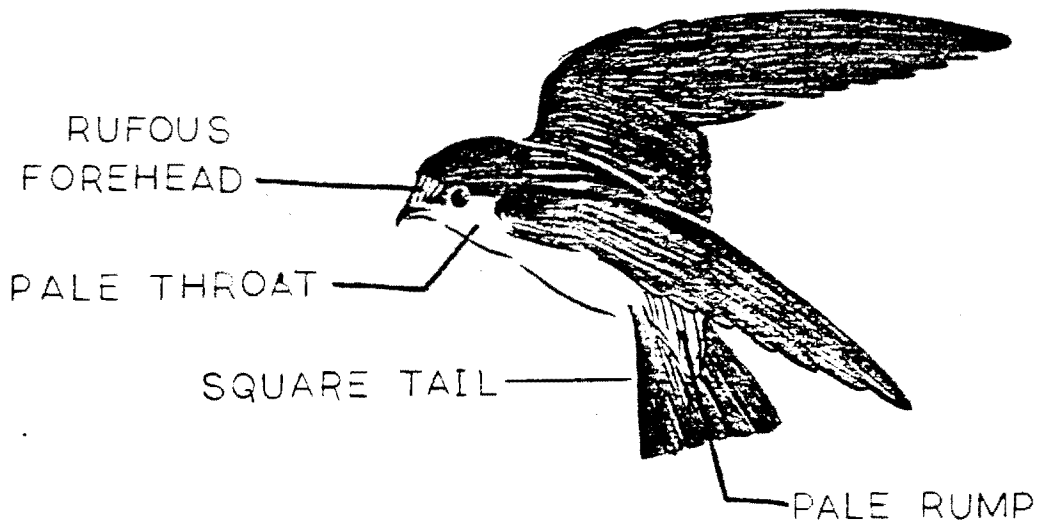
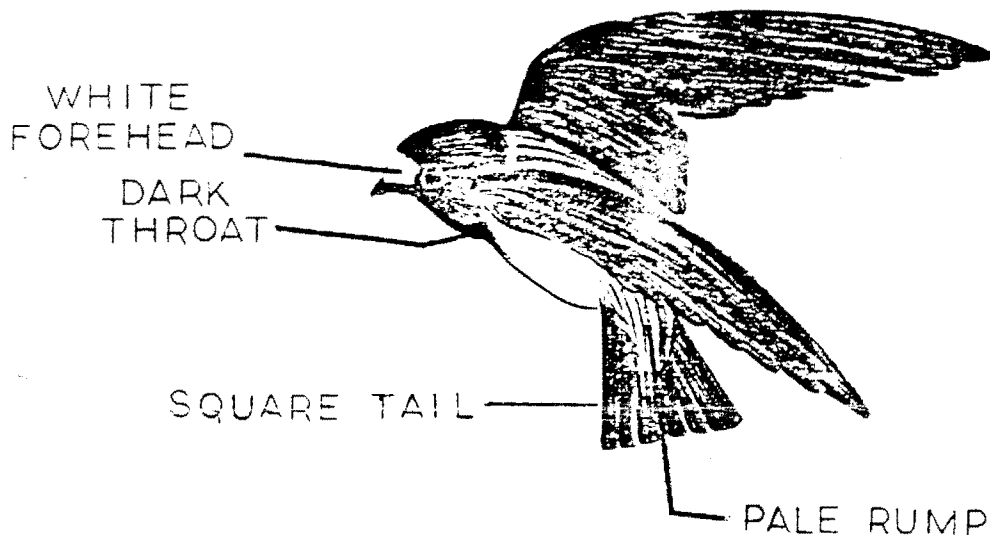


THE AMERICAN BIRD

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 3

MARCH 1987

CLIFF SWALLOW



CAVE SWALLOW

THE MAVERICK BULL, is the monthly newsletter of THE MAVERICK GROTTTO, an internal organization of the National Speleological Society (NSS G-322).

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The Editor invites all cavers to submit articles, news, maps, cartoons, art, and photographs. If the material is to be returned, a self-addressed, stamped envelope should accompany it. News items will be accepted and are urged to be submitted on floppy diskettes in either APPLE II, or IBM compatible ASCII Text file format. Items should be of interest to cavers and their ilk, and be non-political (except cartoons of very good humor) in nature.

