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Carlene Allred

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THE ALASKAN CAVER

VOLUME 24 NUMBER 3, JULY, 2004

SPECIAL

CORONATION

ISLAND

ISSUE



J. KREJKA

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Camp Cave, Coronation Island. Photo by Jean Krejca

Front cover: Vivian Loftin and Kevin Allred sketch in Camp Cave on Coronation Island, photo by Jean Krejca

CORONATION ISLAND EXPEDITION 2002 LOG

by Kevin Allred

April 23, 2002

I arrived back at Whale Pass on about April 18th to help Pete prepare for the expedition and also work on our house building project. Things are looking good on the house, but it is time consuming. My goal is to put all or nearly all of the interior shiplap yellow cedar and get it sealed with polyurethane. Lots more to put up yet, but with long hard days I think it is possible. Pete finished building his ~25 foot boat. It is narrow, very streamlined, and really moves even with a full load. We took off this morning around 7:00AM from El Cap where the Forest Service has their work camp. It is vacant right now. Pete is planning on doing the transfer in on just two trips, and me, Steve Lewis, Kevin Casey, and Terri Brown were on the boat with lots of gear. We had some waves with whitecaps and wind to 20 MPH, and then big swells on the outside. I started getting a bit woozy, as it was a long haul to do the 55 miles.



The boat that Pete built. Photo by Jean Krejca

We are on Coronation Island at the southeast corner of Windy Bay. We set up the camp for the two weeks we intend to be here. It is truly an amazing place. Many of the trees are odd-shaped with branching trunks. Steve (who has spent some time here) calls them "Coronation trees". Pete may not make it back tonight with the rest of the group. I'm feeling a bit under the weather. I'm dozing while writing this.

April 24, 2002

Today we (Terry Brown, Kevin Casey, Steve Lewis, and I) had breakfast then took off to hike up the mountain side to the south where some cavers (Steve, Pete, and the Forest Service and Tim Heaton found some caves last summer. We used Steve's GPS to relocate them and found some new ones. Surveyed one of these new ones called Hooting Grouse Cave, a 20 foot pit with a slope below. Then we went to Colander Cave. It begins with a 35 foot pit and opens up into a neat horizontal phreatic level. Last year Tim Heaton collected some extinct brown bear bones dating ~11,000 years as I recall. There were also deer bones, but not nearly as old. We surveyed lots of passage and found neat

Finger-like tiny formations hanging down from the underside of breakdown, directional cave popcorn, and some moonmilk "cotton balls". Terry found some worms, a fungus gnat, and one small white amphipod (in a small puddle). Incredible! How did it get to this Island, or did it evolve from ocean ones? I found a surface harvestman of unknown species.



Amphipod in Colander Cave. Photo by Jean Krejca

We went back down to camp and found the others there, their having arrived around midday. On the way here, Pete stopped near Egg Harbor and promptly caught a 50 pound halibut, some of which he served for dinner. I felt a bit sickly at times today, but am better tonight. Maybe a touch of the flu. Steve Carley had to go to the hospital in Ketchikan and get checked. He is very sick. It is hoped he and Deb his wife can join us on the second week. Tomorrow we continue the Colander survey and some of the others will check a resurgence cave entrance near China Cove.

April 26, 2002

Yesterday was bad. Terry, Creature, and I went up to Colander Cave and we managed to move in a big boulder which was blocking a drafty side lead. Inside, we started surveying and were heading up a chimney. Terry had already gone up and I was following to sketch the last shot. A flake of rock I grabbed came loose and I hurriedly moved my hand downwards for another hold and the flake fell on my little finger nearly severing it. I was able to see the end of the last bone sticking out. We washed it the best we could and headed out and to camp. Creature thought she could sew it back, so at camp she did. She even had a hypodermic to deaden it. I hope and pray that all the mud and rock is cleaned out. Also yesterday, the other group explored and surveyed some littoral caves along the south coast. I'm taking at least one or two days off caving to give my finger a chance to knit. Still bleeding.

(continues on page 4)

I am on a hike around the north side of Windy Cove. Found one 30 foot long cave with phalangids (harvestman) and they are hibernating there. Some died and white fungus grows on their bodies and leg joints.

4:40PM

A big wind came up on my way back to camp, and when I got there, I checked the boat and marked an "X" on the ground to sight over and make sure the anchor was holding. Went to check later and the boat is on the rocks and the tide is too low to do anything now. Some damage, but it will still float. Pete will be upset.

April 28, 2002

Well, yesterday we left Pete in camp and went part way up Needle Peak and found the snow too deep for our liking. Swung south and crossed a broad saddle. Then split into two teams. Me, Viv, Creature, and Terri went across to a large flat, but heavily karsted area south of camp. Found a couple small caves and leads. One being a blowing dig. A place to return to, but overall disappointing to me. Lots of endless intense karst. One could wander a lifetime on this Island and not see the same place twice. It was cold and windy all day. I took the dressing off my poor finger and creature changed dressing. It may just heal.



Creature's patch job. Photo by Jean Krejca

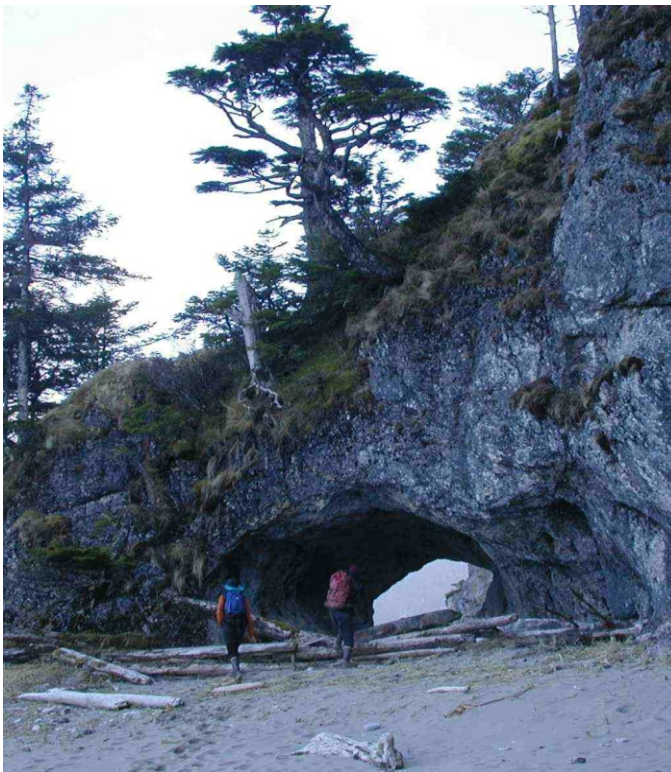
to make sure Pete would get it beached on the sand OK. I guess, today we, or at least some of us will go back to the caves we found yesterday. Weather is holding dry, windy, overcast, but cold (lower than the mid 40's). I have to wear a glove partway on my left bad hand to help it warm so it can heal.

April 29 (AM)

Yesterday we slid the boat down logs to the more gradual part of the flats, then waited for the tide to come in. Pete was boating home and dropped the rest of us off at Egg Harbor where we planned on surveying a string of littoral caves there. The boat ride was rough, but we pounded our way there eventually.

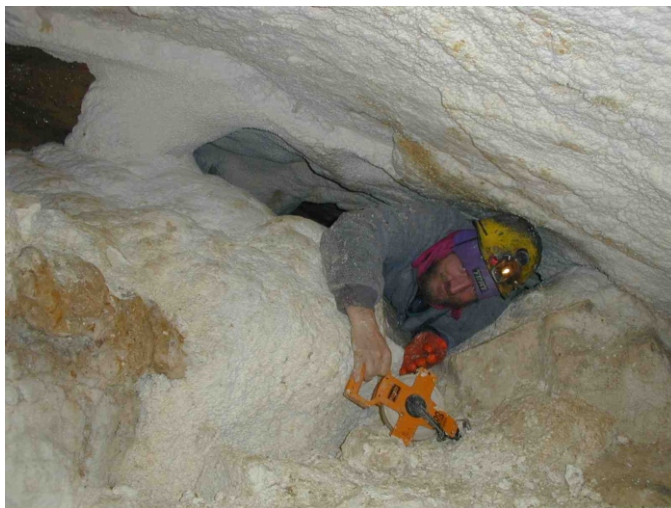
We split into three teams and Kevin and I surveyed two caves and started on a third. The second one had an old broken and rotting ladder in it. It once gave access up a flowstone-lined chimney which we deemed too delicate to climb up. There were no helictites as once described by Steve Lewis. Flowstone and a bit of cave coral and lots of popcorn. A few soda straws and some draperies and short stalagmites. I wonder if it is "Folklore Cave" as described by Hackman in

1949. I now feel strongly that Miner Diversion Cave is a much better candidate for Folklore Cave, as it has many draperies resembling octopus tentacles, easily visible above the floor of the large entry chamber. The third cave I let Kevin sketch because my finger was hurting when I did. It has lots of evidence of camping by natives with firepits and bones and chiton shells associated with them. Someone has to go back and finish the cave. The others found a going dimbing lead in one of their caves with another old ladder in it. They need rope to climb it. We rushed to get back to camp before dark.



Arch at Egg Harbor, Photo by Jean Krejca

We had to hike up over a pass between Egg Harbor and Windy Bay. Took around three hours. My finger was throbbing yesterday and I hope it is not infected. Maybe I used it too much.



Kevin Allred maneuvers around moonmilk in Slant Cave. Note the glove on his left hand to protect his injured finger. Photo by Jean Krejca

April 30 (AM)

Yesterday was a day off and we washed clothes and ourselves. I went on a long hike along the coast cliffs to the southwest. Found a 15 - 20 sea cave ? way up (100 feet) above the present ones in the forest. It had an old fire pit. On my way back I went too far into the woods and got completely turned around for a while. Used shadows on my fingers (barely any perceptible shadow) to orient myself somewhat. Headed for the sound of the wind and sea. I was back on the coast. Hugged it tighter this time, and got back OK. Pete had returned from Prince of Wales Island bringing his sons Jed and Kina and Steve Carley and Deb. We are probably going to Egg Harbor by skiff, but I don't know what I should do climbing, hiking, and caving-wise, since my finger is throbbing and still swollen.

May 1, (PM)

This morning when I awoke, my finger was itching a bit, which is encouraging. Also, today I felt much less internal tearing when I accidentally move it. We split into two teams, Pete and his boys staying in camp. Jed and Kina were too tired to do anything after a long hike most of the crew took yesterday back around the shoreline from Pin Peak and Egg Harbor. Pete minded the boat during 30 - 35 knot winds while Creature, Viv and I did some more survey in the Egg Harbor littoral caves. There are now a total of seven caves. In Miner Diversion Cave, Viv and Creature did a bolt climb up a huge fissure which had not just the one, but two old pole ladders. Someone long ago had been there. I took it real easy with my bad finger and made a compass and pace survey of the caves entrances and their relationships.



Miners' Diversion Cave. Photo by Jean Krejca

Today me, Chris, Viv, and Creature surveyed a couple tiny caves on the karsted flats south of camp. Steve Lewis, Steve Carley, Kevin Casey, and Terri dug in a 70 foot pit and hope to continue tomorrow. I may hike tomorrow with some of the others. There are some unexplored caves there.

May 3

Somewhere I must have lost a day. Yesterday a team worked on Flag Cave (the 70 foot pit) which now has another name. An unstable log threatened to slip down and plug a dig they were working on. There was a five second clattering drop below which turned out to end only 40 feet down. They then went to Lost Cave, one found last year. It keeps going in a nine second clattering drop. Meanwhile, Viv, Chris, Creature and I hiked. Steve Lewis loaned Chris his drysuit and I loaned Creature mine. They went into a resurgence cave discovered



Chris Krejca donning Steve's drysuit. Photo by Jean Krejca

Earlier in the expedition. It looked like it sumped, but they went about 400 feet and it kept going. I wanted to explore the area a little, but the others were anxious about getting to camp and meeting Pete who had decided to take advantage of calmer (20 knot winds) weather and shuttle a group out in the boat. It continues to be unseasonably cold, clear, and windy. Today (this morning), Pete may come in and pick the rest of us up. I've mixed feelings, but I could not do any real hard caving anyway, and probably would not be able to get into the drysuit, let alone have my hand wet and cold for days. Weather has calmed considerably, but the forecast is for rain, snow, and winds for the weekend anyway. So we need to be ready. 🍌

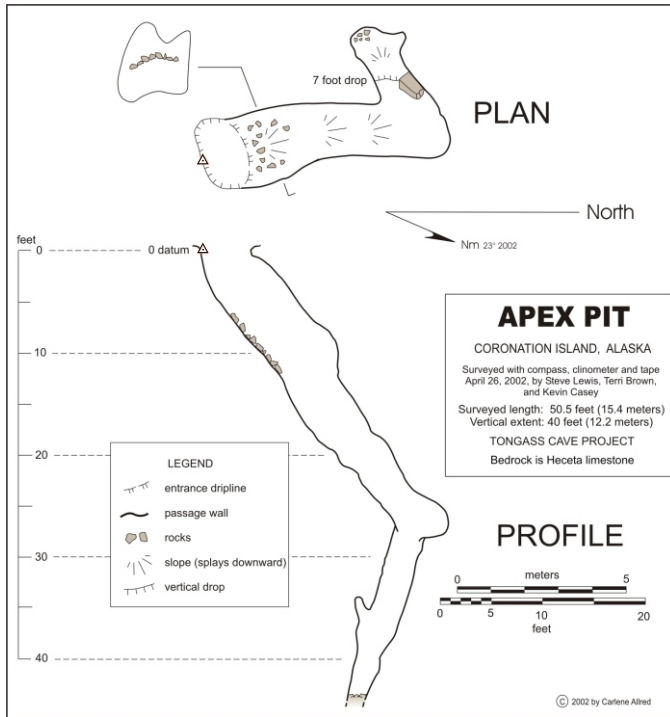
CORONATION ISLAND, TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST, ALASKA
CAVE REPORT #331
TONGASS CAVE PROJECT
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
November 25, 2002 by Kevin Allred

Description:

Apex Pit was discovered about 60 feet west of Hidden Fern Cave by Terry Brown and Kevin Allred, then surveyed on April 26, 2002 by Kevin Casey, Steve Lewis, and Terri Brown. The cave is formed in Heceta Limestone and consists of a sloping pit choked with rubble. It is a total of 50.5 feet (15.4m) long and 40 feet (12.2m) deep. The cave walls are highly fractured, causing unstable, loose rocks. No animal bones or cultural evidence were found. A harvestman was seen near the entrance.

