50th Anniversary and took the Middle Earth Cave tour with a total of 15 cavers at California Caverns in California City. Major mud (the clay type) and real dirty fun. You should see the before and after photos.

Ed Bobrow and Bill Devereaux went to take ice readings at LABE and had difficulty finding the ice pins because there was four feet of water, but they did find more ice than last year. Ed reports Vandalism in Skull Cave. The cave is now closed. There was evidence that a torch was used. The vandals also took out the solar lights at the visitor center presumably to use as light sources?

Rudi slept in Cui de Sac cave on Memorial Day. Has also taken a trip to Samwel Cave and while in the Marble Mtns. July 4th weekend he spent most of his time in Trail Junction Cave. Rudi, Chris K. and Jed M. also went back to Manzanita cave finding connections to the lower, upper, and front of the cave.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Melanie Jackson SAG Secretary

MJ

ROADSIDE COMPLEX CAVES

By L. Wolff

Geologically the Roadside Complex of caves is an interesting area. It appears the flow became blocked, or the pre-flow landform impeded the flow, creating a dam about 15 feet higher than the aa lava ponded behind it. The complex is made up of an arch and eight caves. Two caves and the arch have entrances next to the road, giving the complex its name. Below the dam and the road three outflow channels can be found, but entry will be, um, shall we say, in need of full body armor? Most of the caves were surveyed in 1987, caves 2B & 6 were done in 2012.

Cave #1 is the longest and most complex, having upper levels, side passages, and fantastic flow ledges adorning one wall of the cave. An exit is perched on the hillside above the ponded area behind the dam. The cave is located in the pressure ridge, with a crawl passage leading from the entrance toward the arch. At the main entrance, the cave extends along the road and is breakdown blocked. It is 260 feet long.

Cave #2 is two bridges that nearly connect in the ponded area that drains toward the arch. The low broad passages are rubble floored and the actual connection between the two caves is breakdown blocked. Cave #2 is 78 feet long. The tall narrow arch is 8 feet long and is the only cave remnant to breach the dam; all the others spill over it or pass along the top of it.

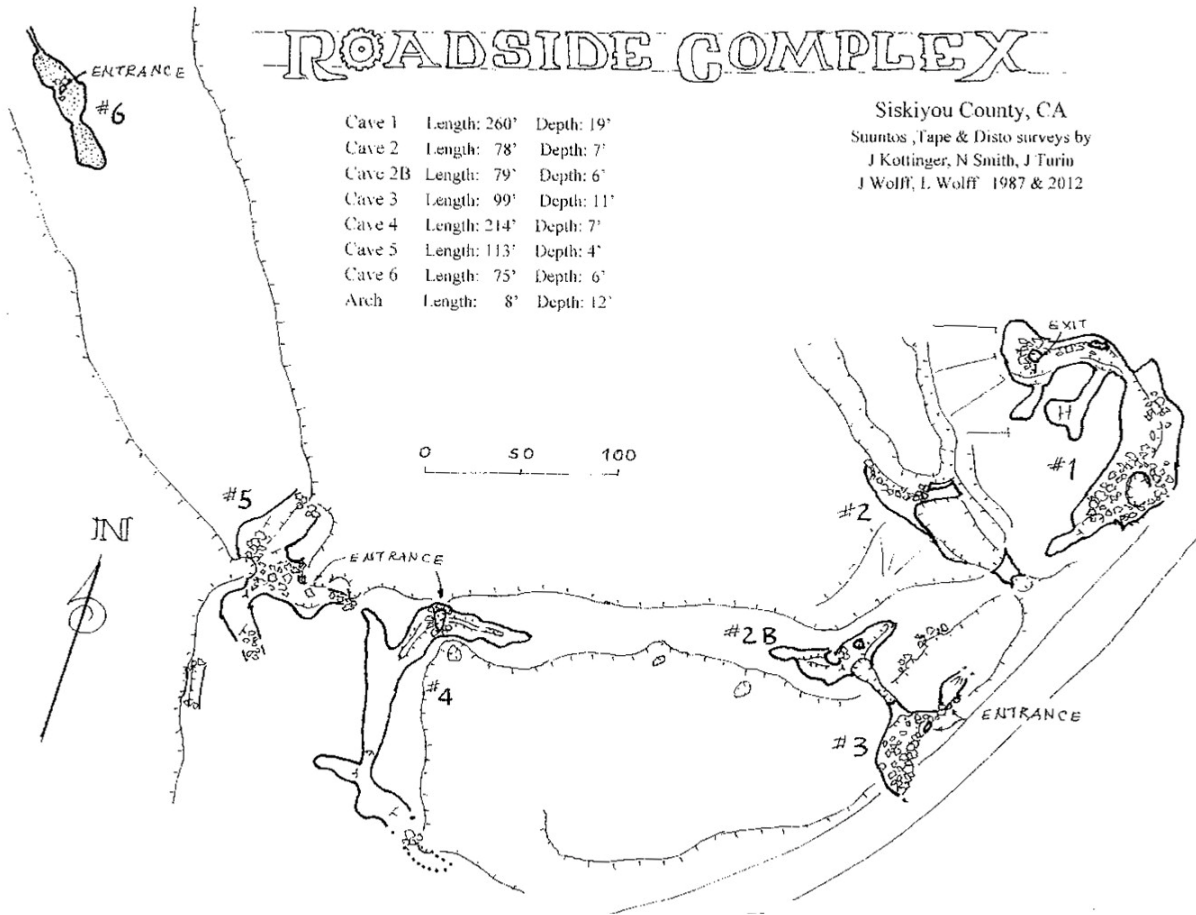
Atop the pressure ridge south of the arch, Cave #2B has a short walking passage with a false floor in the back of the cave. A crawl passage heads west from the entrance along the pressure ridge toward Cave #4. Cave #2B is 79 feet long. Cave #3, which shares the trench with #2B, begins as an open, narrow funnel where the flow descended steeply off the ridge into a chamber below and beside it. The funnel has some really nice flow ledges and a false floor where the lava fall debauches into the main chamber of the cave. It is breakdown floored with a small exit beside the road. Cave #3 is 99 feet in length. Beside the roadside entrance is a small unsurveyed cave, low and intact that ascends towards the arch about 15 feet before becoming too small to continue.

