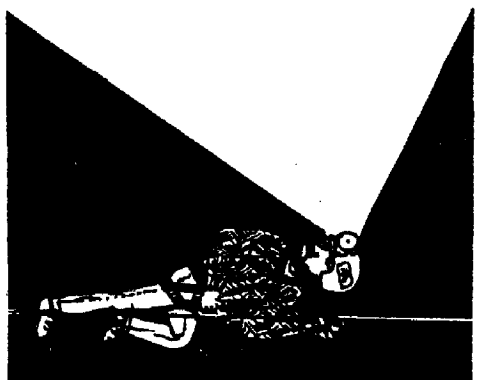
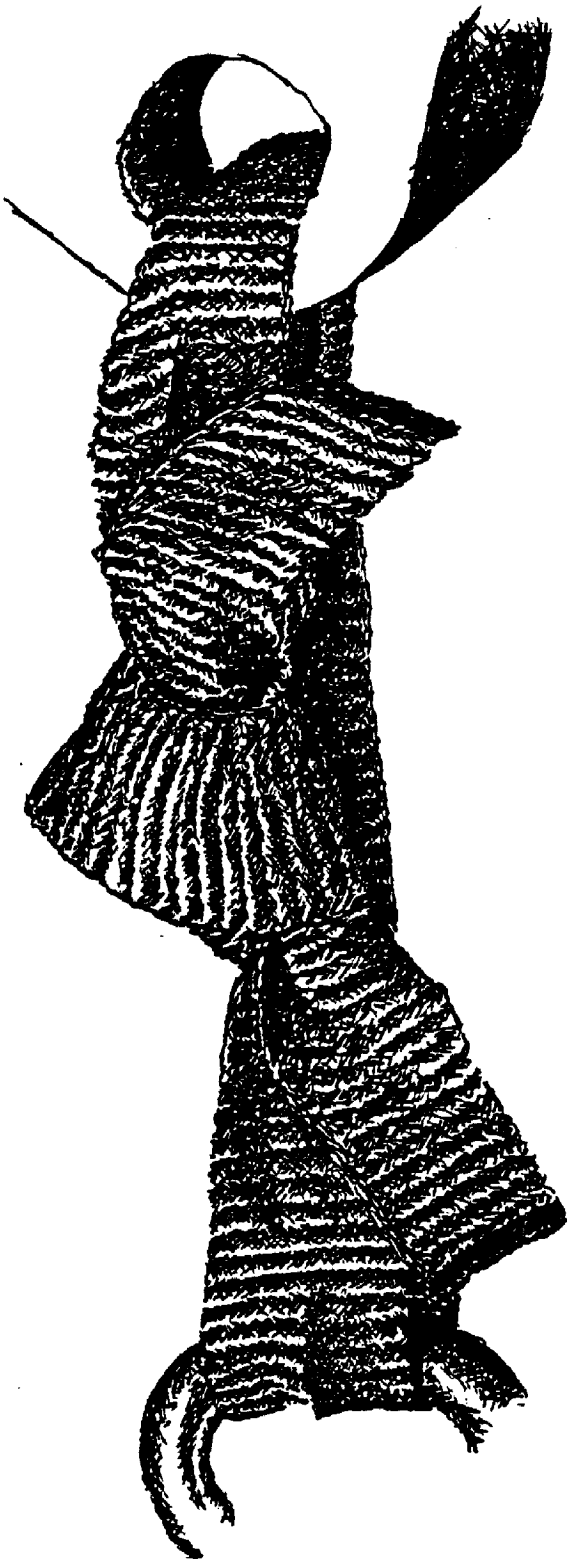
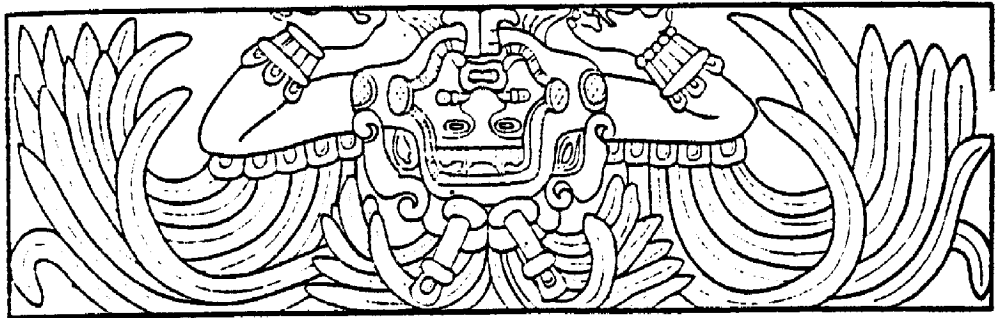