Management Recommendations:

Apex Pit could be visited by those cautious of the unstable rock and prepared with rope.

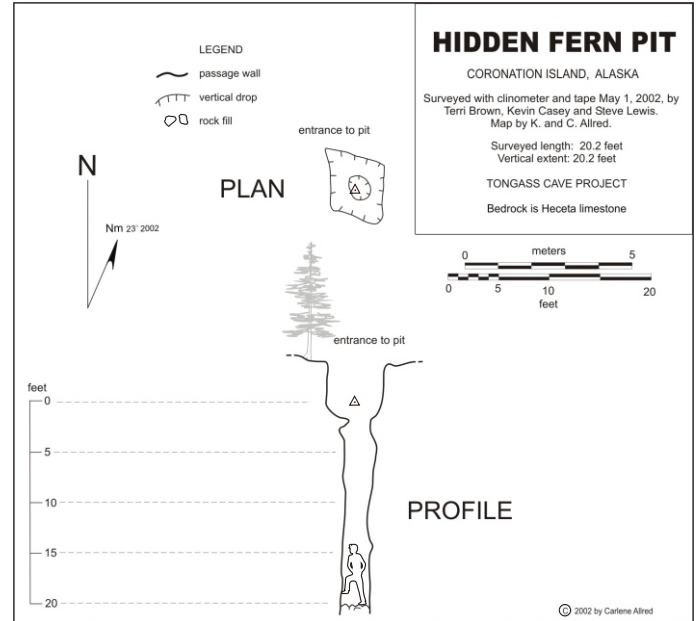


CORONATION ISLAND, TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST, ALASKA
CAVE REPORT #335
TONGASS CAVE PROJECT
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
November 25, 2002 by Kevin Allred

Hidden Fern Cave is a small, vertical pit. Its walls are highly fractured; presumably from frost action. The cave is located about 60 to 70 feet due south from Apex Cave and about 1000 feet south of Colander Cave. Although no speleothems, bones, or cultural evidence were noted in Hidden Fern, it is a fun cave to visit, along with the intensely karsted old growth forest. The cave was surveyed on May 1, 2002 by Kevin Casey, Terri Brown, and Steve Lewis. The length and depth is 20.2 feet.

Management Recommendations:

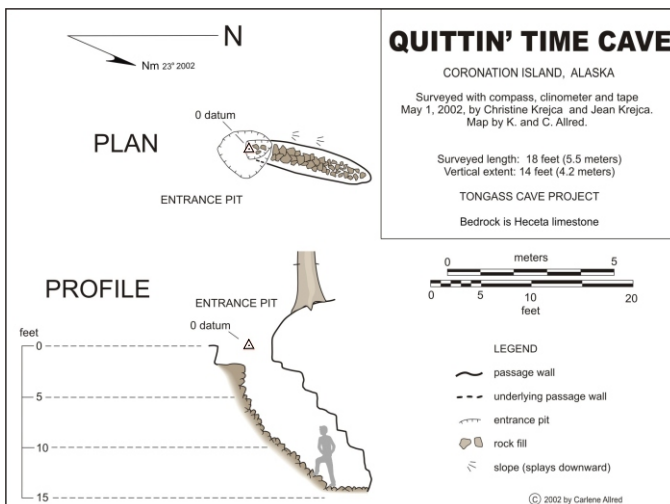
No special management is needed for this cave, so long as it remains a wilderness area.



CORONATION ISLAND, TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST, ALASKA
CAVE REPORT #334
TONGASS CAVE PROJECT
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
November 25, 2002 by Kevin Alfred

Quittin' Time Cave was surveyed May 1, 2002 by Jean Krejca and Chris Krejca. It is a small pit 18 feet (5.5m) long and 14 feet (4.2m) in depth. The cave probably takes a little recharge, but the sinkhole is small and on a hillside. No cultural evidence, invertebrates, or speleothems were noted.

Management Recommendations: No special management is needed for this pit.

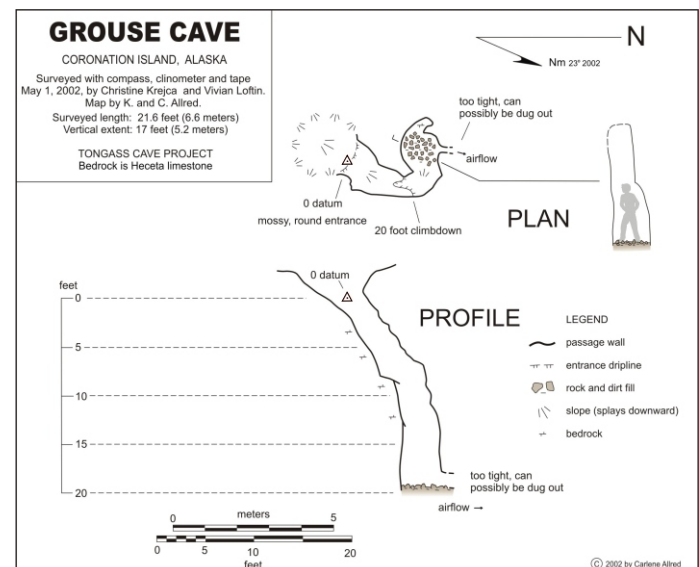


CORONATION ISLAND, TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST, ALASKA
CAVE REPORT #332
TONGASS CAVE PROJECT
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
November 25, 2002 by Kevin Allred

Grouse Cave was surveyed on May 1, 2002 by Vivian Loftin, and Chris Krejca. The cave is 21.6 feet (6.6m) long and 17 feet (5.2m) deep. It has a circular mossy entrance in a steep sinkhole. The cave heads steeply down at first, then drops off 12 feet to end in a too tight constriction. It is a possible dig, as it takes water and air. No rope is needed for the cave. No biology, speleothems or bones were noted.

Management Recommendations:

There is not reason to restrict the location of this cave to the general public.



LITTORAL CAVES OF EGG HARBOR

FIRST EGG CAVE, LOST SOLES CAVE, LITTLE WILLIE CAVE, MINER DIVERSION CAVE, DRAFTY CAVE, CAMP CAVE, SLANT CAVE
CORONATION ISLAND, TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST, ALASKA

CAVE REPORT #323, TONGASS CAVE PROJECT
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
November 25, 2002 by Kevin Allred

INTRODUCTION:

In the November 1949 National Speleological Society Bulletin Number 11, Robert J. Hackman reported the following on Coronation Island:

"This island belongs to the extreme westerly group, and has considerable limestone on it. It is high and rocky with sheer cliffs dropping off into the sea and besides the folklore cave already mentioned, (see below, KA) has many giant sea caves along the coast. One fisherman told me that on a calm day he ran his fishing boat into one of the larger caves. These trolling boats are usually about fifty to sixty feet long and about as high. A very interesting fact about these large sea caves is the abundance of bird life in them. Thousands of wild ducks and other types of sea fowl use them for nesting places. One can fire a gun near the entrance of one of these caves, and thousands of birds will fly out. In fact, so great is the number that by the time the first portion of the flight has completed a half-mile circle over the water and begins flying back into the cave, some of the rear section of the flight are still coming out of the cave.

'FOLKLORE CAVE'

The folklore of the Tlinket Indians gives the raven as the principal deity and ancestor of their race. The story goes that 'way back in the days of creation, and before he started his line of descendants, the raven wished to make the sea safe for his people. Therefore, selecting as a meeting place a cave on the island which later was named Coronation Island, he invited all the terrible monsters of the deep and when they had all assembled in this cave, he cast a spell on them that they might never be free to molest his people. And today when one visits this cave the monsters are all there to be seen.

This story was told to me by Joe Demrit. Joe is part Tlinket and has visited the cave (of Craig, now dead, K.A.). He states that there are considerable formations in the cave and that it was probably the shape of some of these that inspired the imagination of the early Indians to associate them with terrible monsters of the deep. The author did not have an opportunity to visit this cave since it was a considerable distance from where we were working at the time."

In Volume two, Number one, page 17 of the Alaskan Caver, William R. Halliday discusses an article (from Alaska Magazine) written by Emery Tobin. Mentioned is a "row of some six caves and three arched rock bridges in Egg Harbor... the caves are from 10 to 20 feet high at their entrances but gradually contract to their ends at distances of from 50 to 400 feet."

In the Alaskan Caver Volume 9, Number 3, page 12, Steve Lewis, who had been doing deer research on the Island stated: "Egg Harbor has a number of caves on the west side, none of which went terribly far. One did have some nice chimneys with some very interesting formations (and a decrepit ladder). One fork had some large helictites, I believe - anyway, (these were popcorn and coralloids, KA) quite substantial formations coming out almost perpendicular to the walls. This route was impossible to climb without grave damage to formations, but appeared to squeeze down to nothing forty feet or so above me (this cave is now known as Drafty Cave, KA)."

So far, the Tongass Cave Project is not aware of exactly where on Coronation Island Folklore Cave is. There is some speculation that the Tlinket natives used Egg Harbor (located on the north side of the Island) as a staging area while bird egg gathering to the west in the Hazy Islands. Midway along the western side of Egg Harbor are seven good-sized littoral caves which are now raised above the tidal zone from glacial rebound (see location map). Speleothems are found in most of these, but only a few contain significant ones which might qualify them as the cave described by Hackman. Foremost among these is Miner Diversion Cave. In the spacious twilight entrance chamber are numerous clusters of draperies which, with a little imagination, resemble octopuses. A description of the individual caves follows.

FIRST EGG CAVE

First Egg Cave is the northernmost of seven significant littoral caves located on the west side of Egg Harbor. It is somewhat less notable than most of the other caves, being around a corner and screened by vegetation. First Egg Cave is formed along one joint and a secondary one trending northeast. Most walls, ceiling, and floor retain original smoothed surfaces typical of a littoral cave subject to abrasion. The cave contains some seepage and dripping. Some popcorn speleothems were noted. No animal bones or insects were noted. Several very old two foot diameter stumps in front of the entrance may have been from turn of the century mining on Pin Peak above the cave. First Egg Cave was surveyed by Kevin Allred and Kevin Casey on April 28, 2002. It's length is 50.6 feet (15.4 meters), and the depth is 2.6 feet (.8 meter).

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

Considering the archaeological resources in other nearby caves, this cave should be limited access.

LOST SOLES CAVE

Lost Soles Cave was named after some shoe soles found on the floor just inside the entrance. This cave is the second from the north, and technically includes a large natural bridge as part of its passage. It has a spectacular view of Kuiu Island through the natural bridge. The cave is basically one large chamber which has much evidence of past cultural use. It contains boards, burnt wood, fire pits, and a constructed pool near the back. The cave may have had some prehistoric use. Speleogenesis appears to have been phreatic with littoral modification. The only speleothems noted was popcorn. Biology includes worms and growths on the ceiling at the back of the cave. Several small streamlets enter the cave. One of these has been dammed up to form the small pool. Lost Soles was surveyed April 28, 2002 by Steve Lewis and Terry Brown. Total survey was 427.5 feet (130.3 meters) and the vertical extent is 12.6 feet (3.9 meters).

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

This cave should remain available to visit, but there should not be directed access. A thorough archaeological survey might be worthwhile.

LITTLE WILLIE CAVE

Little Willie Cave is the third of seven Egg Harbor littoral caves formed in the Heceta Limestone of Coronation Island (see area map). The entrance is partially screened by small spruces. No cultural or biological evidence was found. However, just inside the entrance is a small area of phytokarst. These are fingers of rock up to one inch long facing the entrance and formed from the surrounding rock being corroded through biological action. Some have caps of popcorn similar to those found in the entrance of Whispering Cave at Wrangell St. Elias Park, Alaska. A small streamlet issues from the back of the cave and disappears into the rubble floor. The cave was surveyed on April 28, 2002 by Chris Krejca, Vivian Loftin, and Jean Krejca. It has a total of 31.5 feet (9.6 meters) and a vertical extent of 1.6 feet (.5 meter).

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

This cave is fine to visit by the general public, however, due to its proximity to archaeologically significant caves nearby, the public should not be directed to the cave.

MINER DIVERSION CAVE

Miner Diversion Cave was surveyed on April 28 and 30, 2002 by Chris Krejca, Jean Krejca, and Vivian Loftin. It is the author's opinion that of all the littoral caves of Egg Harbor, Miner Diversion is most likely to qualify as
(continues on page 8)

Littoral Caves of Egg Harbor, continued from page 7

"Folklore Cave" as mentioned in the introduction. The ceiling and walls of the largest twilight entrance chamber are festooned with displays of draperies, some of which resemble octopuses. Unfortunately until the actual location of Folklore is pinpointed, we can only speculate where it might be. This cave has probably been used prehistorically as a camp and shelter, and more recently to store exploratory drill cores (1 1/2 and 2 inch diameter) in the 1970's according to Steve Lewis. Some chunks of cement are scattered 15 to 20 feet inside the main entrance. Above the cave on Pin Peak, some mining did take place in the early 1900's, and they even mined out a vertical non-carbonate seam for 30 feet within this cave. Two extremely old pole ladders were also found in the western branch of the cave. Using ropes and bolts, Jean Krejca and Vivian Loftin climbed up into this section, repeating what the old timers had done with the pole ladders.

Miners Diversion Cave is the most extensive of the Egg Harbor littoral caves. It has a total of 714.3 feet (242.1 meters) surveyed passage, and has a vertical extent of 111.3 feet (33.9 meters). A back entrance can be accessed from the beach up a steep slope, or up a rubble slope within the cave.

Speleothems:

Near the back entrance is a speleothem-decorated side alcove which can be reached by traversing across ledges. Eccentric soda straws, stalactites, and popcorn were noted here. At the southern most back of the cave, a steeply sloping passage continued but would need technical climbing to get all the way up. Extensive flowstone was seen here. Coralloids up to two inches long were seen near the most immense boulder of the main passage. Popcorn is scattered throughout the cave. The overhanging walls and ceiling of the entrance chamber contains stalactites and draperies already discussed.

Animal Bones:

Bones were found in the far north alcove near the entrance. Part of a wolf-size carnivore skull was discovered in an alcove in the left wall about 15 feet west of a small connecting passage which leads to the back entrance. Small bones are located in the beginning of the pole ladder passage.

Biology:

On the floor in an alcove at the beginning of the pole ladder passage is a small pool fed by drips. In this pool Jean Krejca found white amphipods, brown flatworms, and aquatic oligochaetes. A spider was seen near the two inch coralloids mentioned above.

Management Recommendations:

This cave has already been impacted by the miners. Since the older modification and pole ladders are now more than 50 years old, they qualify as cultural artifacts and should not be disturbed. However, the drill cores and associated rotting cardboard and wood supports could be removed from the cave. Because of the potential for prehistoric artifacts is high and outstanding speleothems are present, the general public should not be directed to visit the cave.

DRAFTY CAVE

Drafty Cave was named after the old empty "Miller Draft" beer can sitting on a ledge in the cave. This cave was mentioned by Steve Lewis in the introduction. Steve had noted the old rotten ladder near the back. The lumber used had dimensions of 1 3/4" x 4" and the nails were very rusted and probably round, rather than square. The ladder may date to the early 1900's when Pin Peak was prospected. Access to the entrance of Drafty Cave is up a talus slope which has partially filled in the entrance. It is an old littoral cave but has been modified by solution and frost action. It was surveyed April 30, 2002 by Kevin Allred and Kevin Casey. The cave has a total of 101 feet (30.8m) of passage with a vertical extent of 28 feet (8.6m). Drafty Cave contains stalagmites up to three inches long, soda straws to two inches, small stalactites, popcorn, draperies (some with serrations on edges), flowstone, and a little one inch long spray of coralloids. A flowstone covered chimney prevented exploration beyond the top of the ladder remains. No biology or bones were found, and the only notable cultural value was the old ladder.

Management Recommendations:

The chimneys could be climbed using bolts, but it would not be advisable because of the delicate flowstone. Because it is near other archaeologically sensitive caves in the area and has speleothems, the public should not be directed to this cave.

CAMP CAVE

The main 70 foot wide and 35 foot high entrance of Camp Cave is highly visible from the entrance of Egg Harbor (see area map). The cave is accessible from sandy beaches adjacent to both of its entrances. Camp cave

was surveyed on April 28 and 30, 2002 by Kevin Casey, Kevin Allred, Vivian Loftin, and Jean Krejca. It has a total of 353 feet (107.6m) and is 15 feet (4.6m) deep. The floor is bedrock in this area with thin, discontinuous silt and rubble. Some boulders are rounded.

One can follow the east branch of the entrance chamber 120 feet to a corner alcove containing a complete mink skeleton. A walking-size passage heads east to a "back door" entrance. Judging from the fresh tracks, deer also use this cave for shelter. The only speleothems noted are scattered popcorn.

Management Recommendations:

As the cave is significant archaeologically, it should be studied in depth by qualified archaeologists. It already receives much visitation by fisherman and recreationists. The public should not be directed to the cave to protect what prehistoric cultural evidence remains.

SLANT CAVE

Slant Cave is the southern-most cave of the Egg Harbor littoral caves. It was surveyed on April 30, 2002 by Vivian Loftin, Jean Krejca, and Kevin Allred. Total surveyed passage is 206 feet (66.8m) and its depth is 11.6 feet (3.5m). Its entrance is nearly obscured by a talus slope, forcing one to descend back down in the cave to its original floor level. Parts of the ceiling and overhanging walls still have the original smoothed littoral surfaces. The upper recess of the cave is steeply inclined and also smooth in places when not covered by silt. Some rounded cobbles and boulders were noted in the floor rubble midway to the back.

Once in the cave below the talus debris, one can see that the cave has been developed along a seam of light brown noncarbonate rock in the Heceta Limestone. The seam is tilted at about 40 degrees. A fire pit is located in the first level area 40 feet beyond the entrance. Further on there is abundant fresh and old river otter scat, indicating they are denning there. Approximately 200 feet from the entrance are some beautiful stalactites and stalagmites high on the wall. Soon the way becomes lower and coated with thick deposits of moonmilk. A crawlway leads to a small sit-up chamber at the very end. A spot of the light brown noncarbonate seam is visible at the very end. A few small pools at the back did not contain any notable biota. Speleothems in the cave are soda straws, stalactites, stalagmites up to five inches high, popcorn, draperies, bacon rind, moonmilk, and moonmilk coralloids. Some of the soda straws resemble "lion's tails". Other than lots of dripping water into the pools at the back, the rest of the cave contains only general seepage and minor dripping with no streams. Miscellaneous small bones were seen. Besides the otter scat already mentioned, more fish bone was found in the last 25 feet of the cave.

Management Recommendations:

Because of its delicate moonmilk and other speleothems, the cave should be protected from visitation. Since the entrance is not as noticeable or accessible as many of the other nearby caves, it is more pristine. An archaeological investigation is needed. 🦋



Vivian Loftin and Chris Krejca in Little Willie Cave. Photo by Jean Krejca

FIRST EGG CAVE AND LOST SOLES CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND, ALASKA

Surveyed with compass, clinometer and tape
April 28, 2002 by Kevin Allred, Terri Brown, Kevin
Casey and Steve Lewis. Map by K and C Allred.

Surveyed length of First Egg Cave- 50.6 feet (15.4 meters)

Vertical extent of First Egg Cave- 2.6 feet (.8 meters)

Survey length of Lost Soles Cave- 427.5 feet (130.3 meters)

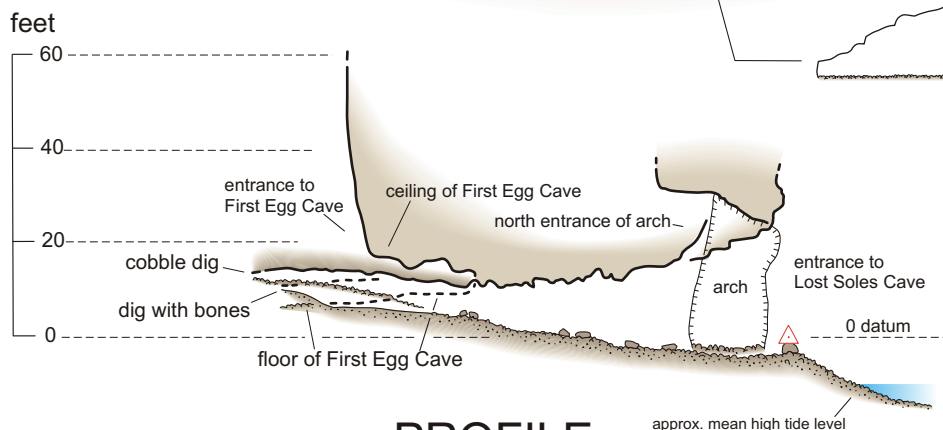
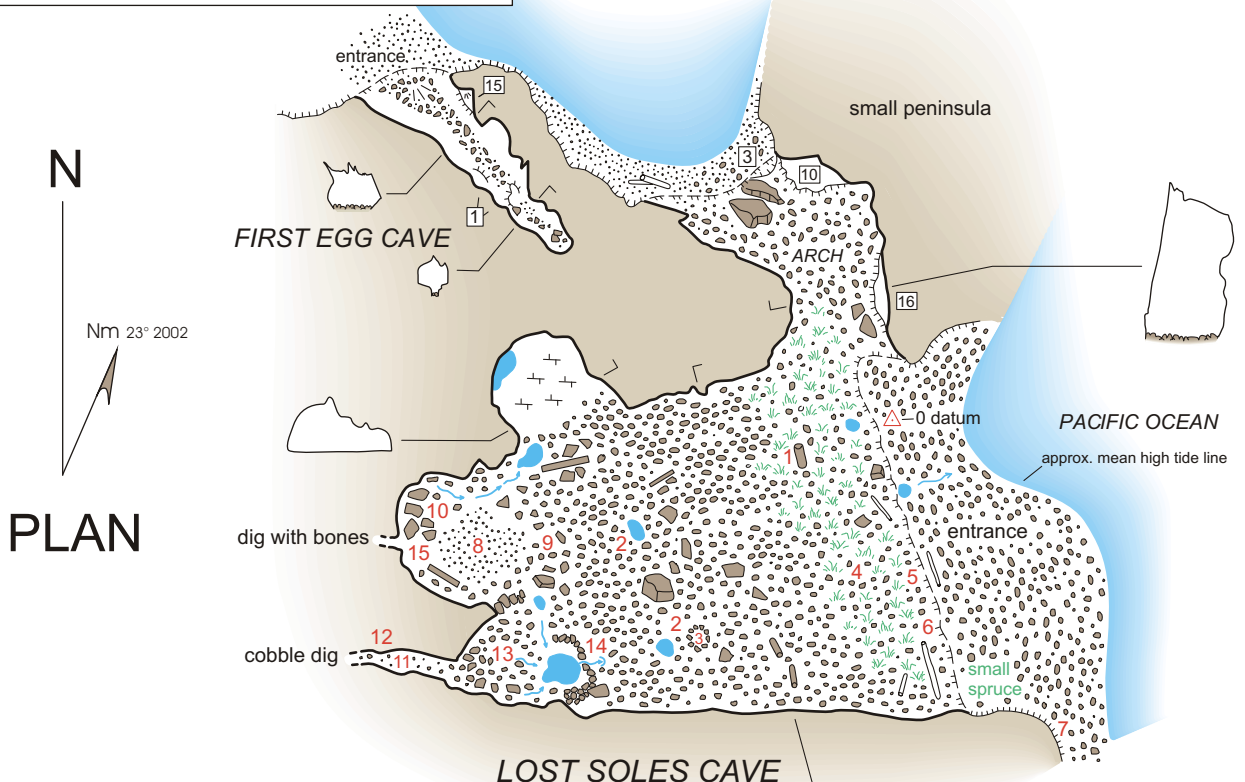
Vertical extent of Lost Soles Cave- 12.6 feet (3.9 meters)

TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

A littoral cave formed in Heceta limestone

LEGEND

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|--|----------|
| | passage wall | | dripline |
| | vertical drop, depth in feet | | log |
| | breakdown | | board |
| | cobble, gravel and sand fill | | grass |
| | water, water flow | | bedrock |
| | slope (splays downward) | | |



NOTES:

1. cut, notched log
2. mossy and damp
3. fire pit
4. old shoe sole
5. stump
6. burned wood
7. alder tree
8. cleared gravel area
9. ferns
10. biologic growth on ceiling
11. bones
12. can hear water
13. bottom of wood barrel
14. built dam
15. moonmilk

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MINER DIVERSION CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND, ALASKA

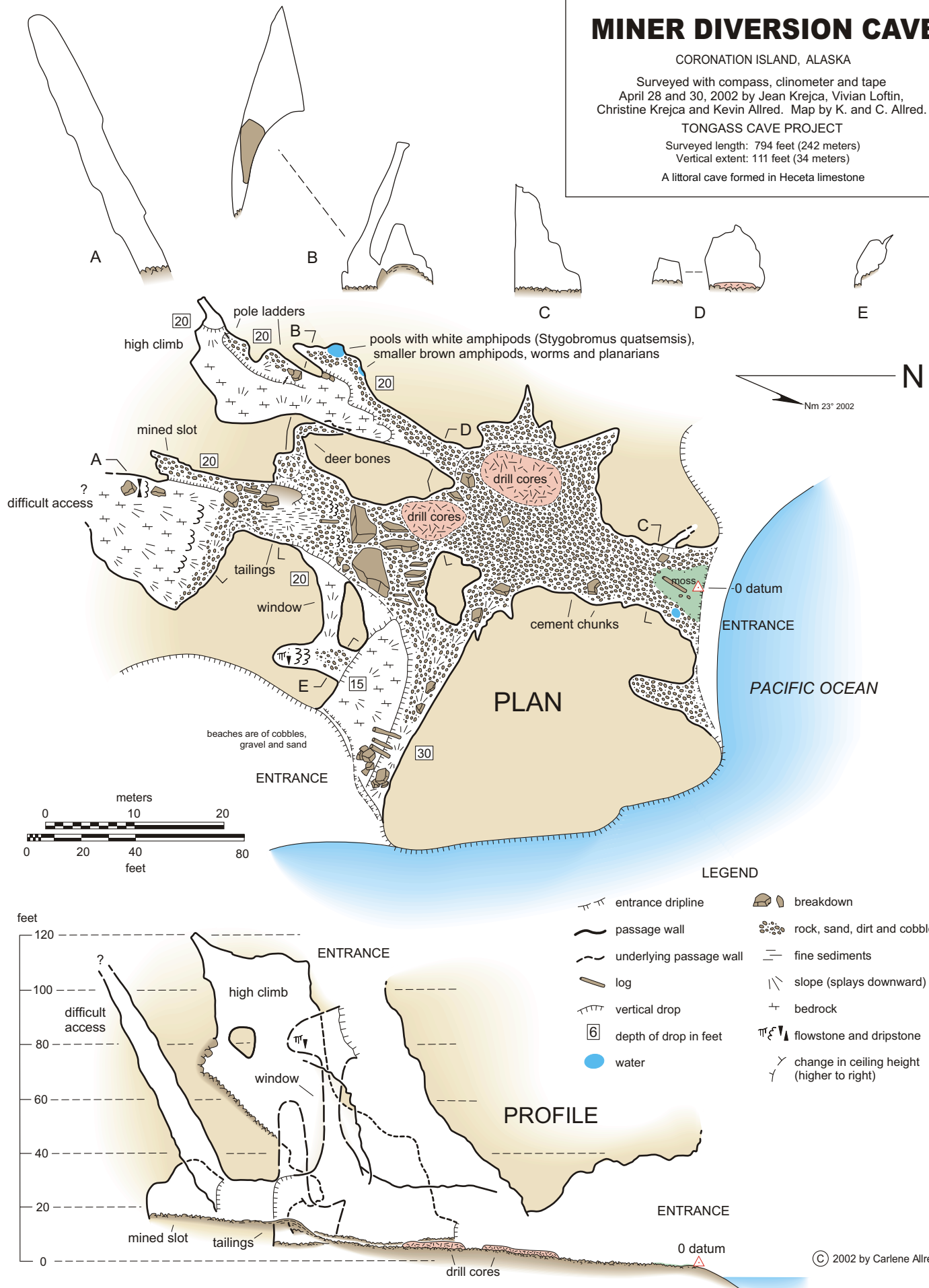
Surveyed with compass, clinometer and tape
April 28 and 30, 2002 by Jean Krejca, Vivian Loftin,
Christine Krejca and Kevin Allred. Map by K. and C. Allred.

TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

Surveyed length: 794 feet (242 meters)

Vertical extent: 111 feet (34 meters)

A littoral cave formed in Heceta limestone



CAMP CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND, ALASKA

Surveyed with compass, clinometer and tape
April 28 and 30, 2002, by Kevin, Allred, Vivian Loftin,
Jean Krejca and Kevin Casey.
Map by K. and C. Allred.

Surveyed length: 353 feet (107.6 meters)
Vertical extent: 15 feet (4.6 meters)

TONGASS CAVE PROJECT
A littoral cave formed in Heceta limestone

NOTES:

1. mink skeleton
2. fire pit with bones, shells and chiton shells
3. alcove contains deer bones, other bones and chiton shells
4. popcorn on walls, some is directional
5. floor mostly angular rocks with sparse cobbles
6. floor is bedrock with thin, discontinuous silt and rubble, rounded boulders and angular boulders

LEGEND

- entrance dripline
- passage wall
- rocks and cobbles
- silt fill
- slope (splays downward)
- bones
- bedrock floor
- grass
- vertical drop, depth in feet

feet

50
40
30
20
10
0

meters
0 5 10
0 10 20 40
feet

North

Nm 23° 2002

0 datum

MAIN ENTRANCE

PACIFIC OCEAN

approximate mean high tide line

PLAN

"BACK DOOR" ENTRANCE

PROFILE

MAIN ENTRANCE

"BACK DOOR" ENTRANCE

window

0 datum

approximate mean high tide level

© 2002 by Carlene Allred

SLANT CAVE

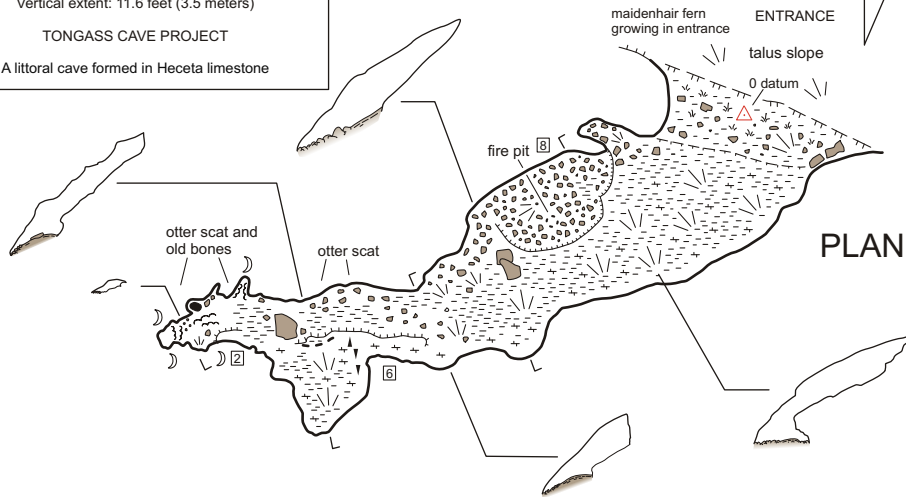
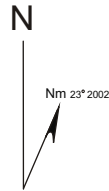
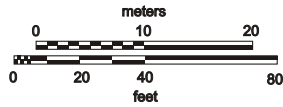
CORONATION ISLAND, ALASKA

Surveyed with compass, clinometer and tape April 30, 2002,
by Vivian Loftin, Kevin Allred and Jean Krejca.
Map by K. and C. Allred.

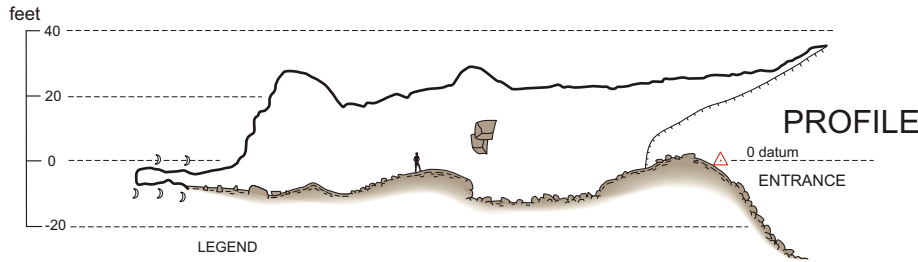
Surveyed length: 206 feet (62.8 meters)
Vertical extent: 11.6 feet (3.5 meters)

TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

A littoral cave formed in Heceta limestone



PLAN



PROFILE

- LEGEND**
- entrance dripline
 - passage wall
 - rock and cobble fill
 - silt and mud
 - slope (splays downward)
 - change in ceiling height
 - stalactites and draperies
 - stalagmites
 - flowstone
 - Grass
 - pool
 - moonmilk
 - bedrock

© 2002 by Carlene Allred



Vivian Loftin's bolt climb in Miner Diversion Cave, photo by Jean Krejca

LITTLE WILLIE CAVE

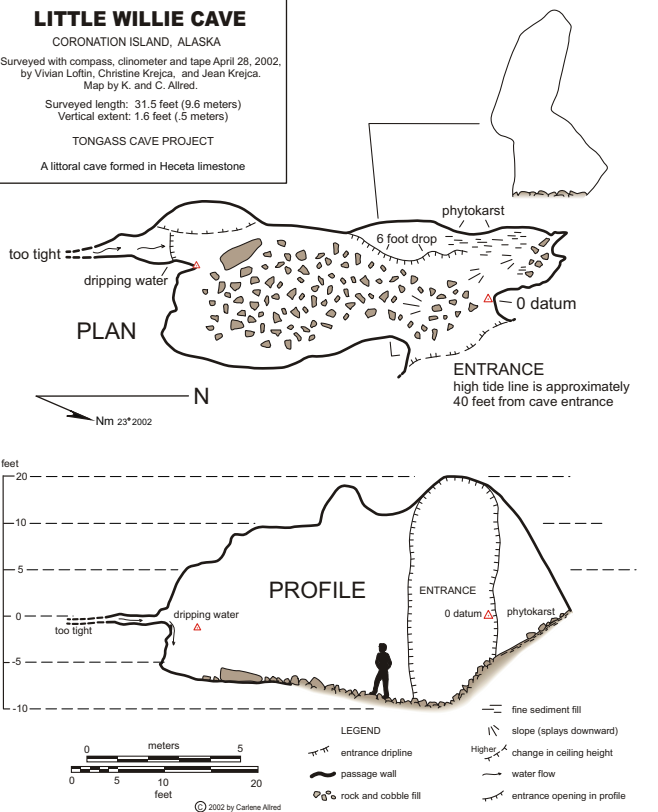
CORONATION ISLAND, ALASKA

Surveyed with compass, clinometer and tape April 28, 2002,
by Vivian Loftin, Christine Krejca, and Jean Krejca.
Map by K. and C. Allred.

Surveyed length: 31.5 feet (9.6 meters)
Vertical extent: 1.6 feet (.5 meters)

TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

A littoral cave formed in Heceta limestone



- LEGEND**
- entrance dripline
 - passage wall
 - rock and cobble fill
 - fine sediment fill
 - slope (splays downward)
 - change in ceiling height
 - water flow
 - entrance opening in profile

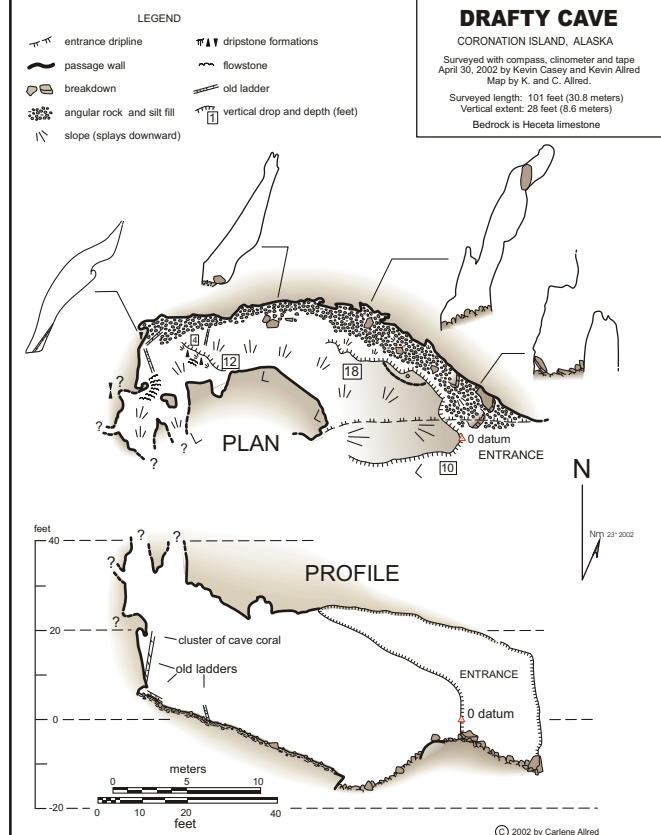
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DRAFTY CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND, ALASKA

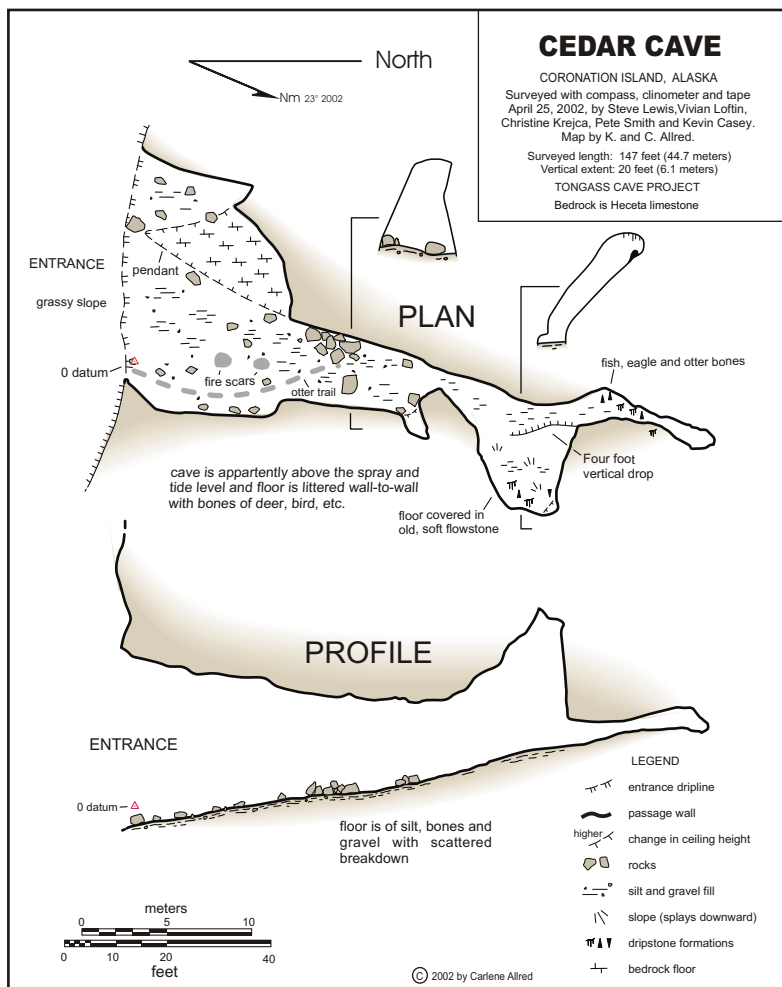
Surveyed with compass, clinometer and tape April 30, 2002 by Kevin Casey and Kevin Allred
Map by K. and C. Allred.

Surveyed length: 101 feet (30.8 meters)
Vertical extent: 28 feet (8.6 meters)
Bedrock is Heceta limestone



- LEGEND**
- entrance dripline
 - passage wall
 - breakdown
 - angular rock and silt fill
 - slope (splays downward)
 - dripstone formations
 - flowstone
 - old ladder
 - vertical drop and depth (feet)

© 2002 by Carlene Allred



CEDAR CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND

TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST, ALASKA

CAVE REPORT #337, TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

November 25, 2002 by Kevin Allred

Cedar Cave is an old littoral cave, no longer reached by the tides because of isostatic rebound. The access to the entrance is either from a steep draw above the cave, or from the ocean. No rope is needed, but calm seas are necessary to access it from the water. Another cave is located to the south in a deep slot containing seawater at mid tide. A waterfall was heard there without an obvious surface connection. This cave is unchecked.

The entrance of Cedar Cave is exposed to the swells of the outside unprotected waters. The entrance is always out of salt water, but still may receive some spray. The cave is composed of one single corridor with was surveyed by Kevin Casey, Vivian Loftin, Chris Krejca, and Steve Lewis on April 25, 2002. Total surveyed passage is 147 feet (44.7m) long with a vertical relief of 20 feet (6.1m). The cave contains bones of deer, birds, etc., and apparent fire scars. Other bones of deer, eagle, small birds, etc., were also found in the cave.

Speleothems noted in the cave are, nice bacon rinds, draperies, stalagmites, and stalactites, which were very nice up high. The cave has damp walls, but no standing water. No biological survey was done.

Management Recommendations:

Because of its archaeological and paleontological resources, the cave should have full protection and the location withheld from the general public. It should be studied before the deposits are disturbed.

FLAG CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND

TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST, ALASKA

CAVE REPORT #338, TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

November 25, 2002 by Kevin Allred

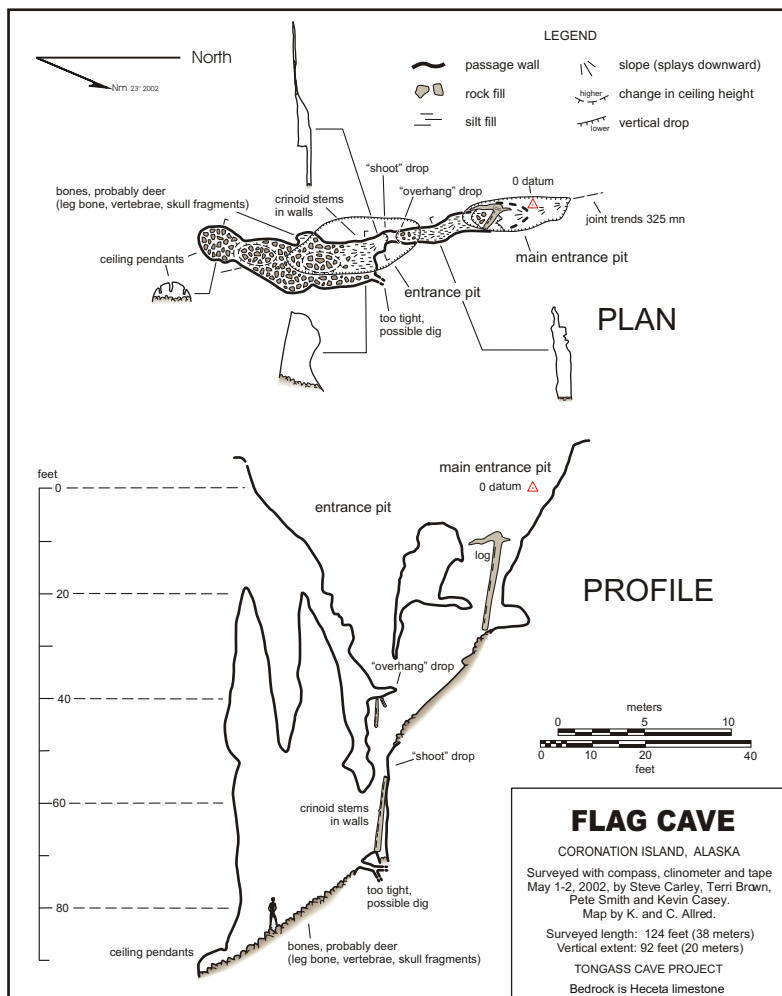
Flag Cave was named after some old flagging on a nearby tree north of the entrance, perhaps left there by a deer hunter. Located on a karsted hillside well away from any landmarks, this cave would be very difficult to ever relocate without a Global Positioning System receiver. Flag Cave consists of two pits below a linearly enlarged double sinkhole. One 50 footer ends at the top of the second pit which is 65 feet deep. The deeper pit is unstable with a dig at the bottom. A team spent a full day stabilizing and rigging the slot and digging out logs and rocks. A five to six second tumbling drop below lured the cavers to use a bow saw to cut a final log away to allow descent of the final pit.

Rigging for the cave consisted of a rope tied to the north end of the entrance sinkhole, which then passes around a large log in the entrance. It is a good idea to secure the log from disturbance by passing cavers. A redirection was also placed on the east side to prevent the rope from touching the potentially dangerous log.

Flag Cave is formed in Heceta fossiliferous limestone. The cave walls are heavily fractured and dip to the southwest. The cave is developed on a joint trending 325 degrees. The soil overburden is very thin and subject to disturbance. The only noted speleothems were tiny popcorn. Speleogens of pendants and scallops were reported. No invertebrates were noted, however, animal bones were discovered. Leg bones, vertebrae, and part of a skull were found. These may be from a deer. Total survey on May 1 and 2, 2002 was 124 feet (38m) with 92 feet (20m) of depth. Surveyors were Terri Brown, Steve Carley, Pete Smith, and Kevin Casey.

Management Recommendations:

Flag Cave has challenging, potential dangerous drops, requiring particular care by cavers. The cave would be good for dissolution and geomorphology studies. As long as the Island remains protected from timber harvest, the cave will be fine. Near Flag Cave is an unsurveyed 25 foot pit called Mossland Cave. It is located at the base of a slope.



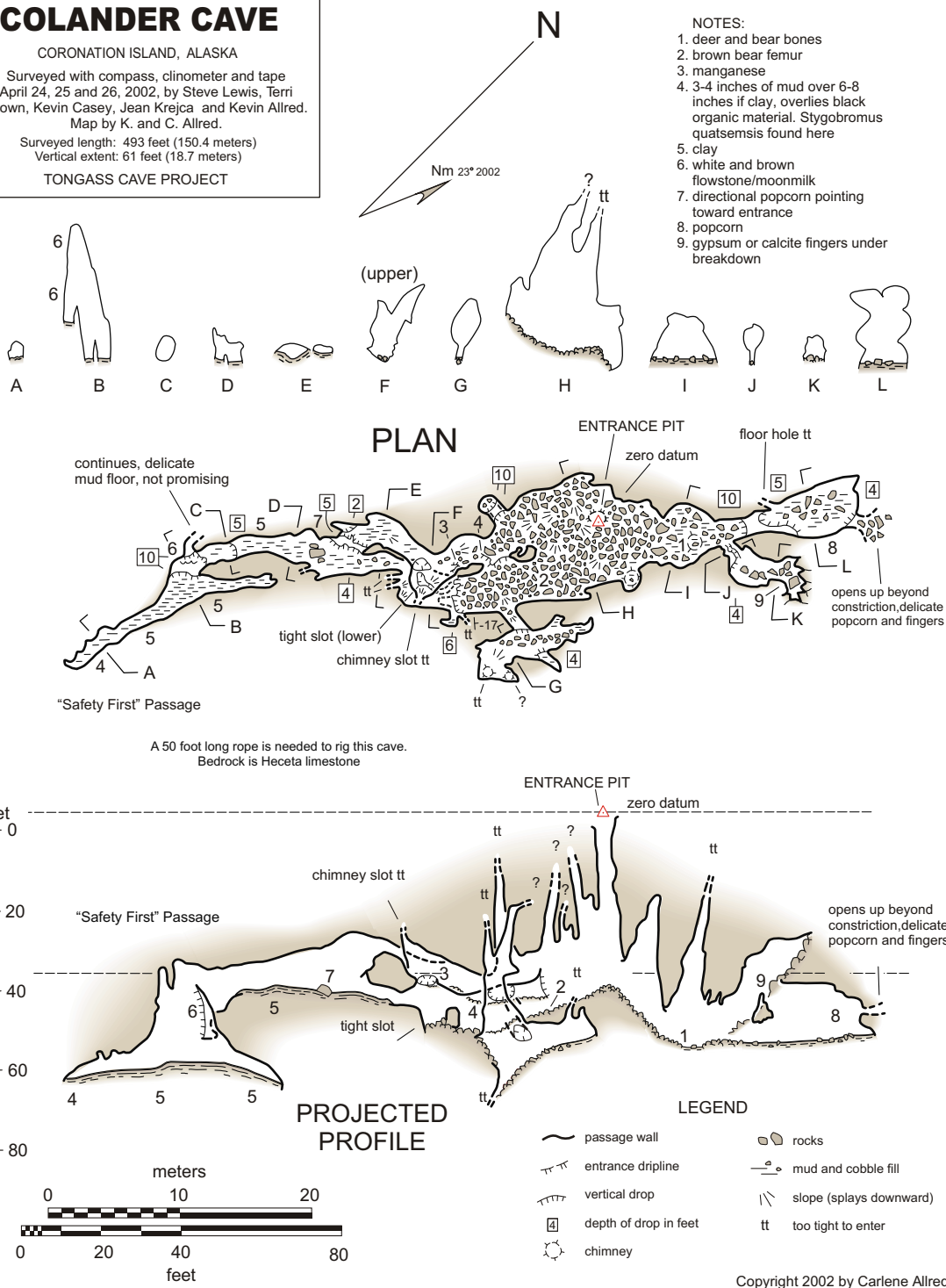
COLANDER CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND, ALASKA

Surveyed with compass, clinometer and tape
April 24, 25 and 26, 2002, by Steve Lewis, Terri
Brown, Kevin Casey, Jean Krejca and Kevin Allred.
Map by K. and C. Allred.

Surveyed length: 493 feet (150.4 meters)
Vertical extent: 61 feet (18.7 meters)

TONGASS CAVE PROJECT



COLANDER CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND

TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST
ALASKA

CAVE REPORT #341

TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL
SOCIETY

November 25, 2002

by Kevin Allred

Colander Cave was discovered in the summer of 2001 by Steve Lewis. Deer bones dating 3,300 years and extinct brown bear bones dating 11,630 years were found at this time. Some of the bones were collected by Dr. Timothy Heaton of the University of South Dakota. The cave was revisited on April 24, 25, and 26th for a complete exploration and survey. An accident occurred on the 25th after Kevin Allred, Jean Krejca, and Terri Brown dug out a partially plugged side passage. A rock fell on one of Kevin's fingers, nearly severing it. The survey was completed on the next day, making Colander a total 493 feet (150.4 m) long, and 61 feet (18.7m) deep.

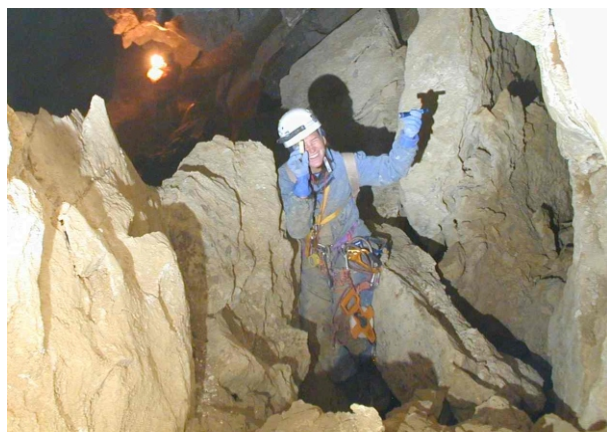
This cave contains significant biological interest besides the fossil bone deposits. Less than 100 feet from the bottom of the 50 foot entrance drop where all the passages converge, Jean Krejca discovered some cave adapted invertebrates. These were two white amphipods, one adult diptera (fly), one larval insect, and one white mite (Acari). These were all collected by Jean. Seen were webworms (from Mycetophilid larvae?) and one small spider web. The amphipods were found in tiny pools (two inches in diameter and 1/2 inch deep) and on walls with flowing water over tiny rimstone dams 1/8 inch across and deep, made of dark, squishy organic material (probably manganese oxide). The larval insect was found on the surface of one of the same pools as the amphipods. The Diptera was found on a ceiling. Webworms were on ceilings. The

small spider web was between rocks near the amphipod pools.

Speleothems found in the cave are flowstone about 20 feet high with microgours, popcorn, and white "fingers" growing from the underside of breakdown at the northern end of the cave. These fingers are either calcite or moonmilk.

Management Recommendations:

The entrance drop is the only place rope is required in the cave, which limits visitation to those prepared vertically. In order to reach the muddy back of the cave, an area of delicate speleothems must be passed. This part of the cave need not be visited at all, in order to limit damage to the speleothems. The sediment here is layered clay, and organic mud. There may be more fossil bones present in the southern section. Colander Cave should only be visited by those studying the speleothems, fossil bones, or biology, in order to protect these resources.



Surveying Passion Pit, photo by Jean Krejca

GOEST CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND, ALASKA

Sketch and survey with compass, clinometer and tape

May 2, 2002 by Christine Krejca and Jean Krejca
Map by K. and C. Allred.

Surveyed length: 56 feet (17 meters)
Surveyed vertical extent: 1 foot (.3 meters)

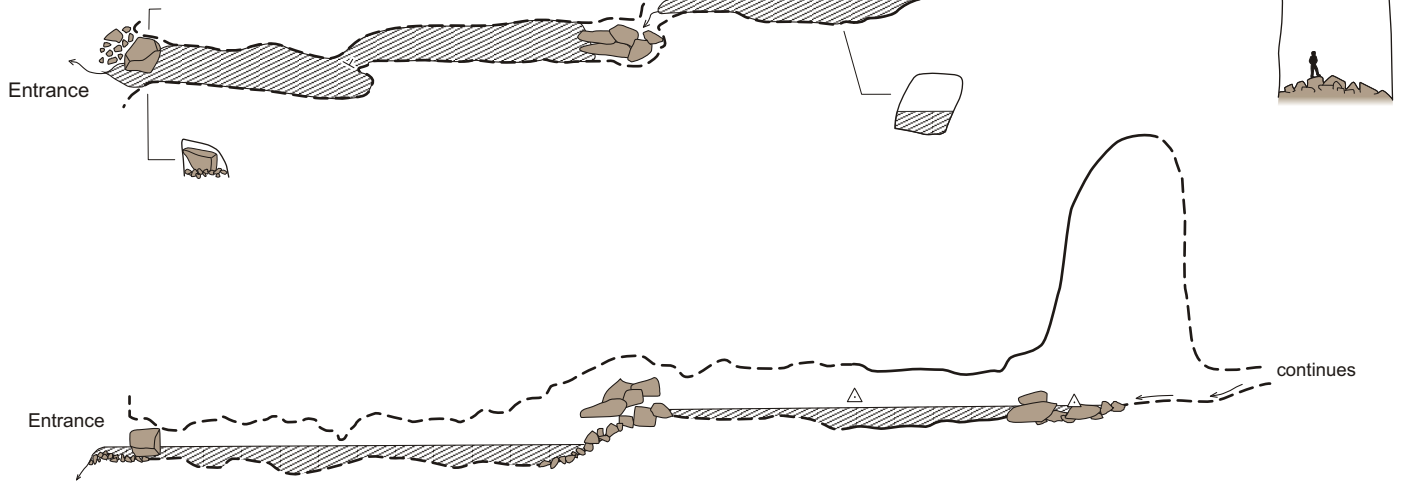
TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

Cave formed in Heceta limestone

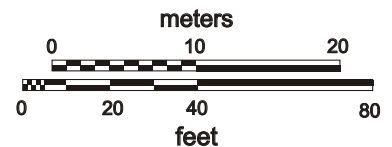
LEGEND

- surveyed passage wall
- - - sketched passage wall
- higher ↗ change in ceiling height
- breakdown and rocks
- water
- △ survey point

PLAN



PROJECTED PROFILE



© 2002 by Carlene Allred

GOEST CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND

TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST, ALASKA

CAVE REPORT #339, TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

November 25, 2002 by Kevin Allred

Goest Cave was named after Pete Smith's new boat which was used first access the Island and access the cave. The cave is located at a steephead part way down a precipitous gully. A sizable stream issues from the cave. Access is steep, but most feasible from above. On May 2, 2002, Chris Krejca and Jean Krejca used drysuits to penetrate deeply into this cave and make a quick sketch with only one survey shot before running out of time. The cave keeps going in two directions after about 400 feet.

Management Recommendations:

Goest should be surveyed and explored. So far, not enough is known of the cave to offer any specific recommendations as to access. As it lies within a wilderness area, it is already receiving protection from surface disturbances. 🐾

WHINTLE CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND

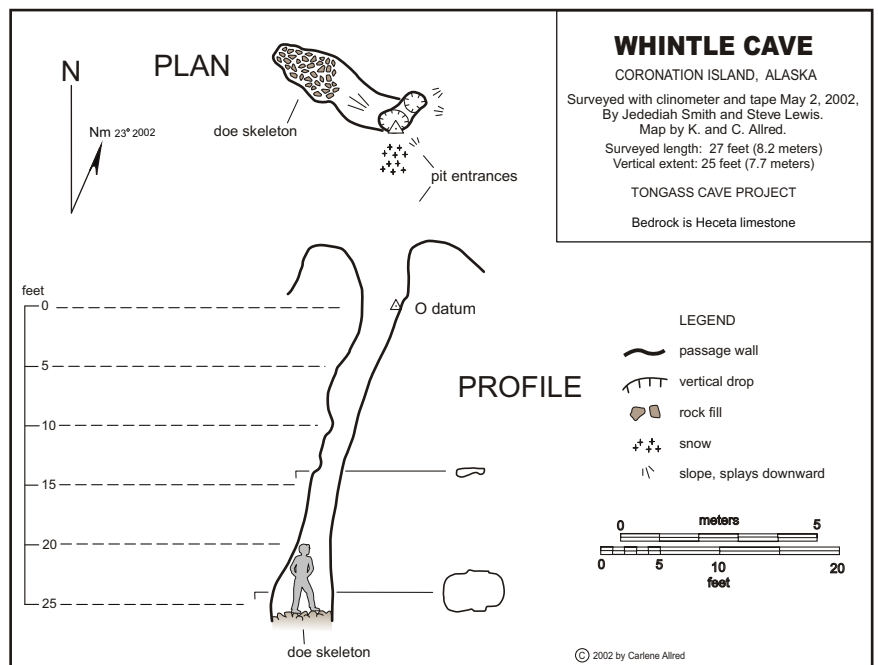
TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST, ALASKA

CAVE REPORT #333, TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

November 25, 2002 by Kevin Allred

The double entrance of Whintle Cave was discovered May 2, 2002 by Jed Smith. It is a 35 foot deep pit which is plugged



© 2002 by Carlene Allred

by rock debris. A doe skeleton was found at the bottom. Whintle was surveyed by Jed Smith and Steve Lewis. Total surveyed length is 27.0 feet (8.2m) and the total depth is 25 feet (7.7m).

Management Recommendations:

There is no reason to limit access to this cave, as it contains no surface fossil deposits, cultural evidence, or invertebrates. 🐾

HIS AND HERS CAVE

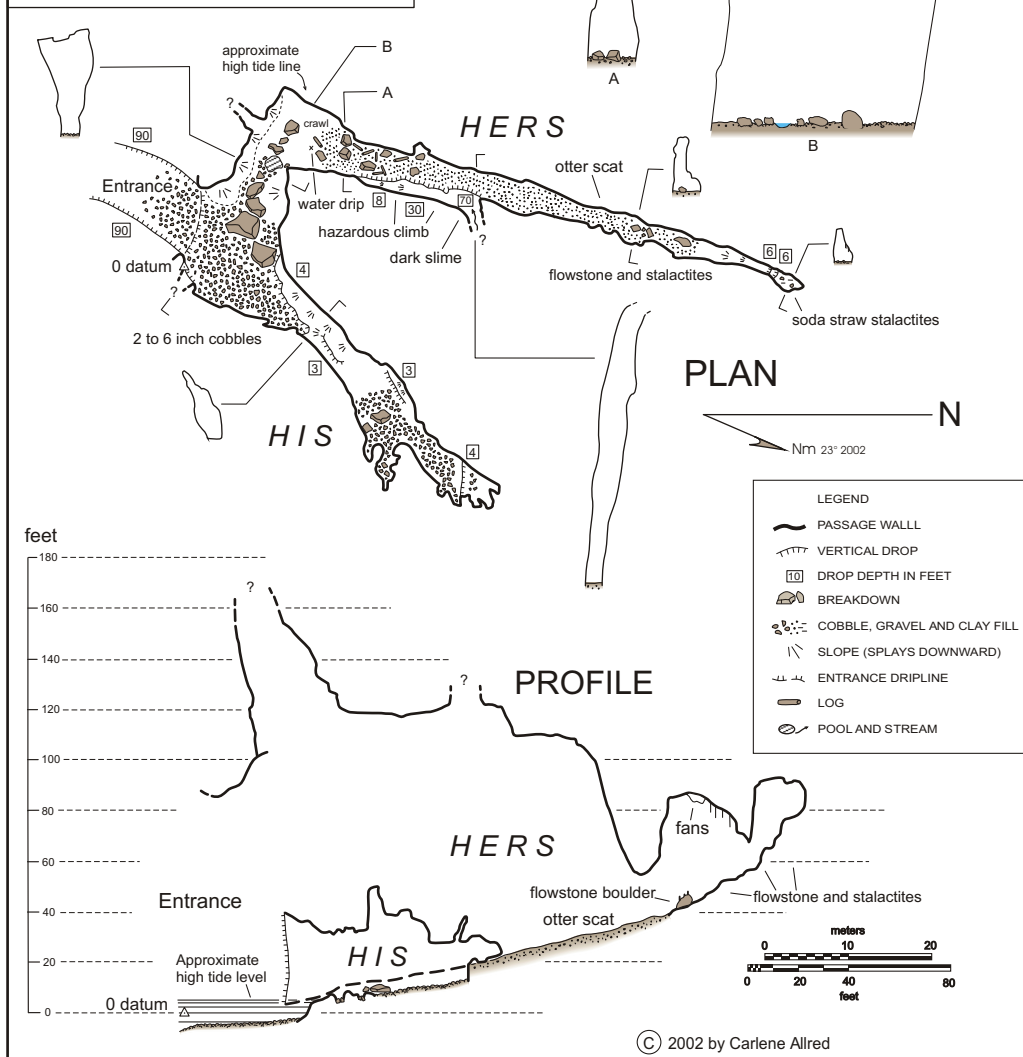
CORONATION ISLAND, ALASKA

Surveyed with compass, clinometer and tape
April 25, 2002 by Vivian Loftin, Christine Krejca, Kevin Casey and Steve Lewis
Map by K. and C. Allred.

Surveyed length: 490 feet (149 meters)
Vertical extent: 84 feet (25.6 meters)

TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

A littoral cave formed in Heceta limestone



HIS AND HERS CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND

TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST, ALASKA

CAVE REPORT #328

TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

November 25, 2002

by Kevin Allred

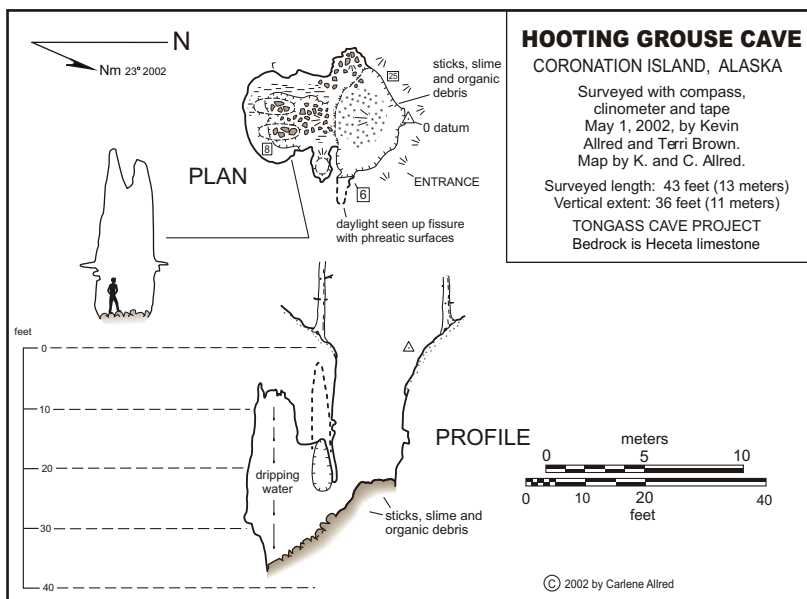
Description: His and Hers Cave is an extensive Heceta Limestone littoral Cave, exposed to the open Pacific Ocean on the southwest coast of Coronation Island, Alaska. The cave has two main branches formed along joints or faults. It has been lifted somewhat by isostatic rebound, so that the sea now only reached partway into the cave. Even though this cave is littoral, flowing water indicates a solutional element as well. Small waterfalls emerge from the ceiling and from a lead located midway along the left branch (Hers) of the cave. The left branch is very tall and canyon-like, and the other is more of a classical funnel littoral shape which branches is the back.

Calm seas are required for boat access into the entrance. The survey team attempted unsuccessfully, in climbing up to the high lead in "Hers". They were able to scramble up a sloping ledge about 1/2 the way up, but no further. The ledge is coated with extremely soft, wet, flowstone which is very dark and is the consistency of mud. Other speleothems found were draperies, where water emerges high in the ceiling. No cultural evidence or animal remains were found in the cave. Fresh otter scat was noted.

His and Hers Cave was surveyed on April 25, 2002 and is 490 feet (149m) long and 84 feet (25.6m) in vertical extent. Surveyors were Vivian Loftin, Chris Krejca, Steve Lewis and Kevin Casey.

Management Recommendations:

We recommend open access for this cave. However boat access is limited to calmer seas on this outer coast location.



HOOTING GROUSE CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND, ALASKA

Surveyed with compass, clinometer and tape
May 1, 2002, by Kevin Allred and Terri Brown.
Map by K. and C. Allred.

Surveyed length: 43 feet (13 meters)
Vertical extent: 36 feet (11 meters)

TONGASS CAVE PROJECT
Bedrock is Heceta limestone

HOOTING GROUSE CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND

TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST, ALASKA

CAVE REPORT #336, TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

November 25, 2002 by Kevin Allred

Hooting Grouse Cave was surveyed May 1, 2002 by Terri Brown and Kevin Allred. The cave consists of one large chamber formed at a joint intersection. The chamber grew from dripping water of a dome which has an interesting ledge encircling it on three sides; probably a bedding plane. There are a few minor side passages at the bottom of the initial 20 foot drop. The cave is plugged with angular rocks. Some phreatic surfaces are intact. A rope is needed for the drop. The cave is 43 feet (13m) long and 36 feet (11m) deep.

No cultural evidence, speleothems, or bones were seen, but a gnat was noted on a ceiling.

Management Recommendations:

The recreational potential of Hooting Grouse Cave is good, and there is little loose rock on the pit walls. It would be interesting to correlate this shaft and its size to the general tendency of small surface features resulting from diffuse water flow on such karsted terrain.

SURE ENOUGH CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND
TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST, ALASKA
CAVE REPORT #329, TONGASS CAVE PROJECT
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

November 25, 2002

By Kevin Allred

Sure enough Cave is formed in Heceta Limestone along a joint. Some sculpting and fluting shows evidence of flowing water. The good sized sinkhole entrance is 15-20 feet in diameter, and clearly takes water. Sure Enough begins as a small pit 38.6 feet (11.8m) deep, the entrance portion having extensive frost shatter. The cave can be negotiated without a rope. Part way down the pit just below a steep slope is a short alcove. No biology, cultural evidence, or speleothems were noted. A buck skeleton was found at the bottom. One antler was hollow with several holes through it that appeared to have grown that way. Total mapped passage is 66 feet (20m) long. It was surveyed by Jean Krejca and Kevin Allred on May 1, 2002.

LOST CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND
TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST, ALASKA
CAVE REPORT #340
TONGASS CAVE PROJECT
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

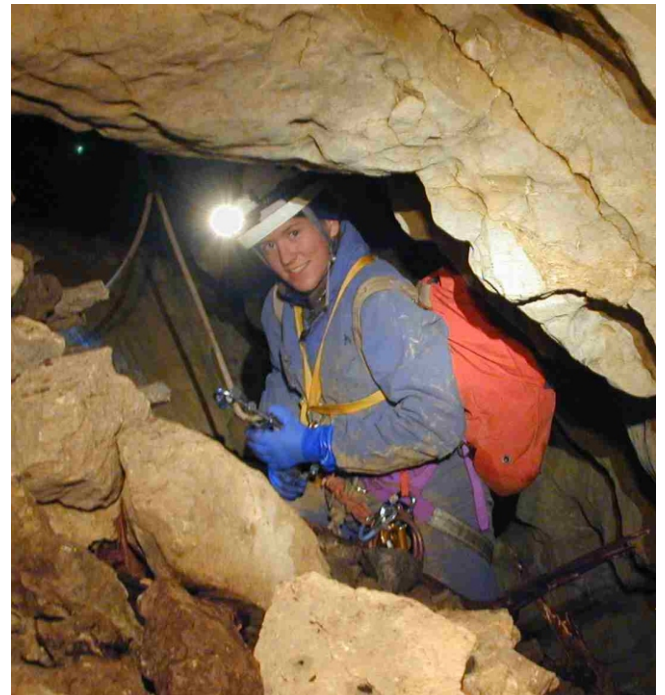
November 25, 2002

By Kevin Allred

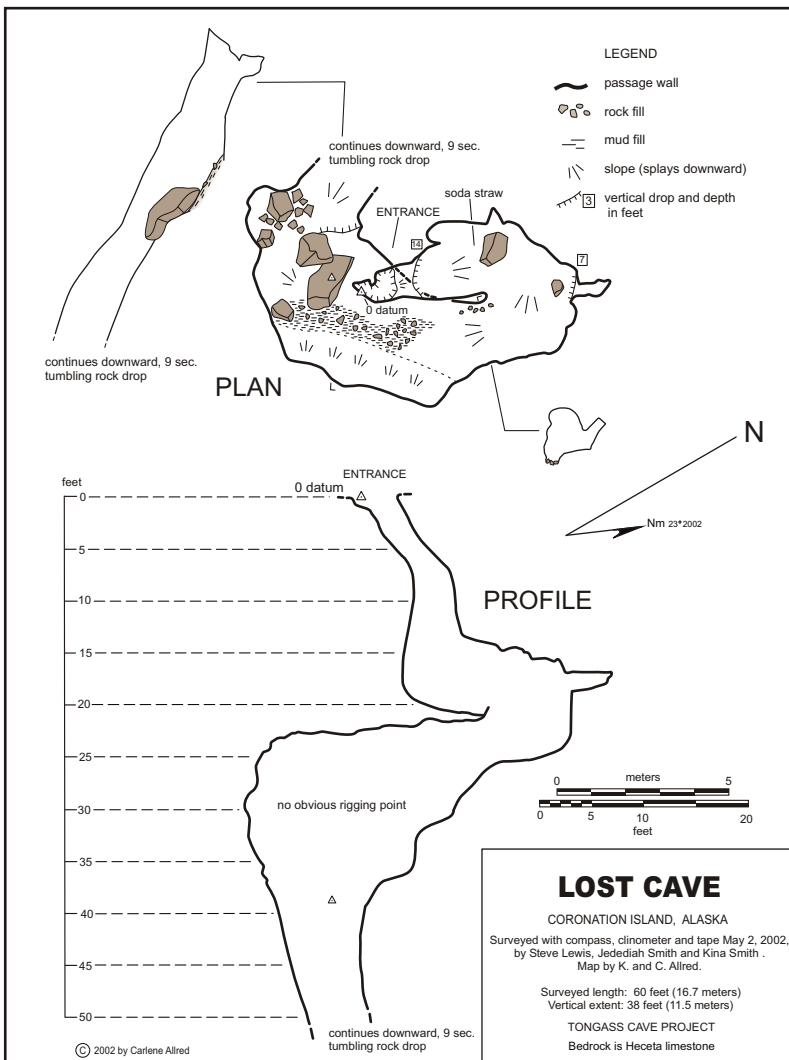
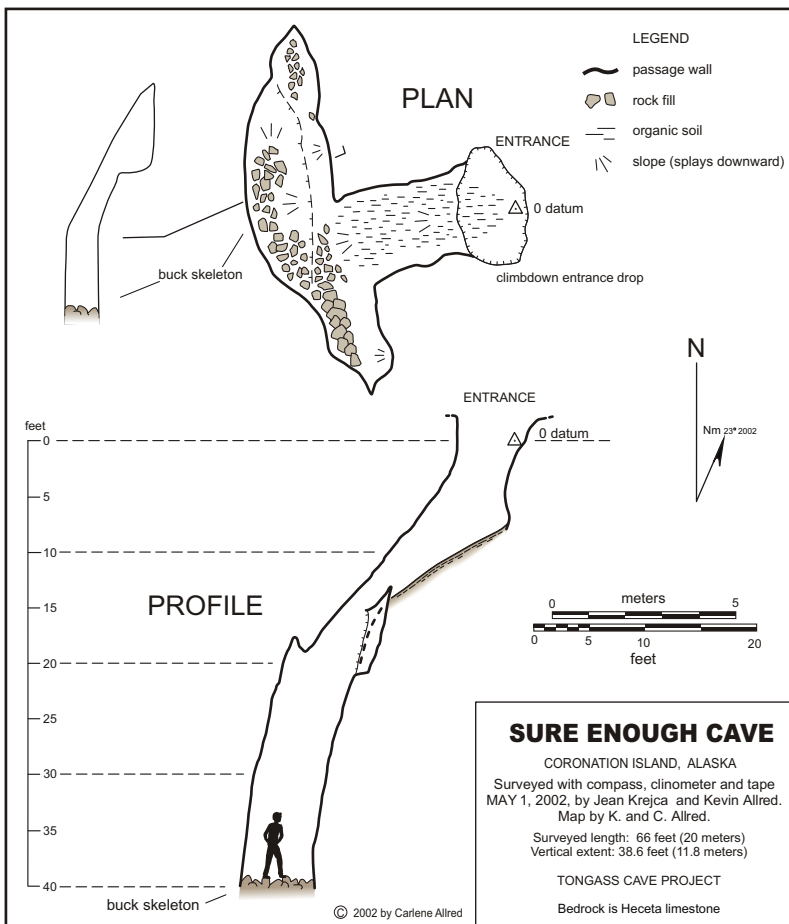
Lost Cave was first discovered in the summer of 2001 by Pete Smith, Steve Lewis, and Tim Heaton. Its entrance is a small, unpromising-looking pit. It was relocated in 2002 on the last day of an expedition and was only partially explored and surveyed for want of rope. The pit corkscrews downwards until at the last survey station a nine second tumbling drop hinted at a significant drop below. Total survey by Steve Lewis, Jed Smith, and Kina Smith on May 2, 2002 was 60 feet (16.7m) and the depth was 38 feet (11.5m).

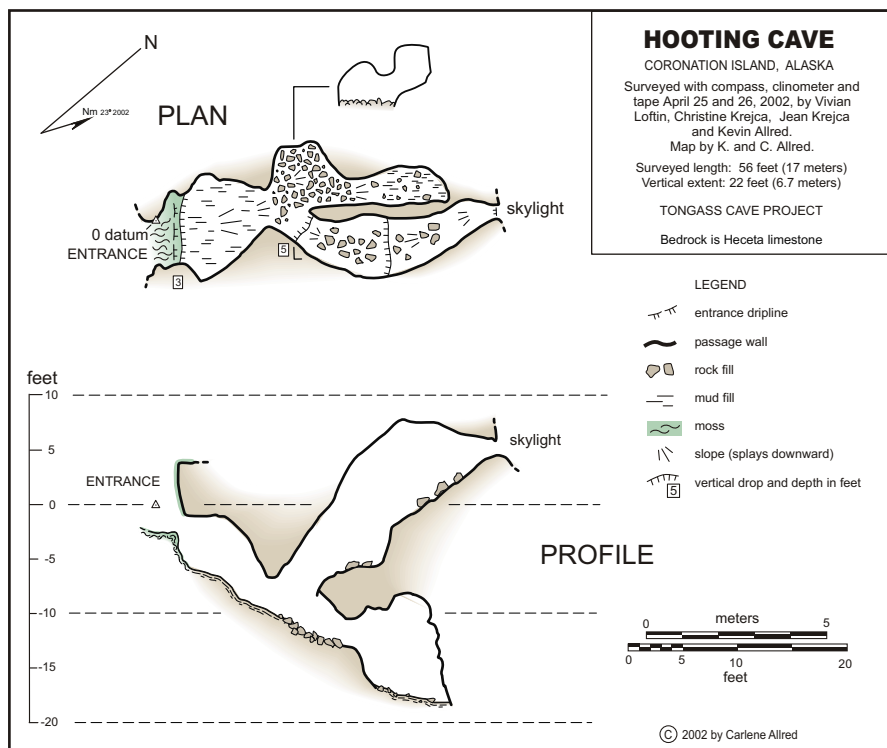
Management Recommendations:

Lost Cave should be more fully explored and surveyed. There is always a possibility that it contains fossil bones like nearby Colander Cave.