To the west, Cave #4 opens on the side of the ridge. It has a skylight entrance, a mini-pressure ridge and inflated floor in one end of the cave; a side passage pinches out just before the cave becomes too small to go further, as it goes off the ridge toward the road. It is 214 feet long. Just a bit beyond the point where it becomes too small, a small tube remnant faces the road.

Cave #5 was dubbed "Unprintable Name" during the survey, because no one had anything good to say about it. Breakdown floored crawls and jagged ceilings, typical of surface tubes, are the main features of this cave. An interesting note, this cave passes completely through the pressure ridge with entrances on each side. It totals 105 feet.

The last cave, #6 has a small, inconspicuous skylight entrance. The floors are mainly mud, covered with a lacy white fungus in one area, and the only breakdown is right around the entrance. The south wall of the cave has two scrolls and a narrow apron running much of the length of the cave. One end of the cave is mud filled and the other narrows until it is too small to continue. Cave #6 is 74.5 feet in length.

LW



Neils Smith and Liz Wolff in Roadside Complex Cave #1 (2004)

GIGANTOPITHECUS CAVE**By Bighorn Broeckel**

After so many crawly surface tubes, something larger comes along, seemingly massive, and it ends up with a big name like Gigantopithecus. In reality, the upper level here is indeed a nice big walking passage with a bread loaf cross-section (think long balconies), but it is not at all "gigantic" when compared to many other similar lava tube caves. It also has nothing to do with giant apes or evidence of Bigfoot. This is just a newly described big walking cave that needed a big name.

We first saw this Gigantopithecus when casting about after the Neapolitan Cave survey on 10-26-10. The upper level checked out great, so we came back and surveyed it on 11-16-10. On both of those occasions, exploration was halted by the edge of the internal pit. Then the cave rested for a time, a true hanging survey. My imagination, however, did not rest, and in my mind the pit took on greater and greater proportions, as did the virgin lower level certain to be found down in there. You could even see it starting back underneath the top floor.

So the matter remained until the 8-24-12 SAG meeting at Sam Baxter's in Mt. Shasta. Many enthusiastic cavers attended this event, but too bad there were many wildfires around the Northstate with closures that were messing up all our great plans and schemes for caving that weekend. In the event, it wasn't too difficult to promote a trip out to an "undropped pit with a virgin lower level", and not closed by forest fires.