JANUARY 1983

BIRMINGHAM GROTTO NEWSLETTER
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY





Minutes of January 3, 1981

The January meeting was called to order by Mike McEachern. Minutes of the previous meeting were read. Two visitors were recognized; Frank Piazza and David Wright. About 32 members were present.

Rena Caudle reported the checking account at \$327.62 and the savings at \$1,133.69. She made a motion to change the savings account from a 4% passbook account to a regular savings account at 5 1/2% interest. The motion was passed.

Old Business:
 Everyone agreed that the Avondale Library was a nice place for meetings, and Ken Brown volunteered to continue making arrangements with the library for the meetings.

New Business:
 Don Curry reported on a trip to Anderson's Cave. He said it was muddy.

Jay Clark reported on the grotto trip to 23 dollar pit. Jay also found Eddle pits 1 & 2 on another trip.

Lee Stubbs reported on a return trip to 23 dollar pit. Les Bury reported on some small caves near Scaric, Al. Lynn and Greg McGill started out to Pretty Well, but were shown another small entrance over Limlock Cave.

Ken Brown reported on a tour trip to Magic Screwdriver. Dave Howell reported his finds on a ridgetalk near Gurley, Al. They found 1 80' pit and 3 other entrances. 1 vertical, 2 horizontal that qualify for the survey.

Trips:
 Andy Zerbe will lead the January grotto trip to Cave Mountain Cave. The trip will leave the Kystal in Tallent at 7:00 on Sunday, Jan. 23.

Program:
 Jay Clark presented a slide show on War Eagle Cave. Mike McEachern showed slides of the TAG FALL CAVE IN.

Sperry Borer

Birmingham Grotto Newsletter is published approximately twelve times a year by the Birmingham Grotto of the National Speleological Society.

Subscription and Membership fees are due. Annual subscription rates included in the \$4 membership fee. side of the Birmingham area, the subscription rate is only \$2. All prorated from October.

Officers for the 1982-83 year:
 President - Mike McEachern
 Vice Pres. - Jay Clark
 Secretary - Nancy Boice
 Treasurer - Rena Caudle

grotto meets the first Monday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Avondale Library.

meeting after the meeting is at 9:00.

ERA WINTER B.M.
 MARCH 20, 1983
 FALL CREEK FALLS, TN
 Nashville Grotto - Host
 More info of meeting