Chris Krejca at the rebelay in Passion Pit. Photo by Jean Krejca





HOOTING CAVE

CORONATION ISLAND

TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST, ALASKA

CAVE REPORT #321, TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

November 25, 2002

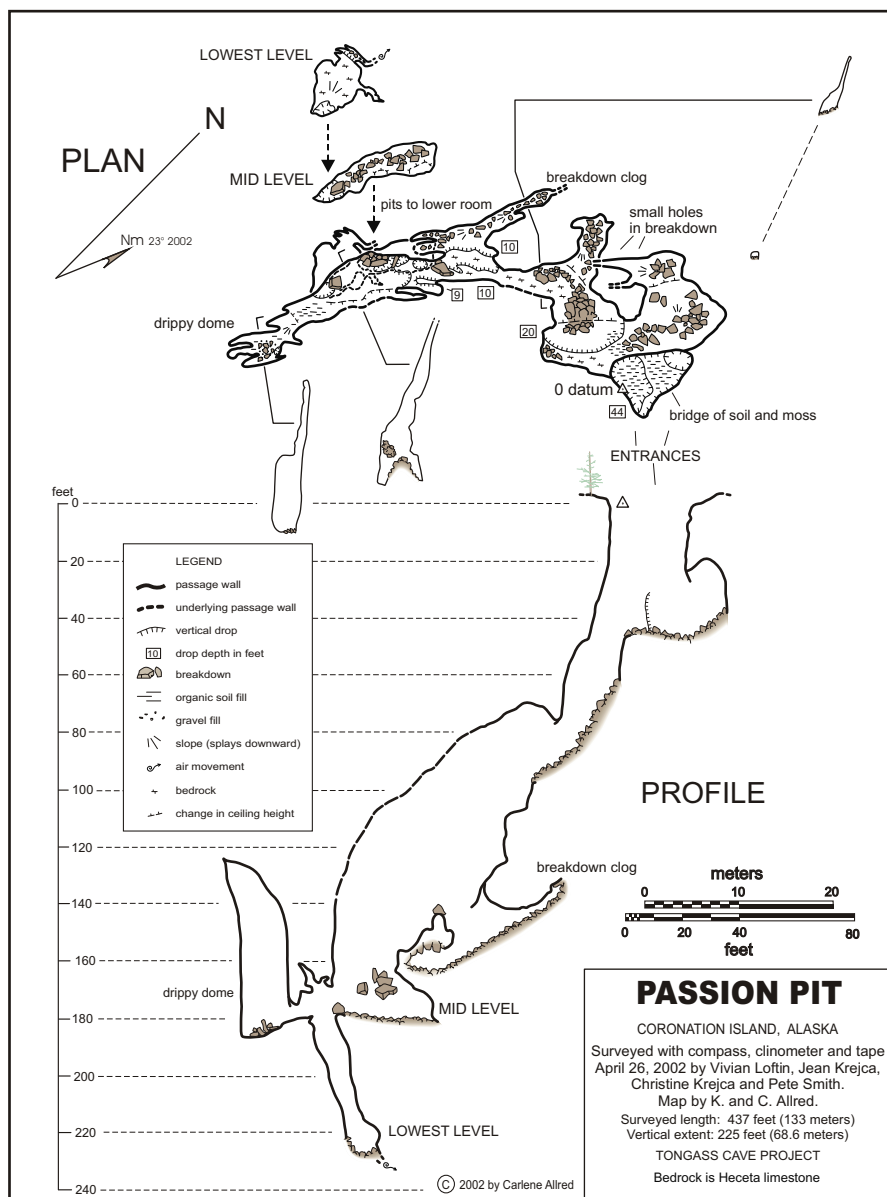
By Kevin Allred

Hooting Cave was named after a hooting grouse seen just uphill from the cave entrance. This cave has two entrances, both located on a small bench on the side of a thinly soil mantled hillside. The cave probably receives some uphill drainage. Hooting Cave was surveyed May 1, 2002 by Vivian Loftin, Jean Krejca, and Chris Krejca. It is 56 feet (18m) long and 22 feet (6.7m) deep.

Hooting Cave is a fun cave to visit, having some nice crystals in the back room. These Crystals are weathered calcite dogtooth spar. Many snail shells were seen in the cave, but no animal bones or cultural evidence was found.

Management Recommendations:

The location of this cave could be shared with the general public, although its remoteness probably makes it unsuitable to visit by all but the most determined. ■



PASSION PIT

CORONATION ISLAND

TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST, ALASKA

CAVE REPORT #330, TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

November 25, 2002

By Kevin Allred

Passion Pit was first discovered by Pete Smith, Steve Lewis, and Timothy Heaton in the summer of 2001. The cave is a series of pits all following one joint that extends north to south. This cave can be rigged on a big yellow cedar at the beautiful sloping entrance. A 220 foot long rope will be adequate for rigging if a rebelay is used at the corner. No cultural evidence or animal bones were found when Passion Pit was explored. Speleothems consist of popcorn here and there, reflecting that this is one of the driest caves found in southeast Alaska. However, evidence of dripping water indicates the cave becomes wetter seasonally.

The initial 40 foot drop gains one access to a sloping side chamber which becomes too tight in breakdown. Following the main trend of the cave down to the north, it soon becomes too tight in breakdown. To the south, the canyon ends in a "Drippy Dome" which pinches out at its top about 50 feet up. About 30 feet back towards the entrance is a 40 foot pit ending in breakdown. The cave takes lots of air, but it all seems to flow into fissures choked with breakdown or in too tight passages.

The cave was surveyed by Vivian Loftin, Chris Krejca, Jean Krejca, and Pete Smith on April 26, 2002. It is a total of 437 feet (133m) long and 225 feet (68.6m) deep.

Biology:

One white mite was collected by Jean Krejca from wet wood about 100 feet from the entrance rebelay corner.

Management Recommendations:

Passion Pit is an excellent recreational cave. It could be a directed access cave for those prepared and trained in single rope techniques. ■

A TRIP TO CORONATION ISLAND, SOUTHEASTERN ALASKA

By Fred Grady

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For about two weeks this summer, I joined Tim Heaton, a former paleo post-doc, for my eighth trip to Southeastern Alaska since 1992. I arrived in Wrangell on June 28th and spent that night in a bed and breakfast, enjoying my last hot shower for two weeks. The next morning, I got on a small plane that took off on wheels and landed on water. Tim and a crew of seven students, including his daughter Christie, were already there. I brought a load of supplies with me, and a plane left with Tim's wife, Julie, a medical resident. This would prove to have interesting consequences a couple of days later. The camp was in a beautiful bay with abundant wildlife, especially birds and sea otters. I set up my tent and got to work sorting sediments.

The main goal of this trip was to dig for deep sediments from three caves discovered on a previous expedition. Carbon dates of up to 11,000 years had been obtained from two of the caves from bones close to the surface. The crew was enjoying a rest day, so it wasn't until a couple of days later that I hiked up to two of the caves where we were working. The hike was long and uphill all of the way. As usual for Southeastern Alaska, it was also wet and slippery. Just below the caves was a convenient spring for drinking water and for screening cave sediments.

I brought my gear up to Deer Bone Cave and started working on the main excavation pit, bagging sediments in five-centimeter levels. The bags would be brought down to the spring where they would be screened where they would be screened in buckets using mosquito net screen bags. The concentrate would next be brought down to camp, where it would again be screened and dried in a drying tent. The concentrate would then be divided into fractions and picked for bones, teeth, and other organic remains.

On the first day working the cave, I got tired about midafternoon so I decided to hike back to camp by myself. Unfortunately, the trail was flagged with orange and pink flagging tape and I am red-green color blind. I got to about within 100 yards before I realized I had lost the trail and had entered a confusing area of small water courses and blown-down trees. I fell down many times and then I fell once more with a branch hitting my left eye, causing blinding pain.

I caught my breath, blinked several times and was relieved to still have sight in that eye. I made it back to camp and found a small mirror, noting that only the lower lid seemed to be lacerated. However that night I started seeing halos on the periphery of my eye and I became concerned that I had retina damage. If only Dr. Julie had been there to give advice. I told Tim if the situation got worse he would have to radio to plane to evacuate me. Fortunately, the situation was much better the next day.

We continued to work the two small caves, reaching sediment in one consisting of clay and rock. This was hard to dig out with a trowel and Tim hadn't brought a rock pick. I had seen a log on the beach with large spikes in it, and so, using a rock, got one free and it worked just great at removing the sediment between the rocks in the cave. Surprisingly, the intact bird bones were found among the rocks and clay. Most of the bones were from small rodents, birds and otters-- although we got some deer and very rare bear bones as well. Eventually we hit bottom at 80 centimeters in one cave and 60 centimeters in the other.

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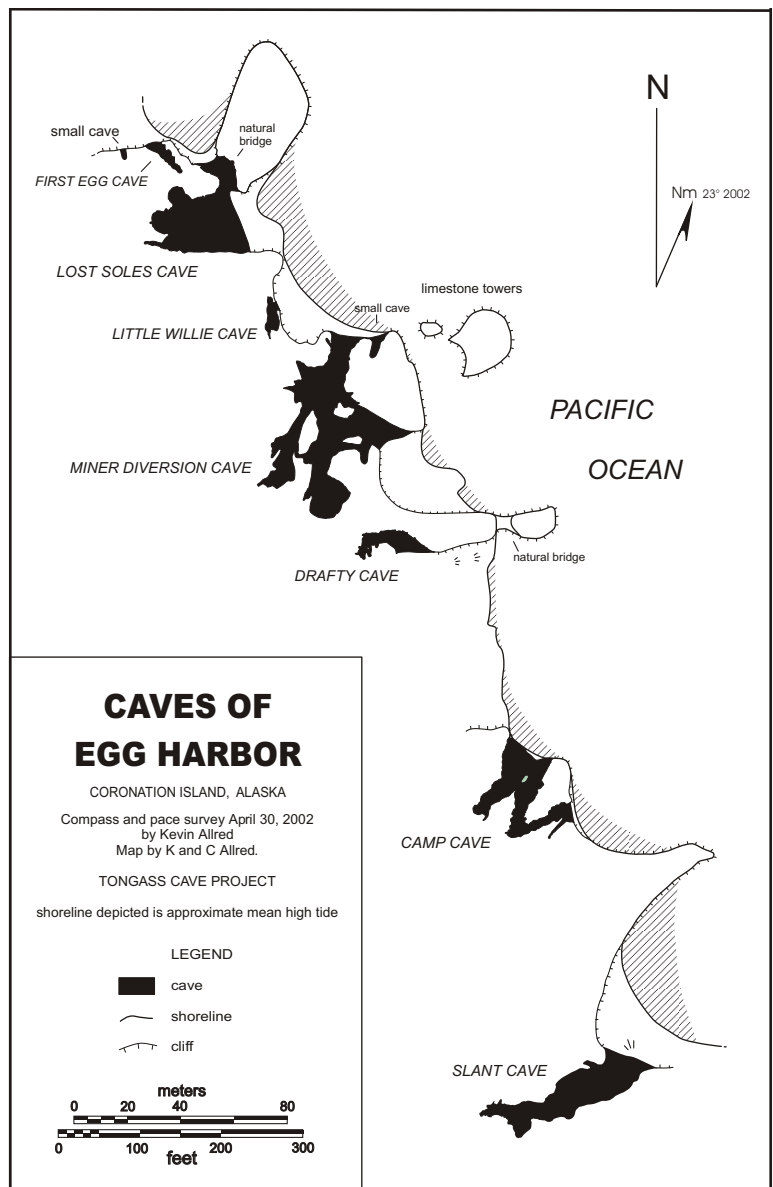
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Meanwhile, Tim had located another cave nearer the camp that previously had been found to contain skeletons of a grizzly bear and a deer dated at about 11,000 and 3,000 years respectively. Colander Cave had a 40-foot drop that we rappelled down on a rope. Tim and I then mapped the bones and wrapped them in papertowels for removal from the cave.

In the next few days, the students took turns going in Colander and the remainder of the two skeletons were collected, but other than a few bird bones, nothing else was found. The deep sediments that were collected proved to be barren of bones. Tim and I located one new cave that I named for Marshall Holmes, who had died a few months before and who had helped me on several bone digs in West Virginia. This cave unfortunately proved barren, except for one vole skull.

In my free time I roamed the beach observing the abundant wildlife, and collecting trash. Finally it came time to leave. The plane had to take three trips to get all of us out. Tim, Christie and on other went on to further adventures and collecting on the Queen Charlotte Islands. The rest of us headed home. I was able to see an eye doctor on the day I got home. He dilated my eyes and told me that the retina of the one I had injured was fine, but that the vitreous humor was sort of scrambled up, which accounted for the occasional clouds I see. The situation has gradually improved since then.

Tim will submit more samples for Carbon 14 dating and we will identify all the species we collected in the next few months. I hope to return again next year. 🐿



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"Specimen" sent to Jean Krejca from Kevin Allred after the Coronation expedition, photo by Jean Krejca



Vivian Loftin at entrance of Goest Cave, photo by Jean Krejca