Never-the-less, the air was thick with smoke the next morning when we gathered at the remote end of a dirt road. Rudi Bega caught up to us just in time on his motorcycle, and we set off with GPS units in hand. Our numbers were dwindling slightly, as Judy Broeckel stayed home, and Liz Wolff took one look at the smoke (equivalent to a pack/year of smoking), and wisely took off for the cleaner air of higher climes (see further). The remaining dogged cave rats hiked off coughing into the noxious clouds of smoke wafting through the woods: drawn along by the promise of virgin cave.

On the spot, Melanie Jackson gave me a crash course on entering a location into a hand-held GPS device. We remembered the #1 rule of GPS frolicking, that is, first GPS the cars. Once all the GPS units converged on the cave, we geared up, and it took all of about one minute to reach the pit; whereupon our celebrated Grotto climbing members, Rudi, Steve Hobson, and Chris Kennedy, immediately, without hesitation, free-climbed down it, gleefully using any variety of routes. A few moments later, the word came back that the lower level ended after about ten feet. Melanie, Hobson, and Wolff went out to set up a vertical practice near the entrance. Dave Smith and I managed to do the downclimb, which was much easier than I had imagined, and I was feeling glum. This trip was taking on all the makings of a Ghar Parau (see book of the same title).

We, however, were reluctant to give up on our hopes of virgin cave. It had to be down there, so we set to work moving the rocks that were blocking the way. Eventually we had a chain gang with Chris at point, then me, then Rudi and

(continued)



Jim Wolff and Chris Kennedy rigging the “gigantic pit” in Gigantopithecus Cave 8-24-12



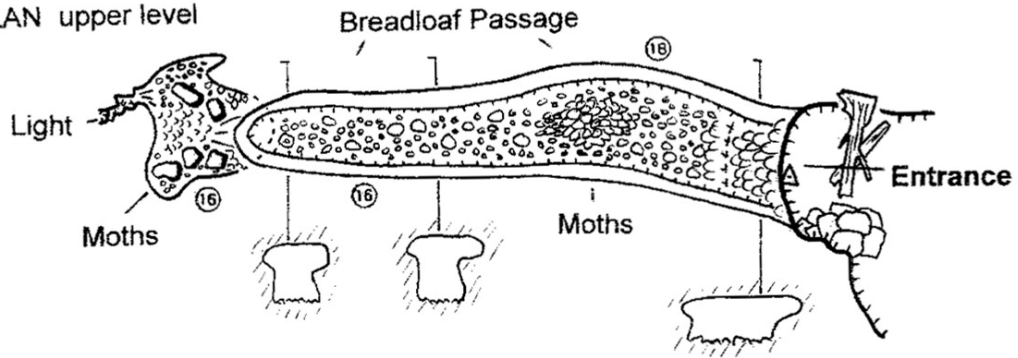
Side passage in Roadside Complex Cave #1 (2004)
Person shown in picture shall not be identified.