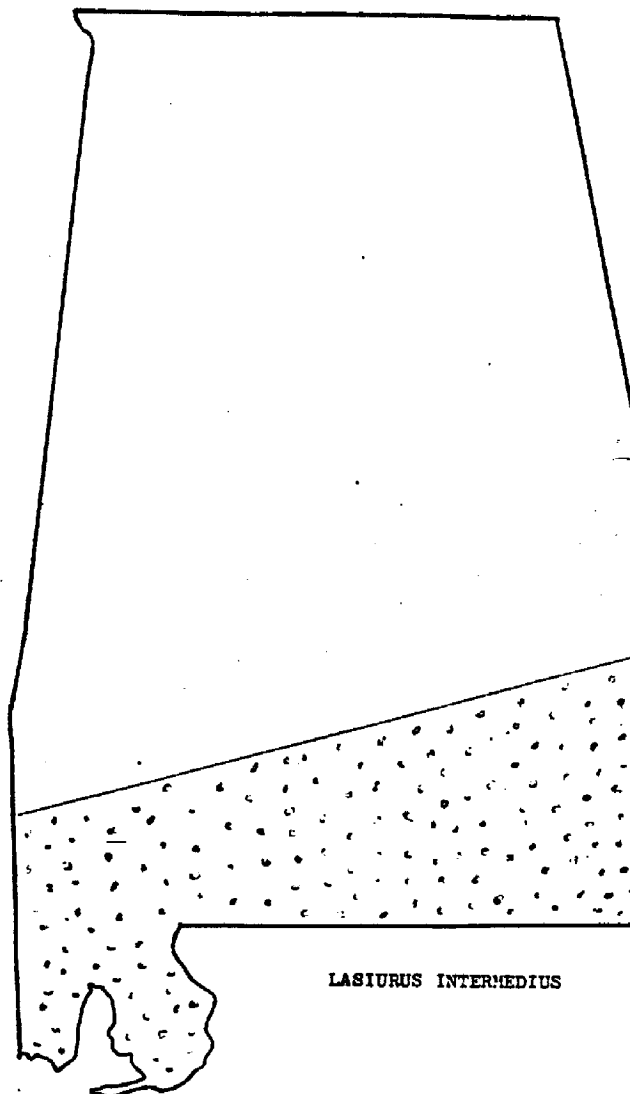
Bat of the Month
by John Marshal

Lasiurus intermedius - Northern yellow bat;
eastern yellow bat.

Description: Forearm, 45-56mm; wingspread, 350-390 mm. This is a large bat with yellowish fur. It has long wings, short ears, and the dorsal surface of the interfemoral membrane is furred only on the anterior half (Barbour and Davis, 1969).

Range: There are two subspecies of this bat. The eastern subspecies L. i. floridanus is the one that is found in Alabama. According to Barbour and Davis (1969) and Hall and Kelson (1959), the yellow bat occurs only in the extreme southern portion of Alabama in the Coastal Plain. Its range closely coincides with that of Spanish moss (Fillandsia usneoides), in which roosts. It is a permanent resident.

Habitat: This bat roosts and bears its young in trees with Spanish moss. Several yellow bats may inhabit a single moss covered tree. In much of their range where there are turkey oak and longleaf pine, draped with moss, they are one of the most abundant bat species. Flights of them can commonly be observed leaving groves of trees in the evening. (Barbour and Davis, 1969)



LASIURUS INTERMEDIUS

THE MAPPING OF BOOTLEGGER CAVE

A real grotto effort has gone into the mapping of one of Birmingham's own local caves. Bootlegger Cave, located just north of the airport, has an interesting history and is a fun cave.

According to Lee Stubbs, whose family comes from that neighborhood, the cave was used during the Civil War to hide family valuables from the yankees. In more recent times, as its name implies, the cave was used as a still. Copper coils, vats, and broken bottles abound in the entrance chamber.

One cold winter day, about two years ago Greg, Lynn, and Sam McGill, Mike McEachern and myself went to relocate the cave. With information from Milo and help from local neighborhood kids we scrounged the hillside looking for a small, crawl-in entrance. We found it under a clump of honeysuckle vines. We squeezed through the tight entrance crawl into the large entrance room. The two neighborhood boys went into the entrance room with us, but they didn't like the darkness so they decided to retreat back to the great outdoors. We continued to explore the cave passing through a maze of decorated passages to the muddy rooms in the rear of the cave. We decided it would be an interesting cave to map due to the maze areas.

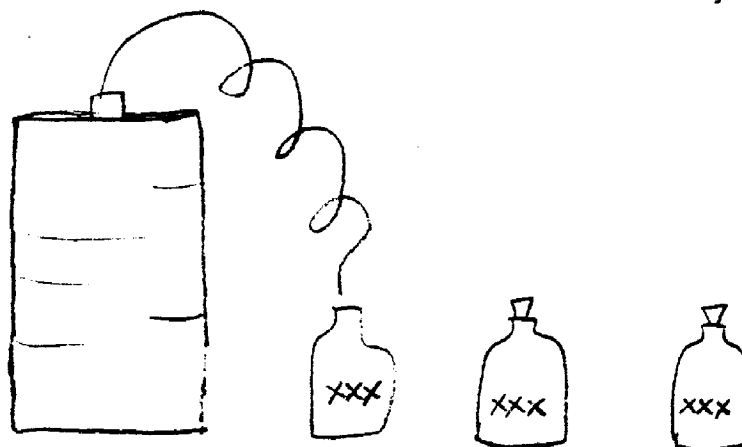
In the last couple of years many trips have been made to map, photograph, or show people the cave. It's especially nice in winter due to its easy access. One can park about 50 feet from the cave and easily walk to the entrance. There is no parking problem, other than the possibility of vandalism. On our last trip, we noticed a stripped down car hidden in the tall weeds that had not been there before.