Internal organizations of the National Speleological Society may reprint any item (unless copyrights belong to author as will be stated in byline) first appearing in THE MAVERICK BULL, if proper credit is given and a complete copy of the publication is delivered to THE MAVERICK GROTTTO address at the time of publication. Other organizations should contact the grotto at the address herein.

EXCHANGES: THE MAVERICK BULL, will exchange newsletters with other grottos. Contact any officer.

PRINTING: This issue was printed FREE by the TROG PRESS, INC. in the Republic of Texas. General flunkies for this issue were Pepe Tres, and Major Meister Brau.

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MEMBERSHIP POLICY: Any caver with interest, beliefs, and action, consistent with the purposes of THE MAVERICK GROTTTO and the National Speleological society is eligible for membership. Membership in the National Speleological Society is encouraged, but not mandatory except to hold office. Acceptance of new members is based on payment of dues and a mandatory three trip requirement with at least three different grotto members. These three members shall act as sponsors and at least one of these members will be required present at a Grotto Meeting where they may be voted in by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present.

Maverick: 1) American pioneer who did not brand

his calves, 2) An unbranded range animal, especially a calf.

MEETINGS: Meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month, at SMOKEY'S RIBS, at 5300 East Lancaster in the east central part of Fort Worth, Texas. Just short of one mile west of Loop 820. This is a central point in Tarrant County, and should be convenient to the mid-cities, Arlington, and Fort Worth! The time is 7:00 P.M., and the food is good. Go through the regular line for your grub and then come to the "party room" which we have reserved in back.

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COVER: This months cover shows a Cave Swallow and a Cliff Swallow and their differentiating features. These drawings were borrowed from a handout provided by Walt Davis of the Dallas Museum of Natural History at the February Meeting. See related article inside.

1987 CALENDAR

March 10; Maverick Grotto Meeting.

April 14; Maverick Grotto Meeting.

April 18-20; Guads trip to Sand, Little Sand,

- Fort Stanton, and Wind Cave.
Contact Corky for details.
- May 12; Maverick Grotto Meeting.
- May 16/17; Trip to Sherfield Cave
Boxley, Arkansas
Contact Corky for details.
- May 10,20; Missouri Caves,
after Sherfield Cave;
Big Smittle, Hooten
Cave (maybe), Big
time caves, waterfalls.
Dale Ellison 817/473-0463
- June 9; Maverick Grotto Meeting.

SPECIAL NOTICE:

In last month's "Bull," a trip was reported on caving the Sparks Ranch in Oklahoma. John Sparks, has requested that ALL CONTACT for trips to this ranch be made through Dennis Thompson, in Ardmore. Direct contact with the land owner could result in all cavers being banned from the ranch. This has nearly happened once before. Spark's Ranch is a ridge walker's paradise and trips limited to six people are available through Dennis.

Corky Corcoran, talks to Dennis on a weekly basis, you may also contact him and he will relay to Dennis.

Dennis Thompson
806 NW 10th
Ardmore, OK, 73401

It's generally good practice before contacting a land owner, to contact a caver who's been on the property before (unless of course it's a new cave find, land owner relationship, etc.), to determine if there are special requirements from the land owner for entry.

FEBRUARY MEETING:

The last meeting of THE MAVERICK GROTTTO, was held Tuesday, February 10, 1987 at Smokey's Ribs in East Fort Worth.

Attendance by members and visitors was surprisingly high, hopefully this trend will continue.

The usual order of business was rearranged to place the feature presentation first. A presentation on Cave Swallows of South Texas was presented by Walt Davis of the Dallas Museum of Natural History. There were slides, an oral presentation and hand outs. Walt made a plea for all cavers observing Cave Swallows to notify him at the museum. A short article involving the presentation will be printed elsewhere in the news letter.

The first order of business was the announcement that the NSS Charter had been received. All members present were given a copy of the Charter. The Maverick Grotto is officially Grotto 6-322 of the NSS.

Projects were discussed, Al Renfeldt, identified several opportunities in Mexico. Discussion was held about opportunities southwest of Fort Worth as well as Gypsum Caves in King and Collingsworth counties. It will be discussed again next month.

