



DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Information Circular 2010/2, May/October 2010

NEXT DCA MEETING

Open Council Meeting: Saturday, 30th. October 2010 at 10am, Monyash Village Hall.

Further DCA meetings, on Saturdays at 10am, Monyash Village Hall:

DCA AGM 2011, 26th. February 2011

The hall will be open from about 9.30am with tea, coffee & biscuits available. The Old Smithy Café next to the Pub does an excellent breakfast from about 9am. (All meetings start at 10am. at Monyash Village Hall.)

CAVES OF THE PEAK DISTRICT

This is now on course for publication at the end of November, a little later than we'd hoped, hence the pre-publication offer is being extended to 4 November. We're sending out more of the flyers with this circulation so, if you've already ordered your own copy, change the date on the flyer to 4th. November and pass it on to another caver.

CONSERVATION & ACCESS

If you have any queries or problems about Conservation or Access in the region, please contact the Conservation Officer: Dave Webb, 0115-840-1109, or Asst. Conservation Officer: Christine Wilson, 01433-621149, 07713-416455, both on conservation-off@theDCA.org.uk. Alternatively, contact the Access Officer: Iain Barker, 0114-264-7561, 07710-689704, access-off@theDCA.org.uk.

"CAVE DIGGING ON SSSIs?... A GUIDE TO GOOD PRACTICE"

A new leaflet has been produced jointly by the DCA and Natural England titled "Cave Digging on SSSIs?... A Guide to Good Practice". It is a replacement for the old "Do you Dig Caves?" leaflet, which became out of print several years ago. A lot of thought has gone into the wording and layout, which is essentially written by cavers for cavers, with the help of a generous grant from Natural England.

Digging is an essential activity for the discovery of new cave, and a completely re-written section sets out some helpful Guidelines on Procedures to adopt before starting a dig on an SSSI. There are also paragraphs on the Monitoring Scheme, SSSIs, Archaeology, Bats, the work of Natural England, the DCA, and the Environment Agency, and a list of some useful contacts.

The leaflet also contains a map of the all the geological and biological SSSIs in Derbyshire and North Staffs (to include the Hamps and Manifold Valleys) and a complete list of all the caves that lie within them and that are monitored. A brief outline of the Monitoring Scheme is given but for more details please visit our website at

<http://www.peakcavemonitoring.org.uk>

A copy of the leaflet accompanies this announcement and distribution is currently taking place but meanwhile, please feel free to contact myself or Chris Wilson for further information - see email address above.

Dave Webb

DCA Conservation Officer

THE NEW EXTENSIONS AT WATER ICICLE CLOSE CAVERN

At the request of Natural England, DCA has agreed that a gate should be placed on the new extensions to Water Icicle Close Cavern, which is part of a Scheduled Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI). This is to ensure the protection of the very fragile floor deposits, which were carefully taped by the original explorers when they were first found, and to allow cave scientists to examine the new section while it is still, as far as possible, in pristine condition.

Note that the gate has been installed in the crawl in the breakthrough area leading to the new extensions - there is no restriction whatsoever to anyone visiting the main section of the cave which has been known for many years. Thanks are due to Orpheus members who have constructed and installed the gate, which DCA has funded.

There is no intention to exclude cavers altogether and arrangements for visiting the new extensions can be found on the Orpheus website at www.orpheuscavingclub.org.uk.

Jenny Potts,

DCA Secretary

ACCESS BAN FOR CAVERS AT ELDON QUARRY

Cavers are still banned from Eldon Quarry, following an incident in which the lock was removed from the gate and vehicles were taken into the quarry. (We don't think cavers were involved but we get the flak all the same!)

Negotiations are still in hand to regain access so please stay away for the time being and we'll keep you informed. Be aware also that access to Eldon Hole, currently free and easy with no prior permission required, could be affected if the ban on the Quarry is ignored.

MILLDAM MINE

Milldam Mine is off-limits to cavers because it is currently classed as a "working mine". Be warned that it has an actively operating security system, which recently led to the arrest of mineral collectors who broke into the site - they are being prosecuted. It may be possible in the future to arrange for legitimate access for cavers but please stay away for the present.