Mapping the cave became a real challenge. On every trip much time was spent to relocate the last survey station. The notes also became very confusing with so many different people mapping. The maze area was always fun for mapping. Almost every trip someone ended up turned around or lost for a few minutes. And one special trip was made to get John Attaway good and lost to kill time before his surprise birthday party. It worked too!

Many people have helped in the project including: Mike McEachern, Nancy Boice, Greg McGill, Lynn McGill, Sam McGill, Steve Connors, Alf Van Hoose, John Attaway, Steve Attaway, Myrna Jordon, Alfred Smith, Lee Stubbs, and Marilyn Moore. There are probably others, but their names are lost.

Last November, Mike, Lee and I made the final survey trip to complete the map. It's kinda sad to have the project completed as Bootlegger was always a good choice for for a trip on a cold Sunday afternoon in January.

Nancy Boice



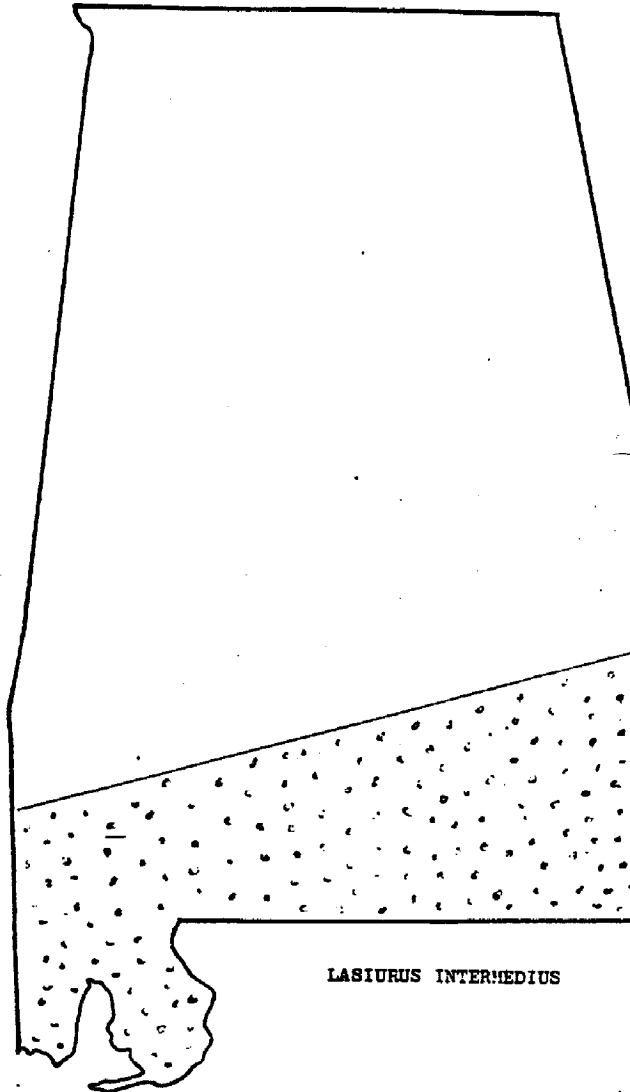
Bat of the Month
by John Marshal

Lasiurus intermedius - Northern yellow bat;
eastern yellow bat.

Description: Forearm, 45-56mm; wingspread, 350-390 mm. This is a large bat with yellowish fur. It has long wings, short ears, and the dorsal surface of the interfemoral membrane is furred only on the anterior half (Barbour and Davis, 1969).

Range: There are two subspecies of this bat. The eastern subspecies L. i. floridanus is the one that is found in Alabama. According to Barbour and Davis (1969) and Hall and Kelson (1959), the yellow bat occurs only in the extreme southern portion of Alabama in the Coastal Plain. Its range closely coincides with that of Spanish moss (Fillandsia usneoides), in which roosts. It is a permanent resident.