Publication of the newsletter has become a two/three person operation and suggestion was made toward a monthly staple, stamp party. The problem being where and when can a day be found for everyone to get together. We're trying to get the letter out earlier, most people received their newsletter the day of or the day after the meeting.

The minutes of the last NSS Board of Governors meeting and the petition announced in the last news letter were not available as was stated. They will be available next meeting.

The Maverick Grotto will have (based on number of NSS members) one or two representatives to the Congress of Grottoes.

Trip reports were made on the TSA (Texas Speleological Association) convention at San Marcos. A DFW, survey trip to Fitton Cave in Arkansas, trip to Oklahoma, and a trip to caves in the Event Texas area.

MARCH MEETING

There will be a program for the next meeting, possibly a film.

Minutes from the last NSS Board of governors meeting will be available to those interested in

reading them.

There will be a petition, which is being circulated throughout all grottos, for interested parties to sign. The petition request the NSS Constitution be amended to limit time in office of NSS Board of Governor members to two consecutive years, they will be allowed to run again after one year out of office. The total time a member may serve on the board will be seven years.

Apparently, this has been an area of contention since the Congress of Grottos has voted on several occasions to limit 306 terms but the Board has refused to act on them.

LOGO CONTEST

THE MAVERICK GROTTTO is holding a contest to select a Logo for the new grotto. The logo should be appropriate for the Grotto name. The winning logo will be the official Grotto Logo for use on patches, bumper stickers, Tee Shirts or whatever. The prize will likely be a Carbide Lamp of collectors interest, provided by Corky Concoran.

Entries for the Logo Contest should be in by the March Meeting. Rumors abound that commercial artists' are being summoned in by several members who cannot draw.

EDITORIAL

It's official, The Maverick Grotto is an internal organization of the National Speleological Society. Our internal organization number G-322. Congratulations to those who sought to form the Grotto, your labors have been successful and well received.

It was the intention of those who participated in forming the Grotto that the organization be non-political where possible. It was further intended that the newsletter would be non-political except to report items of interest to cavers. Our intent was to form an organization dedicated to the sport and science of caving in a locality more convenient to us.

When a new Grotto is formed it appears inevitable that some hard feelings must result when members of one Grotto participate in forming participate in forming another. Regretfully, this

is the case with our Grotto. Members of other organizations appear to resent the formation of the Maverick Grotto. Inappropriate comments have been made and attempts have been made to recruit guest at our meetings over to DFW. Perhaps it would be appropriate at this time to restate Maverick Grotto policy and policies of the NSS.

When we received our charter from NSS, it was accompanied by a letter stating National policy on intergrotto relationships and recommendations for our Grotto. The NSS supports joint membership between Grottoes and definitely supports joint activities and projects between Grottoes. They encourage where possible that nearby Grotto meetings be scheduled at different times to allow members of one organization to visit the other organization when desired. They definitely discourage recruitment from another Grotto.

When forming the Maverick Grotto, we drew a line in contacting DFW members in Dallas County and counties to the East, North and South of Dallas County about the formation of the Grotto unless they had specifically expressed interest in forming another organization. Many of us involved in forming The Maverick Grotto did and still hold membership in DFW, but prefer to meet locally rather than make the long trek to Dallas.

The Maverick Grotto is an open organization and welcomes anyone who wishes to attend meetings but attendance for the purpose of disruption or recruitment is unacceptable. We welcome any subscribers to our newsletter and membership is open to anyone meeting the membership requirements wishing to join. Our meeting times are different from DFW to allow members of any organization, the choice of attending either meeting.

We make every effort to help people get on cave trips, especially those who've never caved and wish to try. In the near future we plan to schedule trips suitable for first time cavers and cavers from any organization wishing to join us for good old fashion fun. Some of us have extra gear we're willing to loan to first timers who wish to experience caving before investing in equipment. All of our trips are open to any and all providing there are no land owner restrictions on the number of people on a trip. In this case, Maverick Grotto members and Grotto

visitors will be given preference.

We do not and will not recruit from the Dallas area or adjacent areas where travel to Dallas is more practical than travel to Fort Worth.

Hopefully, hurt feelings will soon be overcome and we can all get down to what we join a Grotto for; caving!!

DID YOU KNOW?

by Dale Ellison

EFFECTS OF GROUND WATER IN ACTION

Caves (or caverns) are naturally formed underground chambers. Natural ground water is often slightly acidic because of the solution of carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere or from soil gases.

