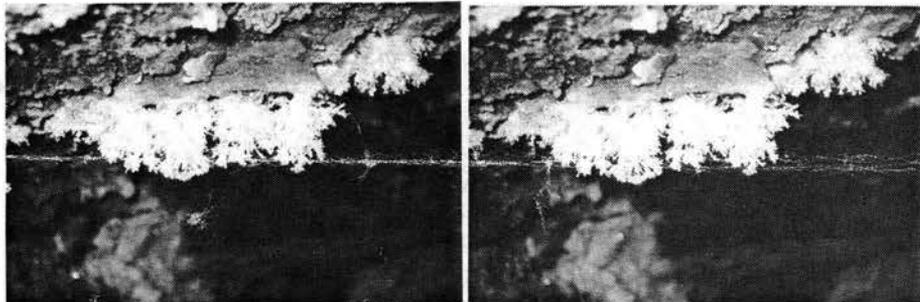


# *Cascade Caver*

Newsletter of the Cascade Grotto of the National Speleological Society

February 1996, Volume 35 No. 2

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# Cascade Caver

ISSN 0008-7211

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All material to be published, subscription requests, renewals, address changes, and exchange publications should be sent to the Grotto address.

## GROTTO MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Cascade Grotto is \$10.00 per year. Subscription to the *Cascade Caver* is free to regular members. Membership for each additional family member is \$2.00 per year. Subscription to the *Cascade Caver* is \$10.00 per year.

## GROTTO ADDRESS

Cascade Grotto; P.O. Box 75663; Seattle, WA 98125-0663. This post office box should be used for both the grotto and for the *Cascade Caver*.

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Vice Chairman Tom Strong (206) 938-3957  
Sec/Treasurer Bruce Nagata (206) 706-0339

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## MEETINGS

Regular grotto meetings are held monthly at 7:00pm on the third Friday of each month at the University of Washington, Room 6, in the basement of Johnson Hall. Please see the map on the back cover of this issue.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

February 16	Grotto Meeting	7:00
March 10	Wayside Mine	
	Contact Daryl Jacobson	
	(206) 481-2387	
March 12	Vertical Practice	6-9pm
	Contact Scott Davis (206) 862-1035	
March 15	NSS BOG Reception	7:00
	Tom Strong's house	
March 16	NSS BOG Meeting	9:00
	West Seattle Senior Center	
	4217 SW Oregon St. Seattle	
	Contact Mark Sherman for details	
	(206) 524-8780	
April 13	Vertical Practice	
	The Big Red Barn in Enumclaw	
	Contact Scott Davis (206) 862-1035	
April 19	Grotto Meeting	7:00
May 17	Grotto Meeting	7:00

**COVER** This month's cover is a stereo photo from Steve Sprague of an aragonite formation in Bighorn Caverns, MT. With a little practice (or a stereo viewer) you can see the picture in 3-D.

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## KENYA 1995

by William R. Halliday

After 21 years, I returned to Kenya in May 1995. Some things were unchanged, but I couldn't recognize anything in Nairobi: new buildings everywhere. And on the once-peaceful Nairobi-Mombassa 2-lane highway, overloaded trucks belching vast toxic black fumes were passing on minor grades at 12-15 mph, infuriating everyone else on the road. Highway death toll for the country currently is about 50 per week. With the Kenya shilling high, travel costs were greatly increased, too.

But very much on the positive side is the new caving since 1974. Looking for new guano caves to mine for fertilizer, Jim Simons was about to give up after being spat upon by a spitting cobra, and treed and almost horned by an anticaver rhinoceros. His last try yielded Leviathan Cave, 10.5 km long (with a 2 km extension beyond a segmenting collapse), and one of the world's greatest lava tube caves, high, multilevel, and full of impressive features. Its discovery led the Cave Exploration Group of East Africa into several years of intense activity, including extensive use of climbing poles to enter and map upper level passages. Two charcoal burners' jungle tracks led to two of the lower entrances, and a third, to a point about an hour's hike from the uppermost entrance. But with completion of the mapping and return of several CEGEA members to their home nations, caving in Leviathan slowed and the jungle reclaimed the tracks.

In May 1995 I returned to Kenya to look into its potential for the 8th International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology. - Nairobi facilities turned out to be quite satisfactory for this. Jim Simons and Dick Fordyce also took me to have a look

at the upper end of Leviathan, which now requires 3 days, with two nights camped in the bush. (The other two tracks would take even longer, due to extensive chopping that would be needed.) It was a great experience: a geologist's paradise of beautifully developed features on walls, ceilings and floor, with the upper end closed by a massive slope of chunky black scoria from a nearby surface cone. An intriguing place for biospeleologists, too. Besides crickets, pale spiders and the like, I found tiny white critters that look like springtails with big antennae on some rotting wood.