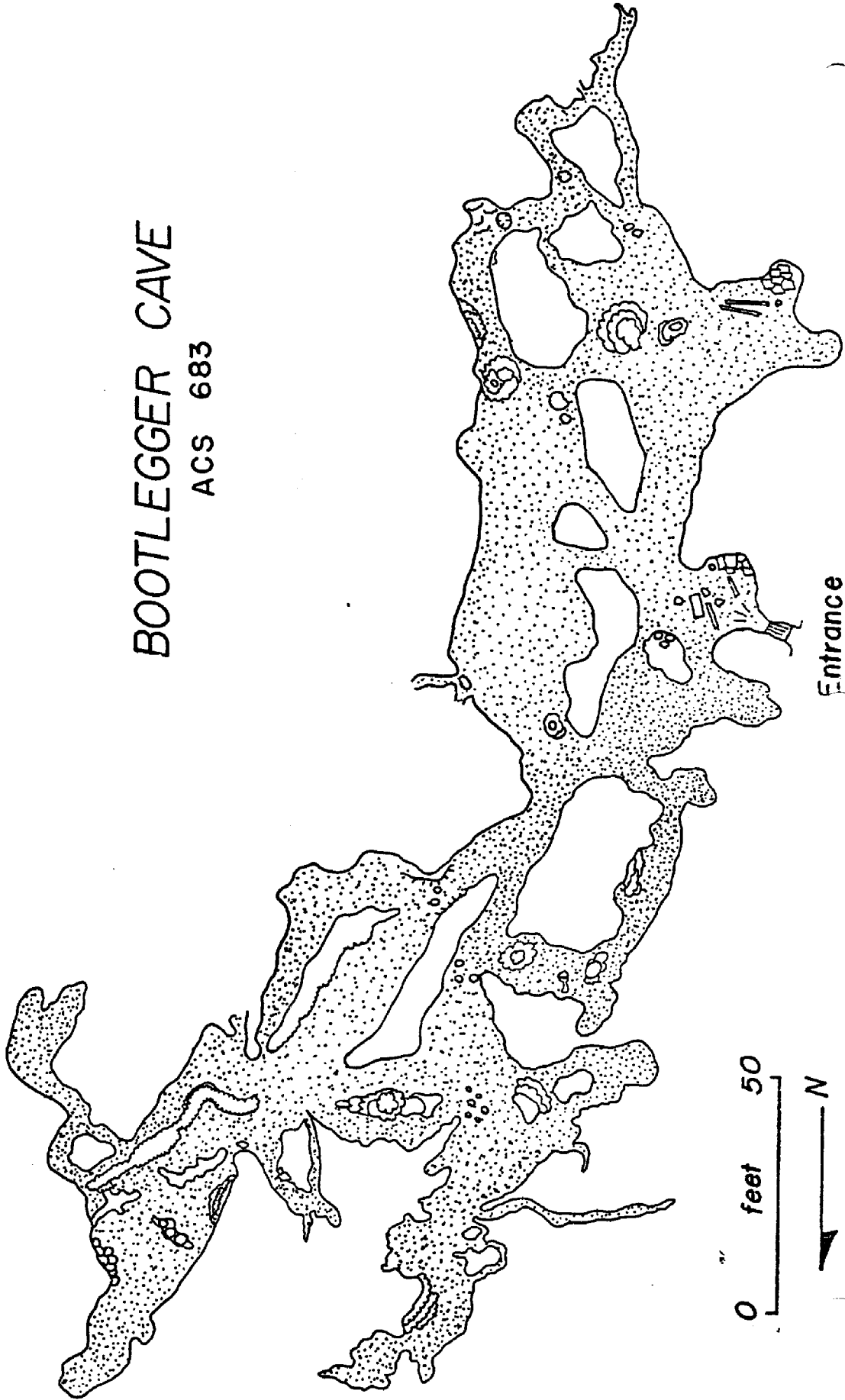
Habitat: This bat roosts and bears its young in trees with Spanish moss. Several yellow bats may inhabit a single moss covered tree. In much of their range where there are turkey oak and longleaf pine, draped with moss, they are one of the most abundant bat species. Flights of them can commonly be observed leaving groves of trees in the evening. (Barbour and Davis, 1969)



LASIURUS INTERMEDIUS

BOOTLEGGER CAVE

ACS 683



Entrance

0 feet 50

N

Knots to You!

Recently, while climbing with an experienced caver, I was appalled to see him tie a series of half-hitches and overhand knots to form one huge lumpy knot for attaching his ascender to his sling. When asked if he was going to climb on that knot, his answer was unequivocally, "Yes!" Being concerned for the safety of my friend, I asked why he did not use a figure of Eight loop. I was horrified to learn that the only thing, that he could tie was his shoelaces! "But," came his reply, "my knot is strong," as he put his foot into his sling and tugged at his ascender. All I could do was to shrug and retie his sling for him.

This nonchalant caver is not the first that I have encountered that was deficient in his ability to tie knots. A caver, caving without a good working knowledge of knots is playing Russian Roulette, sooner or later he will lose. You say that you are a horizontal caver and you will never do any vertical work? BANG, you're dead! Knots are equally important to horizontal cavers. One day you will need a handline to get up or down a difficult climb, a belay across a ledge over a deep drop, or ect... Therefore this is for those of you who are horizontal cavers too. Never depend on anyone else, they may know less than you.

There are basically five knots essential for caving; the Bowline, the Fisherman's Knot, the Overhand Knot, the Figure of Eight Knot, and the Prusik Knot. All of these knots should be in Every cavers repatory. Over the next six months, one of these knots will appear in the B'ham Grotto Newsletter every month, beginning with and introduction to knot tying, and the Overhand Knot.

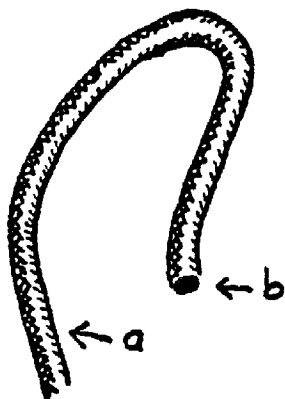
I urge everyone to get a piece of rope five to six feet in length and practice tying these knots. You should know these knots so well that you can tie them behind your back, or in the dark. Some day you may have to!

-Lee Stubbs

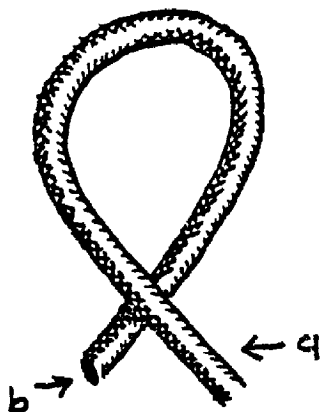
The Overhand Knot

Before learning to tie any knot, one should know some of the basic terminology used in tying knots. The running end, or end is the free end of the rope. The standing part is the fastened part of the rope. A bight is a turn in the rope that does not cross itself. A loop is a turn in the rope that crosses itself. And a half-hitch is a loop, running around a shaft or a rope, that locks itself.

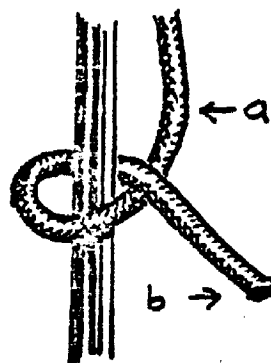
b - running end



Bight



Loop

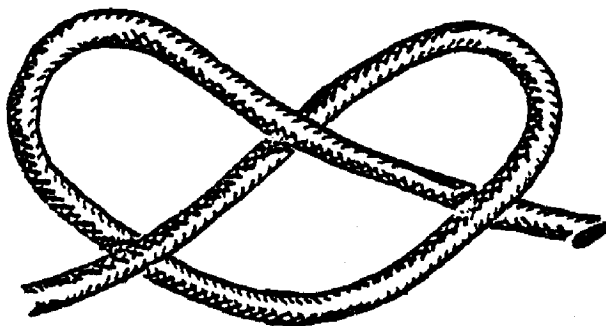


Half-Hitch

When tying a knot be sure to form it carefully and be certain that it retains it's shape and form as it is tightened.

The Overhand Knot is the most fundamental of knots, and is the basis of many other more complicated knots. In caving the overhand knot has many uses. Two of the major uses of the overhand knot are to provide a better grip on handlines, and to secure the ends of another knot. These are the most common usages, but not by any means all of the uses of the overhand knot.

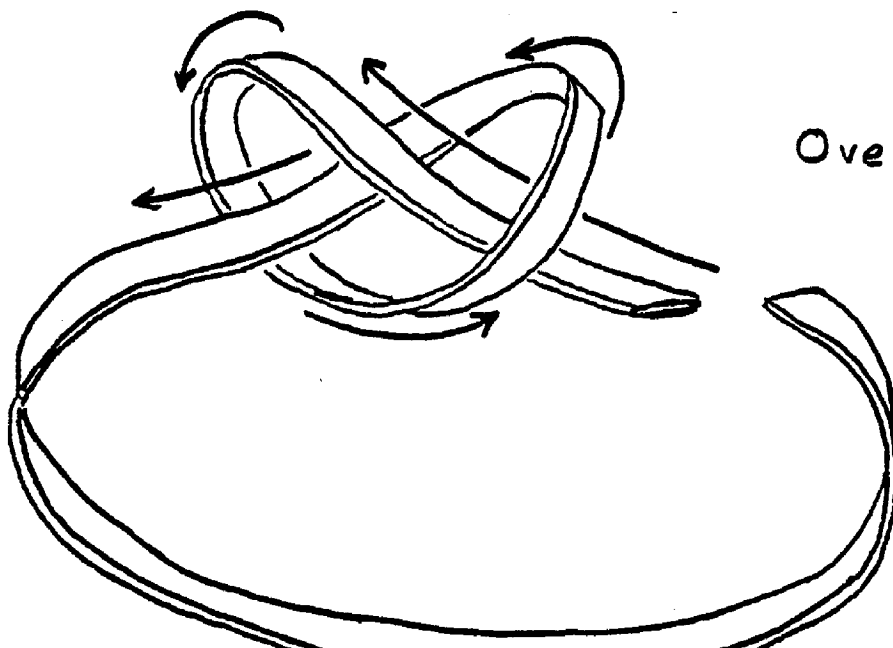
To tie an overhand knot a loop is formed and the running end of the rope is passes through the loop.



Overhand
Knot

A variation of the Overhand knot is the Overhand Bend, also refered to as the Ring Bend, and the Water Knot. This knot works well on webbing and is widely used for tying slings.

An Overhand Bend is formed by tying an Overhand Knot in one end of a piece of webbing, and then leading the other end through the knot.



Overhand Bend

Steven Warren

Alfred Smith

Earl Smith: Reporter

We set out from B'ham at about 8:30, towards the third largest cave in Alabama. We picked up Steven at the abandoned filling station lot where highway 79 and 321 separate, and we were on our way. Since Steven had never been to Guess Creek we filled his ears with tales of suffering, danger and exhaustion. But we also told him of mystery, and adventure, the beauty and magnificence of the Moonscape Room, and the cave's awe inspiring entrance.

Finally arriving at about eleven o'clock we donned our meshed long underwear to guard us from the cold, continous water, fired up the carbide lights and embarked upon one of my most enjoyable trips in Guess Creek cave.

I had shock proffed my ammo can so I could take my camera "safely" into the rugged environment. You see, I had read and reread Stu Clifton's articles about Guess Creek in the Nov., Dec '78 and the Feb. '79 BGN and decided that I would find that upper room with its white and red formations; the room we had passed over and without even realizing its existence. Naturally, I was going to be ready for this rediscovery, or at least our first visit, and take those unbelievable photographs like a true explorer.

After the initiation of stooping for awhile in the cold water I wondered if I was really prepared to lug my ammo can as far as I had been previously in the cave. Anxious to straighten my back, I followed Alfred and Steven to check out what must have been one of the first upper leads after the turn that leads to the Moonscape Room. We found a few winding crawls, most ending in the breakdown that was everywhere; but, we were surprised when Al took the most obvious route up to find the most passage. I had gone basically straight into the breakdown and Steven had pushed some tight crawl that just made shreds of his clothes. I suppose the jagged breakdown room in the new area. While Steven was just starting up, a loose rock dislodged and hit one of his fingers and then threatened to land on my brother, who, hearing the commotion, jumped clear just in the nick of time. We all looked into the unstable room and saw at least one lead at the far end, but thought it a little too risky because even the walls were full of loose, sharp rocks. So we left and rejoined the stream passage which was more of a relief then I thought possible.