ACCESS TO SNAKE MINE (ON MIDDLETON MOOR, WIRKSWORTH)

Call on Mrs Slater at Arm Lees Farm (beside Hopton to Via Gellia road) for permission to cross land. All visitors to carry proof of BCA insurance cover & to understand they enter Mine at their own risk.

DEVONSHIRE MINE

Thanks to Mike Pilling for his work in rebuilding the wall you cross to get to the entrance - take care as some of the stones may still be loose. Please report any damage or litter you come across in the entrance area as it's important we maintain good relations with the owner. A reminder not to park in the turning area at the end of the road - it upsets the local residents and they complain to the owner.

JIM ALDER IS OFFERING BAT TRAINING FOR CAVERS

Jess and I will be running the sessions again, as per the last two years, taking small groups of cavers underground to look for bats and discuss bat ecology, the law, caver impact etc. Sessions will be half day, usually at weekends though we may do the odd evening one if people can't make weekends. It will be in easy mines so no SRT. Sessions will be held from mid December until end of March.

We have decided to do it this winter but will probably have a break next year (so we don't miss too many caving trips etc) so if people want to get on they need to email me (jim.alder@care4free.net) asap to get on the waiting list. We can probably accommodate about 35 people over the winter so it's first come first served.

Cheers, Jim

"SACRIFICIAL" CAVES AND CARLESWARK CAVERN

Dave Webb says: I would like to clear up a misunderstanding with regard to the use of the term "sacrificial cave" which emerges from time to time, usually during discussions on wilful damage or overuse of a particular cave site.

In these times of greater conservation awareness the term, as applied to caves and mines, should perhaps be dropped from our vocabulary altogether. In any event it should never be applied to caves that are designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), such as the Carleswark Cavern, since it implies that the cave has no further scientific or educational value to anyone, which is of course quite untrue. If cavers themselves accept the term and are heard to apply it to a particular site then this will surely be picked up by the impressionable and novice caver who will assume that conservation is of no consequence, placing the cave at further risk of damage and potential loss to future generations.

EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY

If you have any queries or problems about Equipment or Safety in the region, please contact the DCA Equipment Officer: Jules Barrett, 07730-981857, equipment@theDCA.org.uk or DCA Projects Officer: Martyn Grayson, 07976-953089, projects@theDCA.org.uk.

LOOSE BOULDER IN OXLOW ENTRANCE SHAFT

We've had a report of a less than secure boulder in the entrance shaft to Oxlow. It rings when you tap it gently and if it became dislodged the consequences would be horrific. It is positioned about 2 meters below the Ginged entrance shaft and is the size of a person. Anyone entering would be advised to descend and ascend with caution in this area.

Exploring the Limestone Landscapes of the Peak District

by Trevor FORD and John GUNN

This walking and cycling guide is now available from BCRA, price £5.50 plus 50p postage.

To order: <http://caves.org.uk/payments/bca/forms/PI.html>. Further info: <http://bcra.org.uk/pub/cs>

Following closely from the two very successful titles in this Series that covered Upper Wharfedale and the Three Peaks & Malham, the latest volume extends this Series to a further caving area. These titles, although clearly of interest to cavers are aimed more at the educated walker who seeks to know something of the cavities beneath his feet as well as the karst features that he sees all around him. Forming the southern end of the Pennines, the Peak District is mostly within the county of Derbyshire, with a small southwestern area extending into Staffordshire. It has two distinct parts, the 'Dark Peak', with its Millsstone Grit moors and shale-floored valleys, and the 'White Peak' to the south, comprising limestone country with beautiful dales and caves. This book is concerned only with the White Peak, which is some 40km from north to south and generally 10-15km wide. The geology and geomorphology of the region is described by means of eleven 'excursions' which may be undertaken on foot or by bicycle.

Jenny Potts will have copies of this available to buy at the next DCA meeting.

FOR YOUR NEWSLETTER / NOTICEBOARD

www.theDCA.org.uk dca@theDCA.org.uk

19 October 2010

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