Gigantopithecus Cave

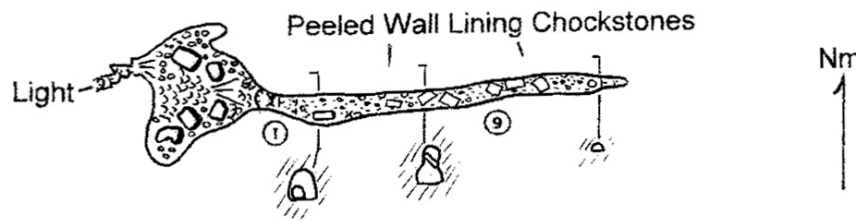
Siskiyou County California

Length 304 feet
Depth 44 feet

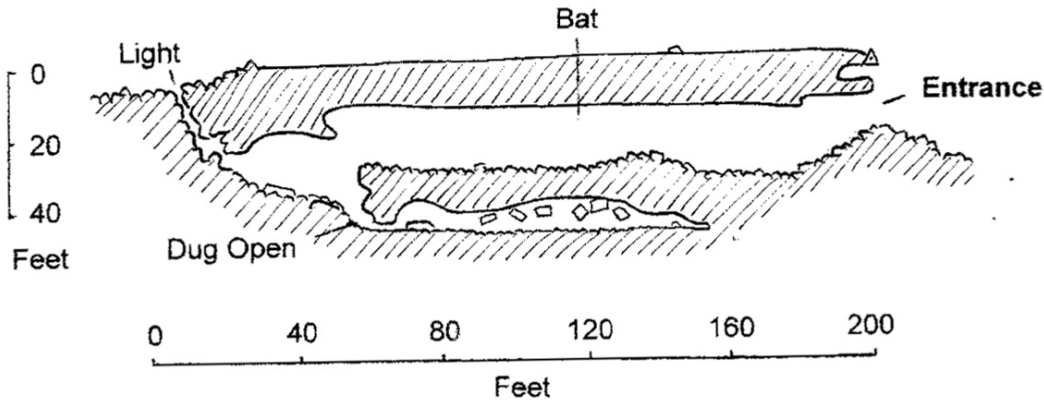
PLAN upper level



PLAN lower level



PROFILE



SAG/NSS - Tape & Instrument Survey 11-16-10 Bill Broeckel and Judy Broeckel.
8-25-12 Rudi Bega, Bill Broeckel, Steve Hobson, Melanie Jackson, Chris Kennedy,
Jim Wolff, and Liz Wolff. Cartography/Copyright 2012: Bill Broeckel.