Geologists disagree whether limestone caves form above, below, or at the water table. If the water table drops or the land is elevated above the water table, the cave may begin to fill in again by calcite precipitation which is the origin of cave formations (speleothems).

Dripstone formations are formed deposits of calcite built up in caves by dripping water. Ground water with high concentrations of calcium and bicarbonate ions drips slowly from the ceiling of an air-filled cave. As a water drop hangs on the cave ceiling, some water evaporates releasing carbon dioxide into the cave's atmosphere. The Evaporation and CO₂ loss cause a small amount of calcite to precipitate out of the water onto the cave ceiling. Where the water drop falls, the impact may cause more evaporation and another small amount of calcite may precipitate on the cave floor. The next drop precipitates a bit more calcite over the first deposits. Each subsequent drop adds still more calcite.

Stalactites: are icicle-like pendants of dripstone hanging from the ceilings. They are often aligned along cracks in the ceiling, which act as conduits for ground water.

Stalagmites: are cone shaped masses of dripstone formed on cave floors, usually directly below stalactites.

Columns: are formed over long periods of time, by stalactites and stalagmites, growing together.

Ground water flowing along the walls or floors of caves causes the formation of ribbonlike flowstone, known as cave bacon, cave drapery, and travertine dams.

Surface features are often present to indicate caves or cave systems. Cavern systems can undermine a region so that roofs collapse and form depressions in the land surface above.

Sinkholes: are closed depressions found on the land surface. They form either by the collapse of a cave roof or by solution as descending water enlarges a crack. Regions in Florida, Missouri, Indiana and Kentucky are heavily dotted with sinkholes.

An area with many sinkholes and cave systems is said to have Karst Topography. These areas are characterized by a lack of surface streams, although a major river may flow at a level lower than the karst area.

Ground water is important in the preservation of fossils such as petrified wood. The organic matter of buried wood is replaced by inorganic silica carried in by ground water. The result is a hard, permanent replacement for the wood.

Calcite or silica can also replace the original material in marine shells and animal bones.

A lot of cavers are also fossil collectors.

Ground water, physical geology and environmental are all related with fossils. For this thought I present two examples: 1) fossil remains of bats indicate their evolution to have been early in time because of the lack of change. Very old bat fossils are rare if found at all because of their very fine bone structure. 2) Sea shells found embedded in walls of underground caverns, located in the Ozark Mountain region indicates that this area once was an ancient sea bed.

Geodes: are partly hollow, globe-shaped bodies found in some limestones. The outer shell is of silica, and well-formed crystals of quartz or calcite project inward toward a central cavity. Crystals in geodes may have filled original cavities or have replaced fossils or other

crystals.

As a final note; it is not accepted practice to remove any formations or fossils from the interior of caves. What you find attractive is likewise attractive to others, therefore; you're able to see these items because someone left them for you to see. Do the same for the next visitor.

XPrecipitate: to separate a substance from a solution or suspension by chemical or physical change, usually as an insoluble or crystalline solid.

Reference: Material for this article condensed and paraphrased from PHYSICAL GEOLOGY, by David McGeary. Published by Wm. C. Brown Publishers © 1985, pp 222-225.

CAVE SWALLOWS OF TEXAS

by Walt Davis (summarized)

Cave Swallows are interesting birds which have left researchers with many unanswered questions. Cavers can be of great assistance in obtaining data necessary to complete the research on these birds.

Cave swallows are found in Texas from Kerrville west, in the hill country through the western part of the Edwards Plateau. They are reported in Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico. They have not been seen in the Transpecos area but there is no reason they shouldn't be. There are caves, massive limestone beds and all the conditions we believe these birds require exist.

Cave Swallows are insect eaters and have a restricted nesting habitat. They could easily become extinct (they are not on the endangered species list) especially in Texas. If minor changes were made in the insecticides used to spray crops they could be affected immediately. They could become extinct before anyone knew there was a problem.

Cave Swallows (*Petrochelidon fulva pallida*) are very similar in appearance to the Cliff Swallow. The following comparison is given for the purposes of identifying the bird:

HEAD

CAVE SWALLOW: Dark Crown, Pale Throat, Rufous Forehead Patch.