We spent another day and night in the Chyulu area, at Umani spring, where Jim and Dick have just obtained a permit to construct a tent camp for tours. This pseudokarstic spring near the lower end of Leviathan Cave is the second largest spring in Kenya and is a truly magical spot. At present it is entirely undeveloped.

From the spring, we returned to Nairobi, then Jim and Dick took me an hour's drive northeast of the city to the gorge of the Ndaruga River, site of Giggling Caves. Here they showed me several hundred feet of passage that looks like a 3-dimensional phreatic solution complex in limestone. But it is in mixed volcanics. It looks to me like a tuff flow largely solidified amid a large talus accumulation along one wall of the gorge, while enough flowed on through to leave an intricately curved braid of passages behind. Most but not all is a kneepad cave. I have never seen another like it.

I did not have time to return to the wonderful Mt. Suswa cave system, in a different direction from Nairobi, nor to travel to Mt. Elgon to see Kitum Cave, the famous cave excavated by elephants. That trip requires a minimum of three days, as does Leviathan. But on my last night, a CEGEA gathering showed slides of many other Kenya caves, not all of them lava

tubes. The Cave of God, in interbedded lake deposits in the Rift Valley, some 600 feet long. Korongo Farm Cave in the ash of a tiny volcano two hours from Nairobi: a big room after an entrance crawl. Caves in PreCambrian marbles in Tsavo East National Park, one with four parallel passages, interconnected. Divers have descended more than 30 feet here. Gypsum caves and water wells near El Wok. Kericho Cave on the Jamji River, behind a waterfall with extensive flooded passages where the explorer has to float along. Kimakia Cave, a lava tube with paper-thin helictites at the guano contact, filled with a blood-red liquid, apparently formed on cobwebs. Pit craters and open vertical volcanic conduits. And clearly these are only a beginning. On my last day, a Nairobi newspaper featured people living in another "Cave of God", this one in the Nairobi suburbs and clearly an extensive one. CEGEA had never heard of it. There are plenty of problems in caving in Kenya, but the payoff clearly is great.

### SKULL FOSSIL IDENTIFIED AS ANCIENT, LARGE JAGUAR

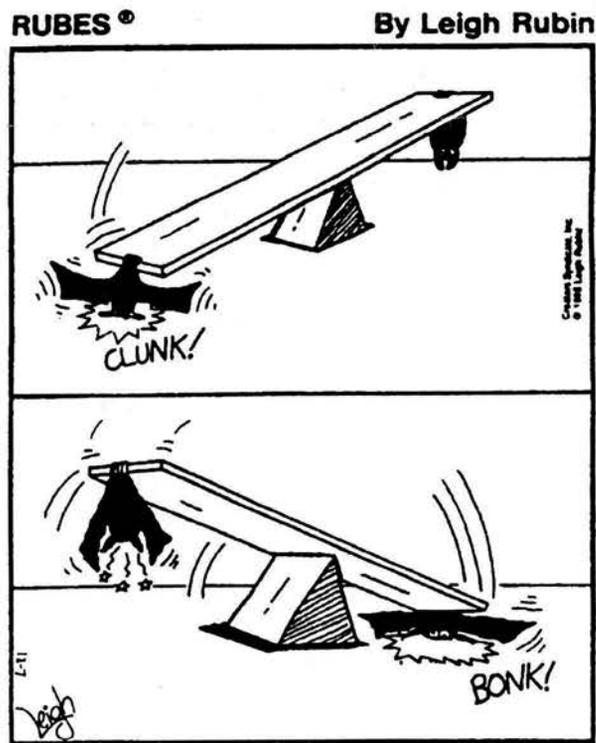
The Herald, January 17th 1996, Associated Press Cave Junction, Ore. - Fossils discovered deep within the Oregon Caves have been identified as the skull and leg of an extinct ice age jaguar that was twice as big as a modern cougar. An expert estimated the jaguar lived 20,000 to 40,000 years ago, based on the size of the skull, which measured 14 inches long, said Greg McDonald, a National Park Service paleontologist in Twin Falls, Idaho. A more accurate dating, based on deterioration of radioactive materials, will be done later.

The jaguar became smaller as it evolved and disappeared from North America about 10,000

years ago, he said. It now ranges through Mexico, Central America and South America. The National Park Service hopes to obtain funds to look for more of the skeleton, which could prove to be the best specimen of its kind in North America, McDonald said.

Steve Knudsen of Beaverton, a summer ranger at the Oregon Caves National Monument, found the skull last summer embedded in rock in the bed of the River Styx off the major tour route, said John Roth, resource specialist at the national monument.

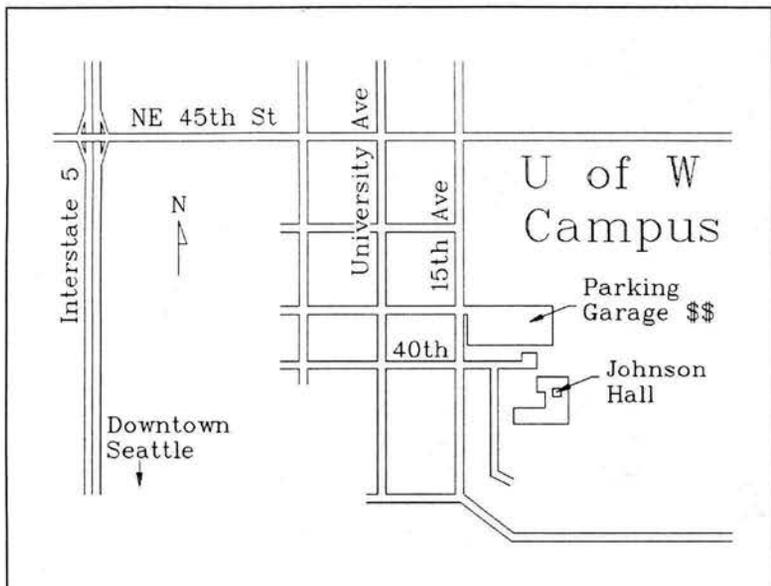
The skull was initially believed to be from a grizzly bear because of its large size. A paleontologist was called in to dig it out last fall. The jaguar was probably 450 to 500 pounds, the size of a modern African lion, McDonald said.



Why bats and teeter - totter never caught on.

1996 CASCADE GROTTO FIELD TRIPS  
Trip coordinator: Jim Harp (206) 745-1010

- March 10  
Wayside Mine  
Visit to an old copper mine near Granite Falls. 165 ft. Vertical entrance drop is expected. Contact: Daryl Jacobson (206)481-2387
- March 12  
Pre -Vertical  
Practice  
Practice at Scott Davis's house 6-9 pm, Scott has a 16 ft. rope rigged in his entry. Get your system together. Contact: Scott Davis (206) 862-1035
- March 26  
Pre-Vertical  
Practice  
Practice at Scott's house 6-9 pm. Get your system together. Contact: ScottDavis (206) 862-1035
- April 13  
Red barn  
Vertical practice  
Formal SRT instruction and practice, near Tacoma. 10am-3pm  
Contact: Bill Bennet (206)255-1466
- May 26-28  
Speleo Camp  
Memorial Day weekend at Trout Lake county campground. Caves TBD  
Contact: Mike Compton (206) 535-5144
- May 26-28  
Joint NCA and Western Region Meet Memorial Day Weekend near Eli, Nevada. Contact: Mike Compton (206) 535-5144
- June 1-2  
Tubal Cain Mine  
The mine is in the Olympic National Forest. The 5am departure time will be worth it as the wild rhodys will be in full bloom along the 3 mile hike. The mine is 2700 feet of all horizontal walking, ( no rotting timber ). An added bonus is a plane crash site from WW2 nearby. Some will make this a long day trip, others will stay overnight.  
Contact: Scott Davis (206) 862-1035
- June 8-9  
Cave Ridge  
Meet at Alpentel by 9am. Caves to be determined.  
Contact: Scott Davis (206) 862-1035
- July 27-28  
Vancouver Island  
Leave on the Port Angeles ferry on Friday at 9:30pm. Our target is Gordon River area caves. Contact: Scott Davis (206) 862-1035
- August 23-25  
Newton Cave  
A Major depth push in Newton Cave, We'll need several teams for this one. Departs Alpentel Friday 5pm. Contact: Bill Benett (206)255-1466
- Sept.22  
Clipper Copper  
Mine  
A neat family trip, you can drive right to the entrance at the foot of Mt. Rainier. The mine is in solid granite and is quite safe. Depart Scott's house at 10am. Contact: Scott Davis (206)862-1035



The Cascade Grotto meets at 7:00 pm on the third Friday of each month in room 006 in the basement of Johnson Hall on the University of Washington campus.

We look forward to seeing you at one of our meetings

Cascade Caver  
 PO Box 75663  
 Seattle, WA 98125-0663



Windy City Grotto  
 c/o Ralph Earlandson  
 802 S Highland Ave  
 Oak Park, IL 60304-1529

Paid to 99/99