It wasn't long before we came to the next good sized room called the Inverted Rock Room, named from the presence of a large piece of breakdown that has fallen from the ceiling with formations on it. Apparently, it flipped as it fell and landed with the stalactites pointing upward. Being surprised with our previous find we began to poke around. Noticing some nice formations above the streambed; I decided that this was the place to take out my camera and try to take a few good shots. So I took position on a boulder of breakdown, took a couple of pictures and as I was putting my camera back into the plastic ziplock bag, I heard Alfred say something about an upper lead. While I started hurrying to put my camera gear away, I felt the weight of it in the ziplock bag, I heard a rustle and before I had time to react, the weight released and I heard two bounces and a splash. I got to the camera in time to hear the air bubbles escaping and I snatched it up like it was going to drown. Thinking of how quick I had been gave me hope that I could still use it somehow; so, after taking the cover off and draining what I could, I whiped it off and it "looked fine". Then, Alfred hollered something about an upper lead right beside some white formations. I left the camera and clambered up the breakdown and there they were! White and clean and one of them stood around three feet tall. Needless to say, I turned and went back to get my camera. Well, I was all set to shoot; tried a picture and the flash worked right only one time. Waterlogged I guess.

I followed Alfred's voice, found his pack and began following a more narrow passage. After I caught up with him, we continued upward and I saw a small pocket of a room above. And seeing between some more beautiful white stalagmites I saw a black hole. As I got close enough for my light to shine through the darkness I saw that we had found a large room, so large that it almost equals the Moonscape Room. Steven joined us and we walked around fascinated with the white formations like ice amid blood red stalagmites and modules on the breakdown floor. One of these reddish stalagmites glowed like a red hot ingot when a light was held behind it. Further investigations in a higher section of the room revealed a wide bank of flowstone, all white with little peckmarks which were filled with crystals that sparkled as my light moved back and forth.

After leaving our newly found discovery we went on to the Moonscape Room and I was amazed once again. We walked around the old large formations and looked in all the little grotto's at the shinier more delicate ones. Finally, we decided to call it a day and left the Moonscape Room and started the long, hard trip back to the entrance. We didn't have any trouble finding the exit this time and I was glad as always to see the life sustaining sunshine.



Beetles Collected From Alabama Caves
collected by Tim King

In order to give other grotto members an idea of the micro-life that is found in caves, I have composed a list of beetles that I have collected in Alabama caves.

This list is by no means complete. It just gives one idea of what beetles might occur in some of the Alabama caves I have collected.

CAVES

Horseshoe 1, 2, 18, 13, 20
 Jess Elliott 3, 13
 Haddin Springs 13, 15
 Hering 21
 Scott 20, 13
 Aladdin 4, 14, 20, 5, 13
 Limrock 14
 McAllister Sink 14, 23, 6, 7, 18
 Guffy 14, 23, 7, 8
 Posey 9
 Horse 9, 16, 18
 Pass 9, 16
 Bangor 9
 Randolph 9
 Blowing Saltpeter 16
 Bryant 9, 16
 Wornock 16, 18, 24
 Copeland 24

Graves Gap 24, 18
 Indian Rock 19, 13
 Cave NE, Springville 18
 Turks 17, 10
 Crystal 11, 18
 Argo 12
 Cave N, Calicus 12, 18
 Graves 16

BEE TL ES

Pselaphidae

- 1 Arianops steevesi
- 2 Machaerites sp.
- 3 Machaerites euros
- 4 Machaerites ferus
- 5 Batrisodes jocuvestus
- 6 Sonoma sp.
- 7 Batrisodes sp.
- 8 Machaerites steevesi
- 9 Batriasymnodes spelaeu
- 10 Batrisodes profundus
- 11 Speleobama vana
- 12 Bythinopsis sp.

Leiodidae

- 13 Ptomaphagus hatchi hatchi
- 14 Ptomaphagus valentinei
- 15 Catopocerus sp.
- 16 Ptomaphagus walteri
- 17 2sp. Leiodidae

Carabidae

- 18 Anillinus sp.
- 19 Pseudanophthalmus sp.
- 20 Pseud. humeralis
- 21 Pseud. profundus
- 22 Pseud. meridionalis fluviatilis
- 23 Pseud. angustilobus
- 24 Pseud. steevesi

BIRMINGHAM GROTTO NEWSLETTER
P.O. 3302
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA 35255

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 3907
BIRMINGHAM, AL.

Dave & Edna Caudle
Rt. 1 714 Millcreek Rd.
Warrior, Al. 35173

IF BOX IS MARKED, THIS IS YOUR LAST ISSUE. PLEASE

PAY DUES.