CLIFF SWALLOW: Dark Throat and White Forehead Patch.

BODY

Pale Streaks on Back, Pale Belly, Dark Back

WINGS

Fairly long and pointed, almost reach tip of tail when folded.

TAIL

CLIFF AND CAVE SWALLOW: Square Ended, pale rufous rump (all other Swallows have Notched or forked tails).

NEST

CAVE SWALLOW: Simple shelf of mud attached to cave walls on ceiling in twilight zone of cave.

CLIFF SWALLOW: Gourd-like mud nest with entrance hole at end of neck at top.

The following list of questions need answers and this is where cavers can be of assistance.

1. Do Cave Swallows bathe in dust water or both?
2. Do Cave Swallows gather mud outside the cave, outside or both?
3. Where do Cave Swallows Winter?
4. Do the nest in Trans Pecos?
5. Do they every build roofed nests?

Cave Swallows are known to nest in Edwards, Kinney, Uvalde, Val Verde, Kerr and Brewster Counties. Any observance of these birds in these counties and especially outside these counties should be reported to the Dallas Museum of Natural History.

214/670-8459

Walt Davis

Jim Peterson

CANADIAN CAVING
by Donna Anderson

DATE: February 7, 1987

DESTINATION: Rat's Nest Cave
Alberta, CanadaPERSONNEL: Donna Anderson, Jessica,
John, Katie and Steven
Donnovan and Andrew
Drummond

A month before my upcoming trip to Canada, I called Joe Giddens and asked if he knew any cavers living in Calgary Canada. He gave me Ian Drummond's name and phone number, saying they had met while Ian was in Dallas on business.

I gave Ian a call and he explained that they do not cave much during the winter as deep snow makes it impossible to get to most of the caves. He said, however, there was one beautiful limestone cave still accessible within an hour's drive and a half hour hike of Calgary. He made all the arrangements and set up a trip for the first Saturday I would be in Canada.

Upon arrival in Calgary, I phoned Ian and we made last minute plans for departure time. Early Saturday morning, John Donovan drove me to Ian's house and the seven of us departed. On the drive, they pointed out the ski slopes which were to be used next year for the Olympics. The scenery was beautiful.

Our destination was about five miles outside of Banff National Park. They explained that most of the caves they visit are on public land and they seldom deal with private land owners. We parked along side the highway with snow covered mountains surrounding us. We gathered our gear, and hiked up the mountain side for about half an hour. The sun was out and it was exceptionally warm for that time of year in Canada. The cave opening was fairly large. A sign over the opening said "Warning, Keep Out, Blasting in the quarry could cause the roof to cave in." They reassured me by saying that it was Saturday and they usually weren't blasting

on weekends so in we went.

At the cave opening were ice formations on the passage floor and walls. We went a short distance then rigged a rope for a handline and went down into a pit. We shortly came to a 60 foot pit at which we rigged a cable ladder and belay rope. At the bottom of the drop some of us explored crawlways while waiting for everyone to descend. I quickly found that heavy winter coats and crawlways do not mix. We then proceeded to the prettiest part of the cave.

Rat's Nest is a limestone cave, so named as there was a rat's nest near the opening when the cave was discovered. There are colorful stalactites, stalagmites, columns, and flowstone. I took about a roll and a half of pictures in the cave.

The cave temperature was about 34 degrees F. I was dressed warmly, but soon left my coat behind as moving around, it did not seem so cold. We moved to another large room where we stopped for lunch. We then proceeded to the deepest part of the cave. Going down was quite easy as the slopes were nice for sliding down. There was water at the bottom which we avoided. Going back up the slopes was, of course, much slower. As it was getting late, we decided to exit the cave as it would take a while for everyone to get back up the cable ladder.

Back at the entrance, ropes and cable ladders were coiled and a group picture was taken. The hike down the mountain was pleasant as the sun had not quite set. We drove back to Calgary and I thanked my hosts and gave Ian a copy of the video movies of "Caves of Glass", "Elusive Depths of Mexico," and "Realm of Darkness" which Dale Ellison had copied for them. It was a wonderful day of caving and I found Canadian cavers to be most gracious hosts.

Later the next week, I went to another cave which was a sulfur spring. This was a tourist spot and in the summer it is open for swimmers. We entered the cave and found a large pool of water which was about 90 degrees F. Looking up, one could see a small natural entrance about 40 feet above the pool where the first explorers had entered. It was warm in the cave and very pretty.

The rest of my time in Canada was spent sight-seeing shopping, and skiing. After seeing

some spectacular falls on the slopes, and being involved in a few of them myself, I decided that caving is indeed much safer than skiing.

BLUE SKIES FOR RAIN

by Corky Corcoran

DATE: February 15/16, 1987

DESTINATION: Hardrock Caving area,
Murray Co. OK.

PERSONNEL: Corky Corcoran, Dale Ellison,
Butch Fralia, Jody Robertson,
Dennis and Joshua Thompson
Shane the Wonder Dog

Is it true? Could it really be? Hold on, before starting the trip report you've got to hear this. It seems that every grotto has it's own rainmaker and ours is no exception. At the Christmas Party, we went so far as to give him the dubious Rain God Award which was supposed to be a joke but this could be getting serious. The details will be omitted except to say that clouds really love this guy and he was along for this trip. Also at this point, due to possible discrimination, embarrassment and recrimination, he shall remain nameless. Now on with the story.

Blue skies prevailed as cavers loaded their prospective vehicles and made their way to Oklahoma. Shortly after picking up DALE in Denton, Corky noticed that it was beginning to cloud up but didn't put two and two together until later. Needless to say it was raining pretty hard by the time all had arrived at Dennis's house.

Undaunted and armed with the knowledge that it doesn't rain in the western Arbuckles the assembled group set forth in the Speleo-Trooper only to find it does rain in the western Arbuckles. When it does rain in the western Arbuckles, it doesn't kid around. After noting which sinks along the road(? -- trail? -- ?) were taking water and a brief moment of tension as the Speleo-Trooper did a balancing act on a muddy rock between tree and a sink, the group arrived. It really started to rain at that time and spirits began to dampen.

Shane, once outside the Trooper, noticed it was

really messy outside and he was fixing to be locked out, made a flying leap (a difficult task for one of his stature) for the back seat and landed in the middle of Jody who was trying to change into his cave gear. After Jody answered a few inquiries about suddenly having a lap full of wet dog, he, Butch, and Dennis set out for the resurgence to see if it was flowing. The others, not having brought rain gear, decided to wait for a report before they ventured too far.

The scouting party arrived at the cave to find that water was not flowing yet so they entered. Water was entering at several places through ceiling but at that time, no water was flowing over the falls. They decided to exit and report back to the others. Back at the truck it was decided not to enter the cave due to the extreme flood potential. Instead a search was instigated for an elusive seventy foot pit that is largely unexplored. Unfortunately the pit remained elusive and unexplored. By this time it was late in the afternoon and still raining, so wet and cold the troop returned to Ardmore.

Butch, Jody, Shane and DALE decided to return to Fort Worth while Dennis and Corky decided to see what could be done the next day.

After much discussion the two decided to hunt down an old and very obscure lead but after arriving they found the land owner not at home. Not wanting to trespass, they decided to go back to the Hardrock area and check a sink on the map that had not been noted before. The sink turned out to be a pond but not all was lost. An extensive ridgewalk did turn up one cave and a very nice fossil ridge. The cave is a talus cave with a few solution holes and as Dennis was the only one to enter, it was not mapped. The cave was named Foreman's Cave due to the foreman's help in finding the right road to the area. By this time it was late and Dennis needed to get back to Ardmore so it was left for another day. Maybe next weekend?

Afterthought: Notice there was no mention of rain the second day?

IN SEARCH OF A LARGE CAVE

by Corky Corcoran

DATE: February 21/22, 1987

DESTINATION: Large unnamed cave, Murrey Co.
Oklahoma, Hardrock Caving area.

PERSONNEL: Corky Corcoran, Mark Porter,
Dennis and Joshua Thompson

After two years of waiting Dennis finally gained access to an area marked on a topo as having a "Large Cave." Due to it's remote location permission from several landowners had to be gained before entry into the area could be made.

The trip was beset with problems from the beginning but fortunately none were too severe. It started with a wrong turn at a fork in the road that was not shown on either of the maps we possessed. This resulted in a grueling hike over a mountain peak to get back on the right road. This was accomplished the hike continued without further mishap until the area where the cave was supposed to be located was reached.

On reaching the right road, our information again led us astray. The indications from the map led us to believe we were looking for a resurgence but no such feature could be found. Supposing we were in the wrong place, we assessed our probable location on the map and set out for the cave. Before long however, a fence was encountered. Knowing we were really off track, the fence was followed south until a landmark was spotted (i.e. a pond). The land mark was spotted all right but not the one we hoped for. Before us lay a great expanse of creek valley and one look at the topo located our position.

On the way toward our "intended" destination a few sinks were spotted but only one worth noting. After the noted sink, we continued on in search of the "Large Cave" only to find ourselves back where we started. Somewhat frustrated, we returned to the noted sink only to find ourselves off course by some two hundred feet and standing at the edge of a very large cave indeed. We then realized our mistake, the cave was an resurgence instead of a resurgence, no wonder we couldn't find it.

The cave is set in the Cool Creek formation on a strike and dip of 22 degrees southwest. The entrance is a 45' long crevice with large breakdown at the northeast end. After descending the breakdown one is confronted with a 20' by 30' room with 10' to 15' ceilings. In the center of the room is a pit dropping 15' to

another large passage. Unfortunately after 10' the ceiling drops to 2', opens immediately to a 6' high ceiling then the passage terminates in breakdown. There is a possibility of a dig but until we can get the road in passable condition it isn't feasible. Fauna in the cave consisted of 8 little brown bats.

With little time left we headed for the other sink but it proved to be too narrow after 20' despite previous efforts by someone to open it by chemical means. Perhaps they too could see the wider passage beyond the constriction and feel the steady breeze. Minor work with a rock hammer may finish their work.

Another mishap was the loss of a carbide on the trail back to the truck.

Since the name of the cave is unknown we voted on various suggestions, some not so eloquent as others, and finally decided to name it two mile cave for the two mile hike it took to get there.

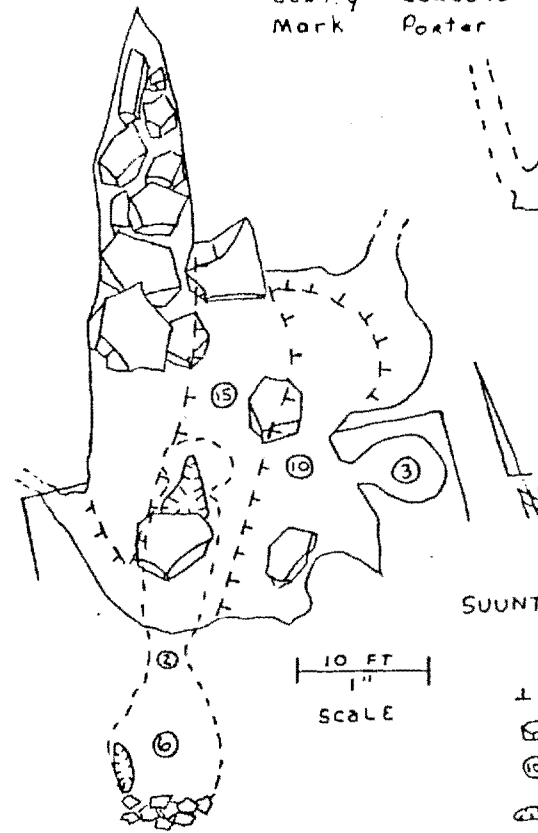
The following day found us at the Hardrock Cave area doing a little ridge walking. Unfortunately nothing of consequence was found but a few rattlesnakes and one 40' pit. The pit was a 25' long cave 40' tall adorned with a beautiful flowstone down one wall. Due to a late start, time factors did not allow a survey.

All in all, it was a nice weekend despite the weatherman's threats of snow back in Fort Worth though it would have been nicer if more people had shown up. Come on Mavericks, lets go caving!

TWO MILE CAVE

MURRAY COUNTY OKLAHOMA

Personnel - Dennis Thompson
 Cooky Carcoran
 Mark Porter



VERTICAL

SUUNTO and TAPE SURVEY
 February 21, 1987

- ∟∟ CEILING HEIGHTS CHANGE
- ▭ BREAKDOWN
- ⊙ CEILING
- ⊖ SINK

PLAN