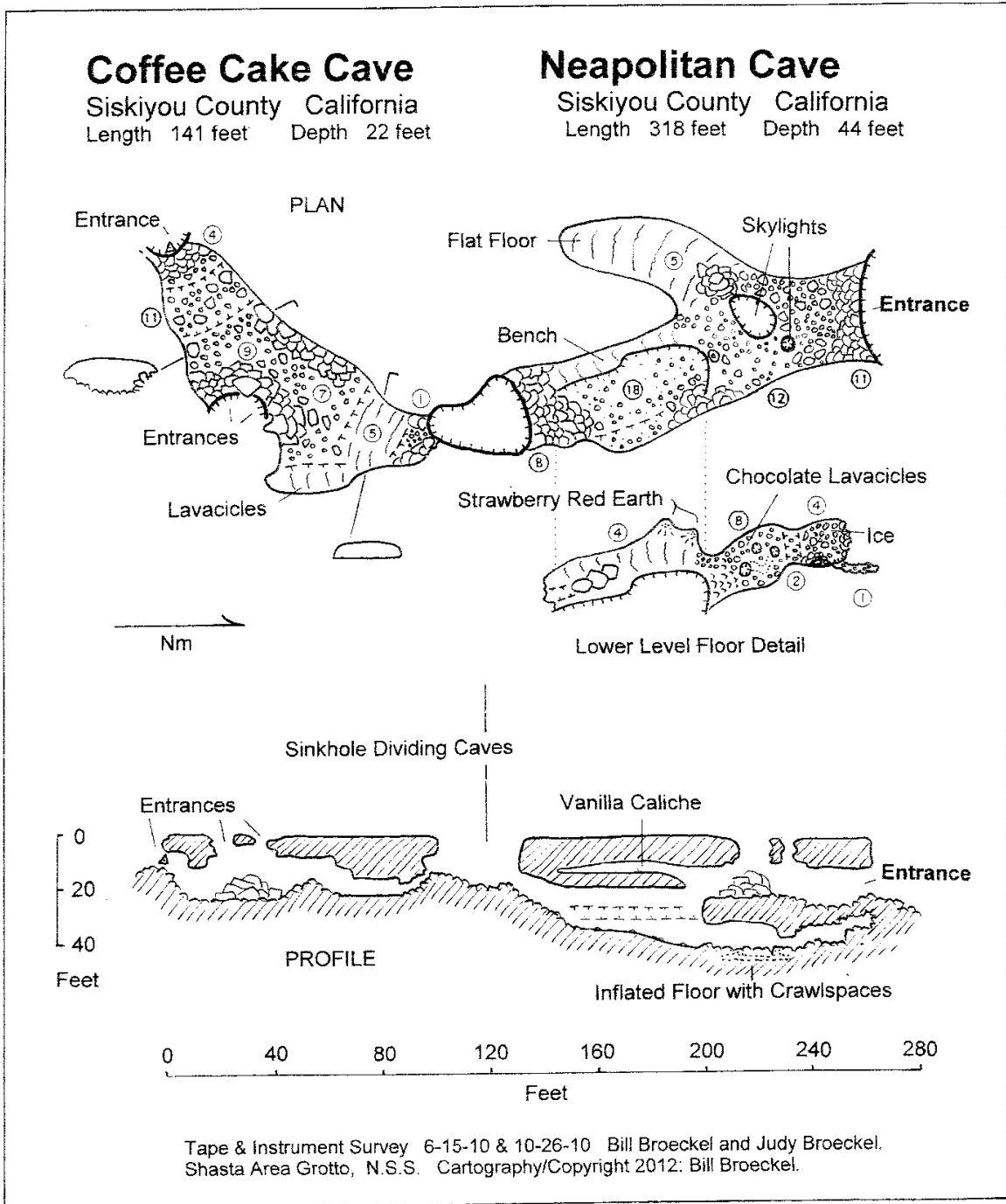
Map: Gigantopithecus Cave

Dave, passing back rock after rock and stabilizing the route. After about 30 minutes of this ... futility? ... suddenly Chris was able to turn a big rock to the side and there was enough room to get through. A ripple of excitement and happiness passed through the entire group and beyond.

The new passage was almost as long as the upper level, but much smaller caliber, and quite different in style. The cross-section was tall and triangular, 8-9 feet tall and several feet wide. Wall and ceiling peeled-off linings were wedged in there, such that we had to wind around these hanging slabs and chunks to make progress. A similar situation occurs near the end of Arch Cave, another lava tube in Siskiyou County, and both caves end up at inexplicable crawlways suddenly too small to continue.

Another passage in Gigantopithecus, "too small to continue", is found back in the south end of the cave, leading up to the surface and allowing a tiny patch of daylight to enter. On this particular occasion, the light was a dirty orange in color, from all the smoke outside. Oddly enough, the orange light looked like a small campfire glowing in the back of the pit/room. Rudi, Chris, Dave, and Wolff all helped with the survey, and others enjoyed touring the new passage where the refreshing air was cooler, and smoke-free. Some of the group also visited an additional pair of caves present a short distance down-flow from Gigantopithecus. These two (Coffee Cake and Neapolitan) were located and surveyed in the Fall of 2010. Neapolitan has its own lower level, and an upper level side passage as well, such that it is actually a bit longer than Gigantopithecus. Ultimately, however, the big G did end up coming through on that projected virgin passage. Cool beans after all.

Added up together, the three caves contribute about 760 feet of new cave survey to the wealth of the Medicine Lake Highlands of Siskiyou County, and one can sense the ripple of excitement and happiness extending further into the circle of kindred spirits who read these newsletter reports. **BB**



Map: Coffee Cake Cave, Neapolitan Cave



Dig site in Gigantopithecus Cave 8-24-12



Peeled off chokestones in Gigantopithecus Cave 8-24-12



Dave Smith under peeled wall lining - lower level of Gigantopithecus Cave 8-24-12



Chris Kennedy in same passage as above 8-24-12

About Bats
ROOSTS

Where bats hang out (or down) is called a roost. There are basically four types of roosts.

The day roost, as the name implies, is a place where the bats feel relatively safe to go about their daytime business of napping and grooming. This is also a place where they might go into torpor, a short term hibernation where their metabolism shuts down to conserve energy.

A night roost will be easily accessed from their foraging area. Here the bats will rest between hunting expeditions, digest their bugs and socialize. Car ports are a favorite night roost location, and many a car owner has been left to wonder how all the "mouse droppings" got on their cars.

A nursery roost is a secure area, warm and away from drafts, where the females rear their pups. For the wellbeing of the little ones

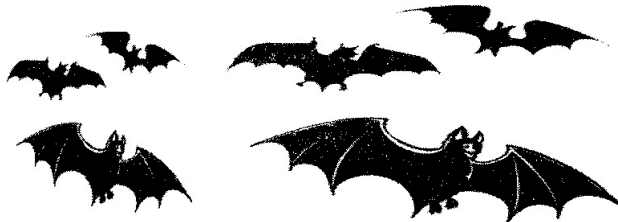
always stay clear of an occupied nursery roost.

A winter time roost we encounter in caves is the hibernacula. Here the winter temperature is fairly constant and near, but not reaching freezing. The humidity is high. For those bats that do not migrate hibernation is how they make it through the winter. In hibernation their body temperature drops to the ambient temperature, and they live on stored fat. The bats sense any intrusion, and although there is no apparent movement they will shiver to bring up their body temperature. Body fat consumption then becomes excessive and that can cause the animals to starve to death. It may be an hour before they appear awake.

Roosts may contain one or many thousands of bats.

Ray Miller

SAG RAG
2916 Deer Mdws Rd
Yreka CA 96097



STAMP

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TO: