



## Tresviso Caves Project

# Tresviso 2021

REPORT OF THE CAVING EXPEDITION TO THE TRESVISO AREA, EASTERN  
MASSIF OF THE PICOS DE EUROPA, SPAIN

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*Cover Picture: BFG-9000, Cueva de la Marniosa (Tom Smith).*

## **Abstract**

This report provides an account of the 2021 caving expedition to the Tresviso area of the Eastern Massif (Andara) in the Picos de Europa of Northern Spain.

The 2021 expedition was undertaken with collaboration between numerous UK based caving clubs and the Spanish AD KAMI club, under the banner of the *Tresviso Caves Project*.

The global COVID-19 pandemic caused major disruptions to the planning, resources, and timing so a more focussed set of objectives formed the basis of the 2021 expedition, concentrated on two main caves, close to the village of Tresviso.

Firstly, *Cueva del Nacimiento*, a >15km cave system with a height gain of over +535m from the entrance. The catchment of this cave totals 37 km<sup>2</sup> and, if linked with known cave systems high in the Andara mountain range, would create a potential >1500m deep underground traverse, one of the deepest in the world.

The second main cave of interest was *Cueva de la Marniosa*, slightly further up the valley and a feeder system into *Cueva del Nacimiento*. On the 2019 expedition a new secondary streamway was discovered, with the potential for leading further into the mountain.

## Introduction

The Picos de Europa is a range of mountains 20km inland from the northern coast of Spain, forming a Westerly extension of the Cantabrian Mountains. It consists of three main areas, the Western, Central and Eastern Massifs. It was the Eastern Massif (Andara) that drew the attention of Lancaster University Speleological Society (LUSS) in the early 1970s.

The early years of LUSS exploration were spent pushing *Cueva del Nacimiento (Cueva del Agua)*<sup>1</sup> located at the foot of the mountain range. Over the years this was pushed to the 11km and +300m mark, but after several years the cave was abandoned as all the major routes sumped, and no continuation could be found.



*Picture: Andara (Phil Walker).*

LUSS turned their attention to the Andara region higher up the mountain range and sought caves that would connect into the *Nacimiento* system and hopefully create a record-breaking underground traverse. They found several deep caves around this 'top camp' area. *Sara*, *Tere*, *Flowerpot* and *Sima 56* were all pushed to respectable depths, but the connection remained elusive.

In 1986/87 the South Wales Caving Club (SWCC) and LUSS briefly turned their attention back to *Nacimiento* and investigated several sumps and pushed a bold

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<sup>1</sup> *Cueva del Nacimiento* is the official Spanish name for the cave known to UK cavers as *Cueva del Agua*. All UK publications pre-1996 refer to the cave as *Cueva del Agua*.

steeply ascending ramp, gaining over 200m of height, at the back end of the *Nacimiento* system with several leads left unexplored.

Between 2011-2014 the SWCC returned to *Nacimiento* to re-investigate the possibilities of mounting remote trips to the furthest regions of the cave, and re-climbed the steep ramps discovered in the 80's, in addition to a successful dive of the *Far Upstream Sump* in *Nacimiento*, extending the sump by another 80m and down to a depth of -46m. Additionally, the *Death Race 2000* chamber was explored discovering a way down past the previous limit of exploration to find over 700m of new passage.

Since 2015 the *Tresviso Caves Project* has continued work in *Nacimiento* finding more cave passage above and below the *Death Race 2000* chamber, extending the cave by over 5km and reaching a new height of +535m above the entrance.

In the past few years, exploration has returned to *Cueva de la Marniosa*, first explored in 1975. The furthest downstream sump was passed in 2018 leading to ongoing streamway, heading towards *Nacimiento*, and a new entrance *T20A Cueva de la Silvestre* was found, creating a through trip, from the head of the Sobra Valley and exiting from *Cueva del la Marniosa*.

## **Expedition Aims**

The 2021 expedition was comprised of 15 cavers based in the village of Tresviso. Due to a reduced number of people objectives were more focused than in previous years:

### **Cueva del Nacimiento**

- The *Sandy Dig* is a draughting hole located at the furthest explored limit of the cave and is thought to be a main way on into the mountain. An objective in 2021 is to undertake a concerted dig of the passage and see if a way through can be found.
- At the bottom of the *Death Race 2000* pitch series there is an immature streamway, heading away from the general direction of passage. A large ramp, perpendicular to the rest of the cave and heading southwest, is currently unclimbed and again could be another main route on, into the mountain range.

### **Cueva de la Marniosa**

- In 2019 a discovery of a major new inlet, the *42 Streamway*, with ongoing open passage, opened the possibility of a progressing further into the mountain range between *Cueva del Nacimiento* and the higher alpine potholes. This will be the focus of exploration in *Marniosa*.
- Several avens and potential high level passages in the upper section of the cave will be revisited. The cave in this area is like *Nacimiento* and markedly different to the lower less developed streamway series. Discoveries in this area are likely to be in similar large scale passage, with potential routes over and beyond the lower streamway.

*Note: Originally the expedition was planned to have twice as many members and more objectives, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in the preceding months, the composition of the expedition was altered to accommodate the circumstances.*



## **T13 - Cueva del Nacimiento**

WGS84 30T x: 0363921 y: 4789684 z: 480m.

*A full description of Cueva del Nacimiento is not provided here, but comprehensive details and surveys can be found in previous reports<sup>2</sup> and the expedition website<sup>3</sup>.*

*The following sections summarise the main discoveries made on the 2021 expedition. Further details of exploration are described in Appendix G: Expedition Log.*



**Picture: Cueva del Nacimiento, entrance pool (John Roe).**

### **Jurassic World – Barney and Friends**

*Jurassic World* ends where the mud rises to the ceiling. On the back wall (left side) an enlarged 3m crawl steps down and then squeezes steeply upwards one body length to emerge into larger passage. Passing a blind alcove on the left, a short climb up leads to a short narrow rift to crawl across and an awkward climb back down over delicate rock, back into easy going mud floored passage.

A flowstone constriction leads to a continuation of the passage, split by a large flowstone formation. The passage on the left ascends 2 short climbs and ends with a blind pitch back down to floor level. Right leads to a further large passage and after

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<sup>2</sup> "Expeditions to Tresviso and the Picos de Europa in Northern Spain (1974-1977)". LUSS (1978). "An Expedition to the Picos de Europa Northern Spain". LUSS. (1979). "Agua '86 and '87". SWCC. (1987)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.tresvisocaves.info/>



climbing up and back down a rock bridge *Barney the Stalagmite* is encountered (Barney is very purple).

A short climb beyond *Barney* leads to gently ascending passage and a further large flowstone formation. (*Below this a 10m blind hole in the floor, the hole can be stepped over to then free climb the large flowstone*). Climbing the right of the flowstone leads to an awkward step (traverse line required) before flattening out at large gour pools.

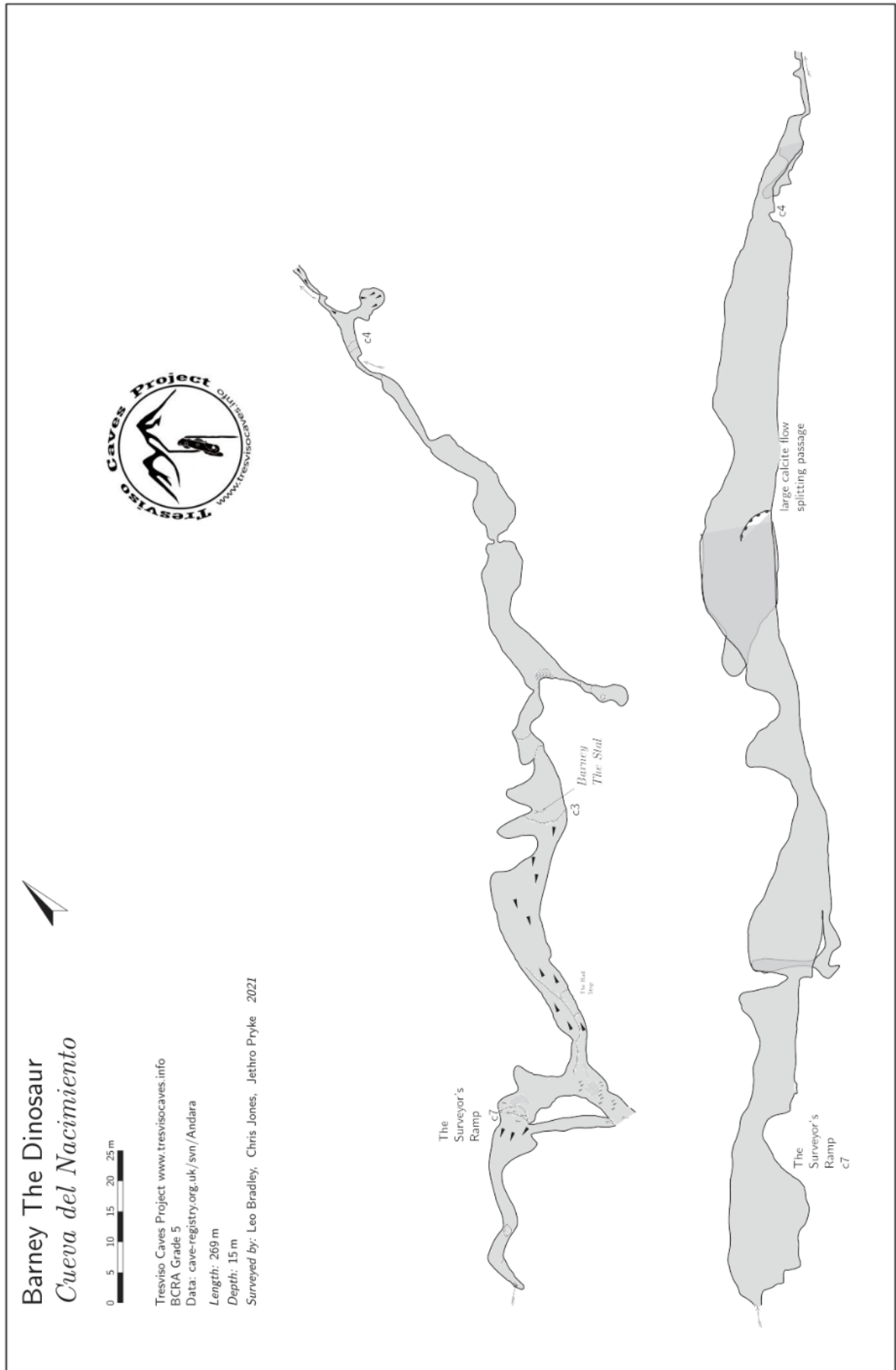
At this point the passage splits again. Some intricate crystal gour pools head left and up toward an obvious passage. *To preserve the formations, please do not enter this as it has been accessed from above and shown to close and join back with the right hand route.*

Around to the right a 7m pitch is rigged as a single drop from a large natural. Left at the top leads to the top of the gour pool passage. Straight ahead an ascending passage narrows with flowstone walls. Soon a further up pitch is reached, split by a rebelay to the final calcite choke - *Leo's Blowing Crack*.

*Leo's Blowing Crack* is a calcite choke, with a 1/2 body sized hole, through which a strong draft emerges. Capping of the corner entering the space will give more space to work.



**Picture: The Sandy dig, breakthrough point, Cueva del Nacimiento (Dave Powlesland)**



### **Death Race 2000 - The Bastard's Ramp**

Following the rift leading out from the *Pina Colada* sump there are two short flowstone ramps, each rigged as a straight drop with a single bolt (*both requiring a decent back up*). A final short climb, best tackled on the left, leads to *Here's What You Could Have Won (HWYCHW)*, a spectacular large passage with a mud floor.

Turning left at the top of the ramps leads through some muddy slopes to a closing down of the passage, where there are two holes in the floor. Being directly above the *Pina Colada* sump, it is presumed the furthest one will lead back down to the far side of the sump - **an interesting lead as this is not easy to view from the rope traverse around the sump**. The nearer hole in the floor is likely to also link with the sump pool, probably via a more convoluted route. Neither of these holes exhibits a draft.

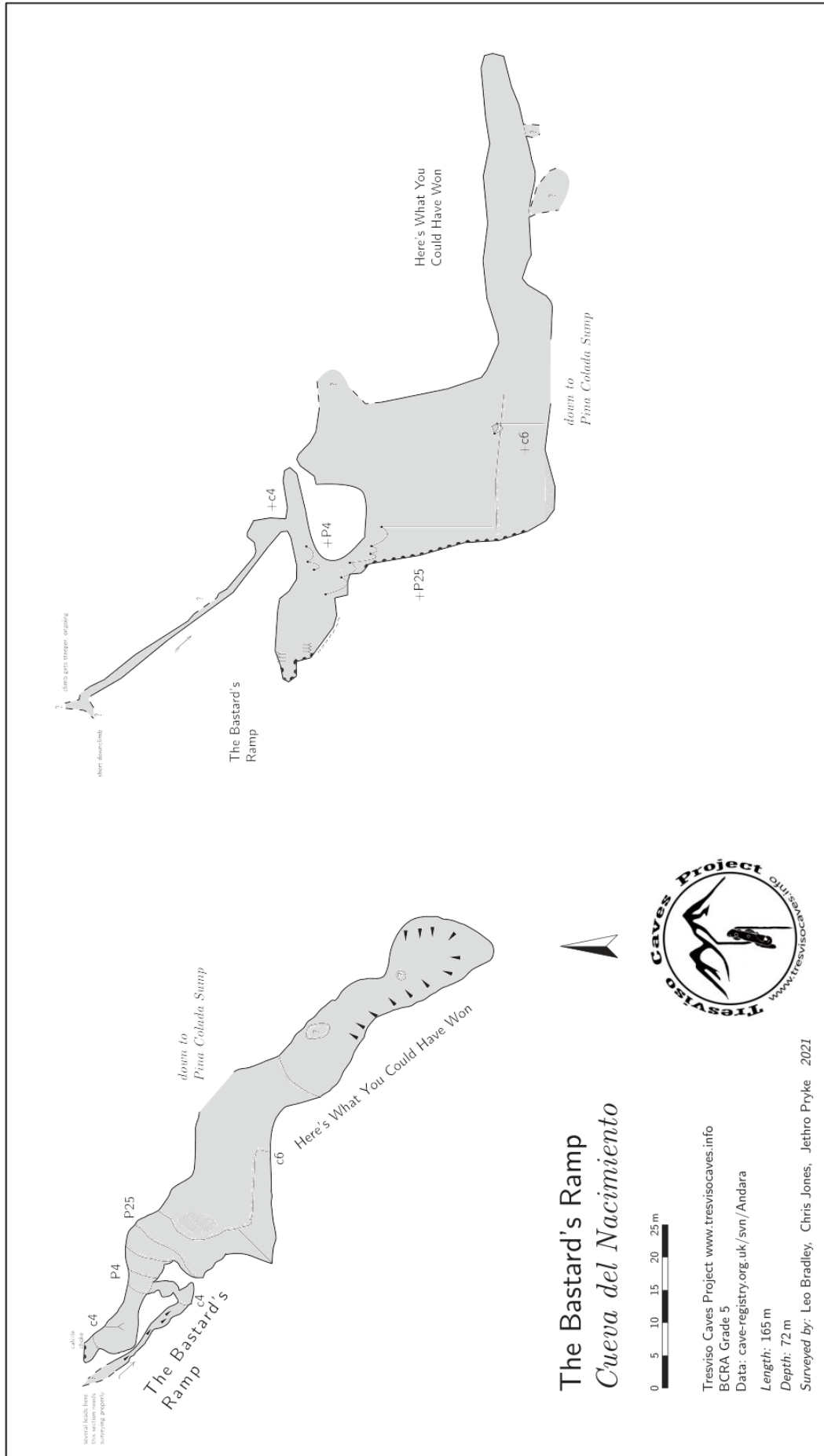
Turning right at the top of the ramps brings you to an impressive flowstone pitch of 40m. This can be climbed by a rope on the wall opposite the entrance to the passage, follow the rock ledge and then a longer 25m rope takes you up the main pitch in a single drop. Here, a suicidal descending traverse has been rigged to a column - the jury is out as to whether this is worse on the return journey.

Once you have stopped swearing at the rigging, a further rope can be followed up to a y-hang in calcite. Two ropes lead out from this point, the more obvious way continues up the flowstone, to a final 4m pitch, the passage continues for a short distance and further climb to end in a well decorated calcite choke.

Back at the y-hang, straight up leads to a tri-hang in shattered rock and a short section of level passage. The rock here is of similar structure to the stream passages underneath *Death Race*, although fortunately much larger, it doesn't inspire confidence. There are a few alcoves, all close quite quickly.

The most obvious climb looks a bit dubious this far into the cave, however ducking underneath reveals a chimney alternative, squirming up here leads to a reasonably sized ascending phreatic tube, in slightly more reliable rock. A second 2m climb leads to more of the same. Being of phreatic nature, the rock is honeycombed with many possible ways on, most small and leading back to the same passage.

The original exploration remained in the obvious passage and ended with three possible ways on. A short down climb into more horizontal passage and a steepening of the ramp where there appears to be a roof and **possible horizontal passage beyond**. This is estimated at 5m and will likely prove simple to pass as a mixed aid/free climb, but a rope would probably be wanted for descent. The **passage also continues**, now at a considerably steeper angle. This section has not been surveyed.



## T19 - Cueva de la Marniosa

WGS84 30T x: 0361359 y: 4790462 z: 974m.

*A full description of Cueva de la Marniosa is not provided here, but a comprehensive description and survey can be found in previous reports.<sup>4</sup>*

*The following sections summarise the main discoveries made on the 2021 expedition. Further details of the exploration and discovery are described in Appendix G: Expedition Log.*

### The 42 Streamway

From *Corner Chamber* head approximately 125m further upstream to where the passage narrows to a stooping size passage in the stream. Just before the stream bends to the right, is *station 42* of the survey, with an obvious dark void above and to the left. This is the entrance to the *Alien Weaponry* chamber. Below the entrance up to *Alien Weaponry* is a large boulder, climbing over this leads to a short drop down into the start of *The 42 Streamway*.

The streamway begins as a walking rift passage with a flat sandy floor. After 50m, the right hand wall gives way to a sand and rubble choke with dark space above. This is assumed to be *District 9*, the survey certainly indicates it is likely, but **not confirmed**. Climbing up the sand wall proved impossible due to its affinity with the floor. Back in the stream and just around the corner, a muddy ramp is reached. This rises to a T-junction and a draft is present. Right quickly closes with a few loose boulder chokes in the ceiling (possibly the floor of *District 9* once more). Left crosses over the streamway below into a fair sized boulder chamber, the passage continues both up and downstream in a rift, both are thought to quickly re-join the streamway below but this has **not been confirmed**.

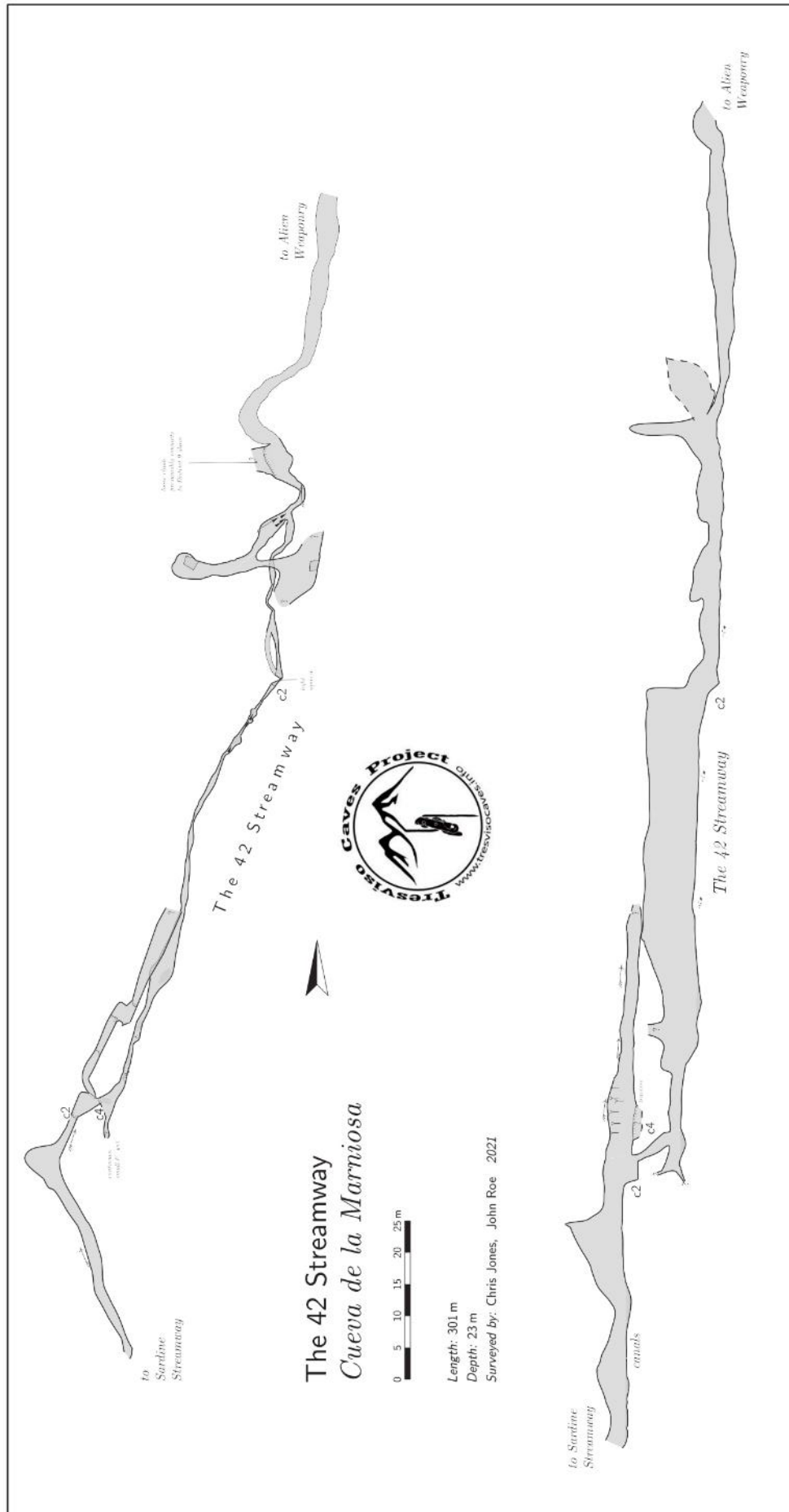
Continuing along a streamway, past a small dry oxbow on the right, leads to a squeeze. Beyond this the passage continues as a high, narrow rift canyon with several climbs and static pools. After 100m it begins to close, some progress would be possible, but it would be miserable in wet, small passages and there is no draft. A possible continuation again becomes tight.

Approx. 5-10m back from the pool a 4m climb up leads to a further climb of 2m and into 100m of canal sections, a climb of 4m enters a round chamber. The water (and draft) comes out of a small circular hole 5m off the floor. This leads into the *Sardine Streamway*.

At the top of the first C4 listed above a high rift passage can be followed 'downstream'. This was followed over several pits in the floor to a logical end point where traversing required bolts. It is assumed to connect to the boulder chamber mentioned above

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<sup>4</sup> "An Expedition to the Picos de Europa Northern Spain". LUSS. (1979)





### **Sardine Streamway & Tinned Fish**

The 5m pitch up at the end of the *42 Streamway*, marks the start of the *Sardine Streamway*.

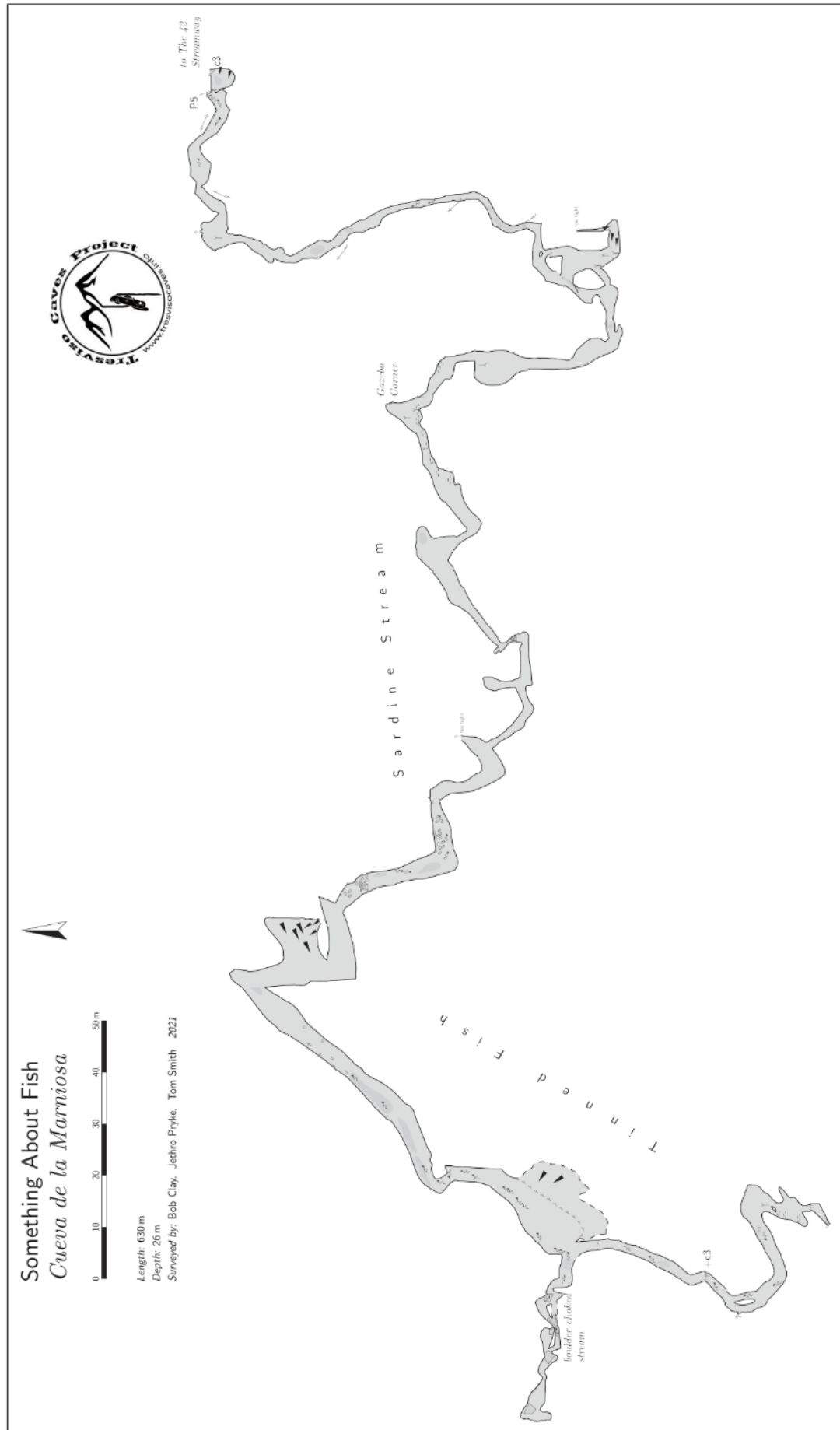
A small active streamway runs a gently meandering course for a hundred meters or so where a small side chamber enters with a short climb at the back that quickly becomes too tight. Further along the stream passage the height varies from well above head height down to crawling height where in high water the passage looks likely to sump. The passage eventually breaks out into a large chamber with a sloping ramp on the right, leading up to a couple of tight climbs at the back.

The continuation along the streamway, *Tinned Fish*, eventually reaches a further chamber with a ramp on the left leading up to a calcite choke.

The passage at the end of the chamber splits in two, the right fork, which has most of the water flow, comes through a wet crawl which can be drained to make it more pleasant. This eventually leads to a complex boulder choke with no apparent way on despite extensive exploration.

The left branch goes past some awkwardly placed calcite formation before becoming standing passage. After a 3m climb up a small oxbow is reached with **an 8-10 m clean washed aven that would require a bolt climb on dubious looking rock to gain access.**

The lower passage eventually becomes too tight to continue.



### **The Predator**

Passing through *District 9* and shortly before the boulder ruckle into *Weyland-Yutani* is a huge boulder. Directly behind this boulder is an open chamber, access is attained via an +8m climb up a jammed boulder. **Care should be taken here!**

A rope is in situ here, tied around a reasonably good boulder belay (2021). The chamber at the top of the boulder slab is formed as a large aven/ramp with a blind pit on the left hand side. The way on is up the easier angled ramp, there is a trickle of water coming down here and this aven series will probably get quite unpleasant in the wet.

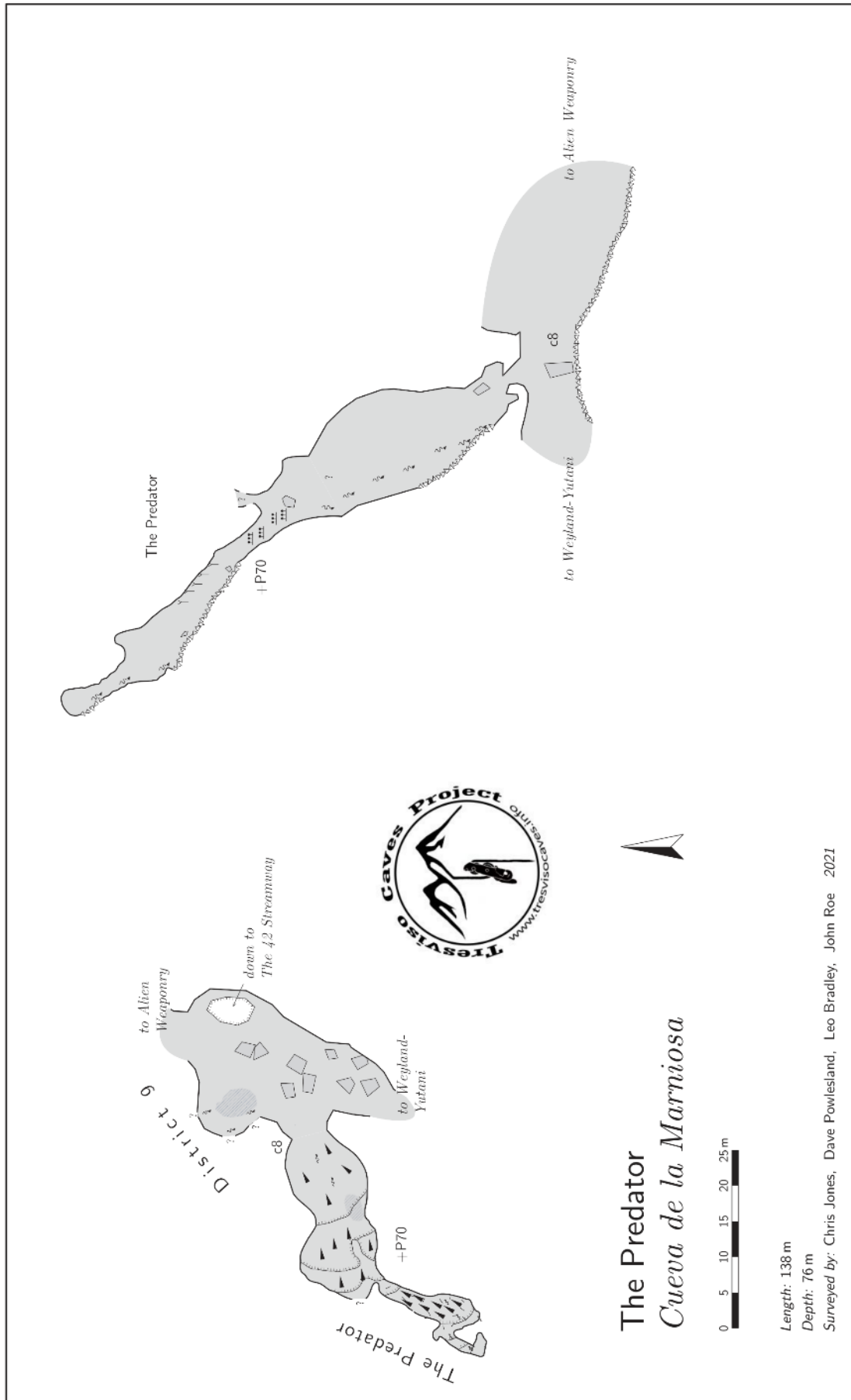
A +20m pitch leads to a small alcove (*assumed to get wet*) and a further +5m pitch takes you to the less secure upper slopes. Follow the rope with a step out here onto a precarious ledge and a very gentle prussik up leads to an ascending passage.

Float up this, preferably without touching the floor, to a final aven. Don't look up here, instead close your eyes and think brave, slow thoughts as you prussik the final rope into the middle of several thousand tons of hovering rock. This pitch ends in a boulder chamber, hopefully you won't.

There is one lead, back on the ledge, it's possible that by traversing further away from the alcove there is another, slightly smaller aven entering on the far side.



***Picture: The Predator, Cueva de la Marniosa (Dave Powlesland)***



### Elevenses

At the bottom corner of *Morning Chamber*, on the opposite side from the main route down to the fourth pitch is a 1.5m climb leading to a 35 degree calcite slope. The slope is 4m to a high level set of passages, *Elevenses*.

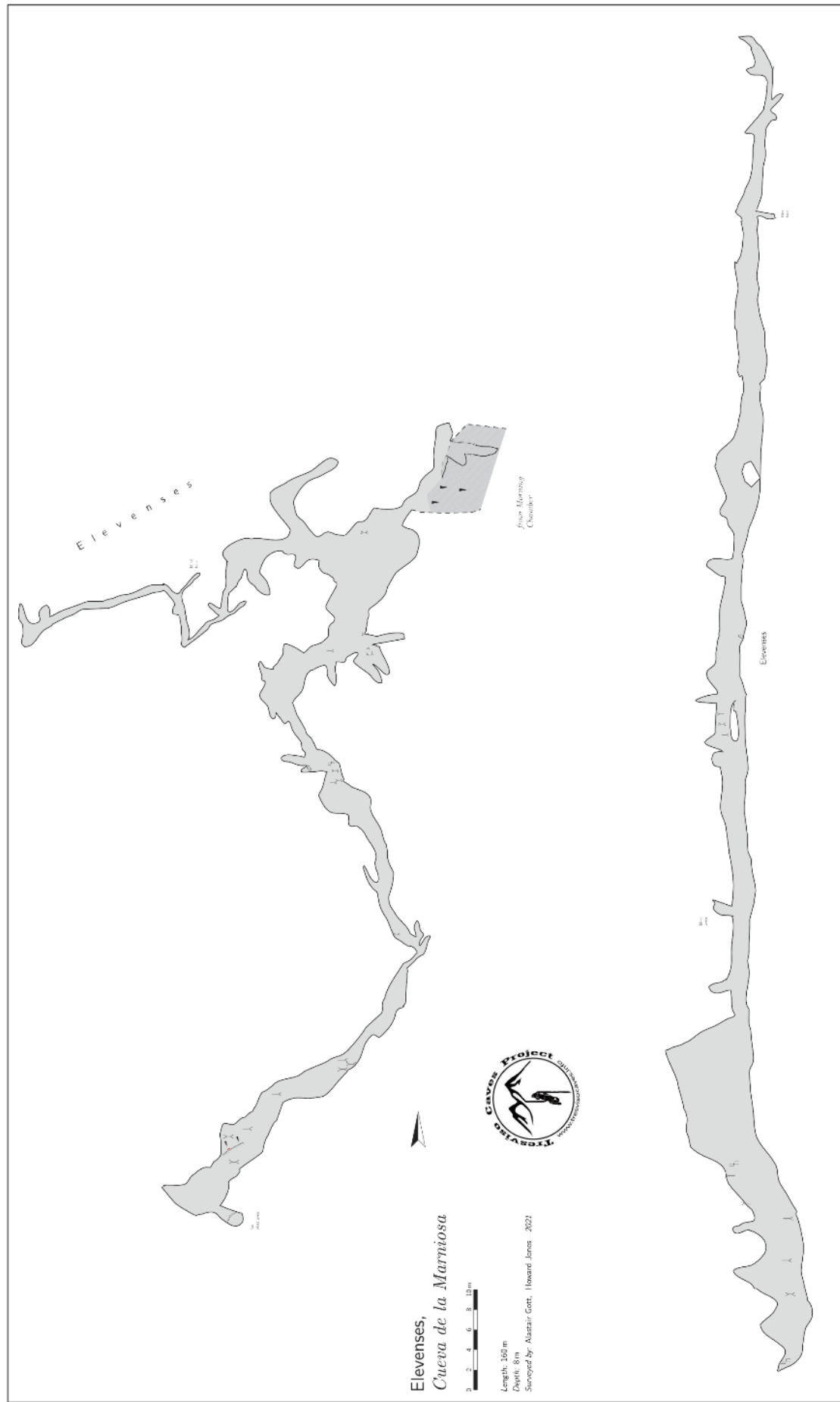
Turning right the passage continues above *Morning Chamber* with various holes dropping back into the chamber, the end of the passage is blind.

Left reaches a chamber, with two ways on, right and straight on (*slightly upslope*), Straight on leads to a squeeze through stalagmites, and into a well decorated gour pool passage, followed by impressive columns in the walls and stalactites hanging from the ceiling and stalagmites in the floor. The passage ends with a blind aven to the right hand side of some impressive flowstone.

Right at the chamber leads to walking passage (*with a blind passage on the right, and some other blind passages off to the right and left*) until a right hand turn at the end of the passage leads to a squeeze through at almost ceiling height where there is a fork in the passage with one passage on the right heading down into a blind hole and the left being a 20m crawl to a choke (*70m above and 20m horizontally from the northern passage in Extra Caverns Series*).



*Picture: Elevenses, Cueva de la Marniosa (Phil Walker)*



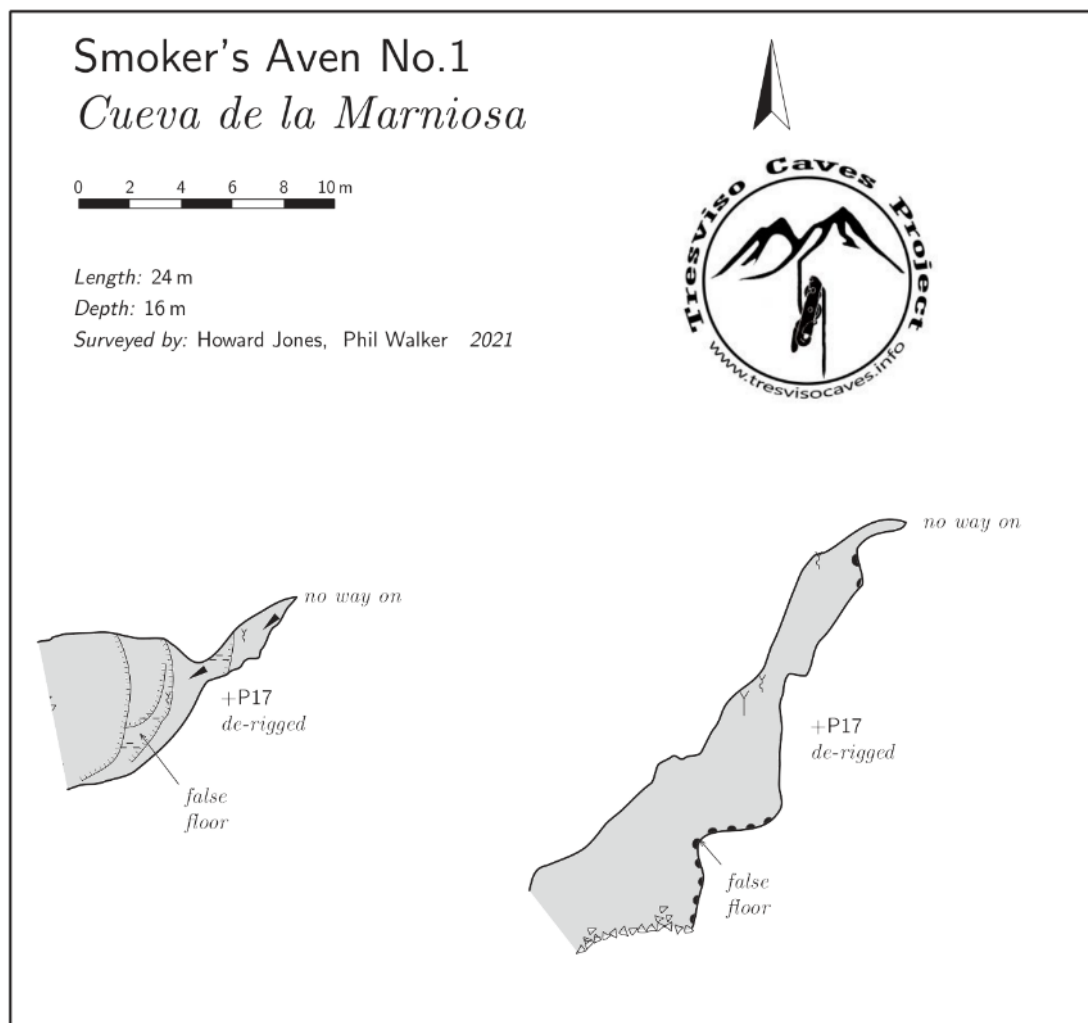


### Smoker's Aven No 1

On the left of the passage, 35m before *Smoker's Corner*, there is an obvious alcove with a large false floor about 3m of the ground, this is Smoker' Aven No 1.

As you face the aven there are several stalagmites on the right, which can be used to free climb, until level with the false floor. The original bolt climb begins here and starts with an easy traverse on the false floor, until directly below a calcite flow, coming in from the aven. A 17m pitch up ascends next to the calcite flow passing under further stalactites part way up.

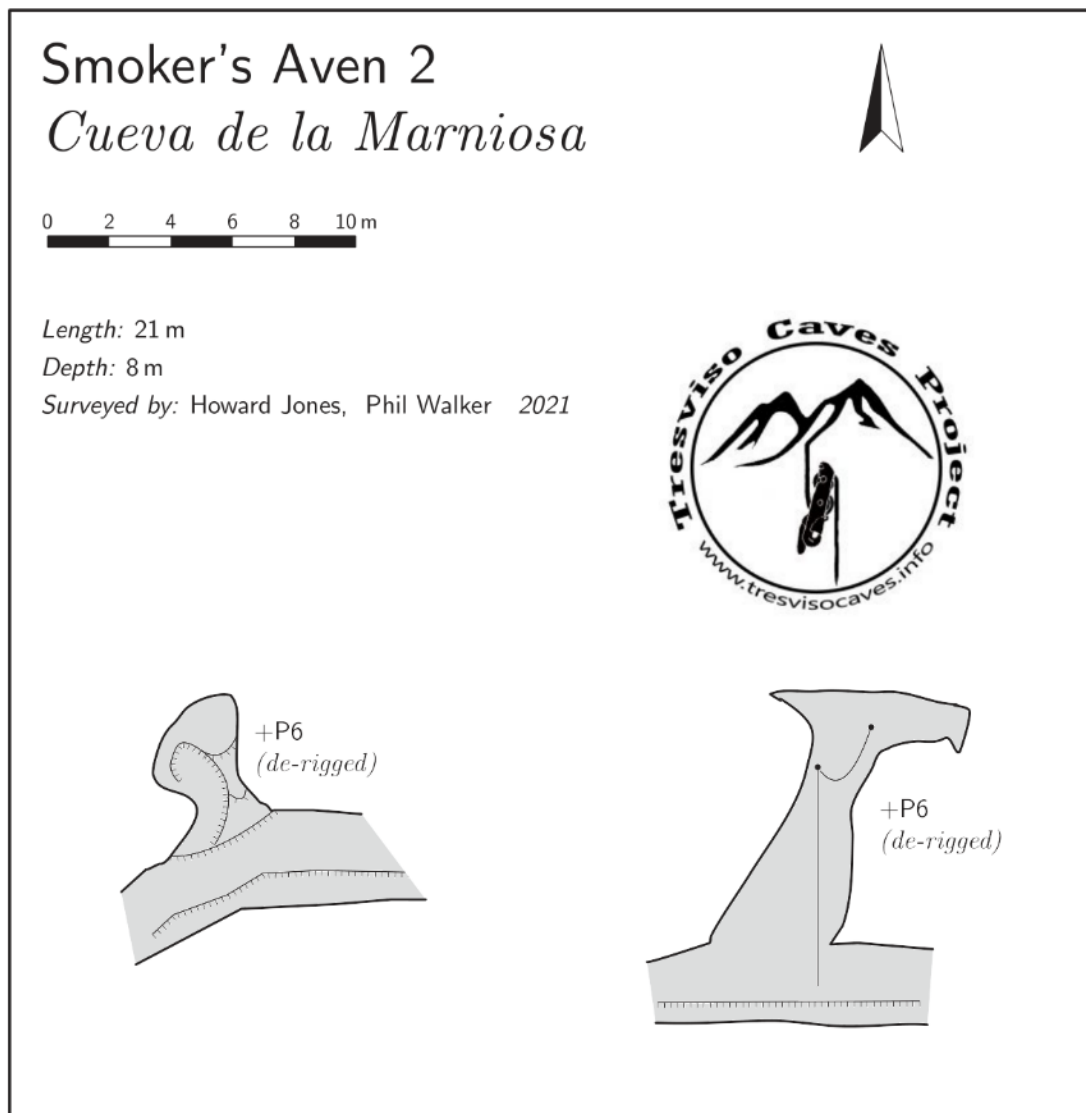
At the top of the aven it narrows considerably to an awkward upwards squeeze and left turn. However, the aven ends soon after and there is no way on.



### Smoker's Aven No 2

On the left of the passage, 40m after Smoker's Corner, while traversing over the shallow stream trench, there is an obvious chert / nodule climb. This is Smoker's Aven No 2.

A simple 6m bolt climb leads to a ledge above the main passage. A small alcove on the left looks back down to the passage below. There is no way on.



### **Helictite Crawl**

Smoker's Corner is a complicated area, with several passages coming in from different locations. On the left hand side is a low passage which turns back on itself and initially runs parallel to the main passage.

It quickly lowers to stooping passage and further crawling, decorated with lots of helictites. The floor is very interesting as it's clean sand, suggesting water flow on occasion, and there is a false floor about 9 inches above the current floor which is wafer thin.

A squeeze must be negotiated before the passage eventually ends in a sandy dig **which might yield in the future**. Only of interest due to the signs of water flow in the passage on occasion.

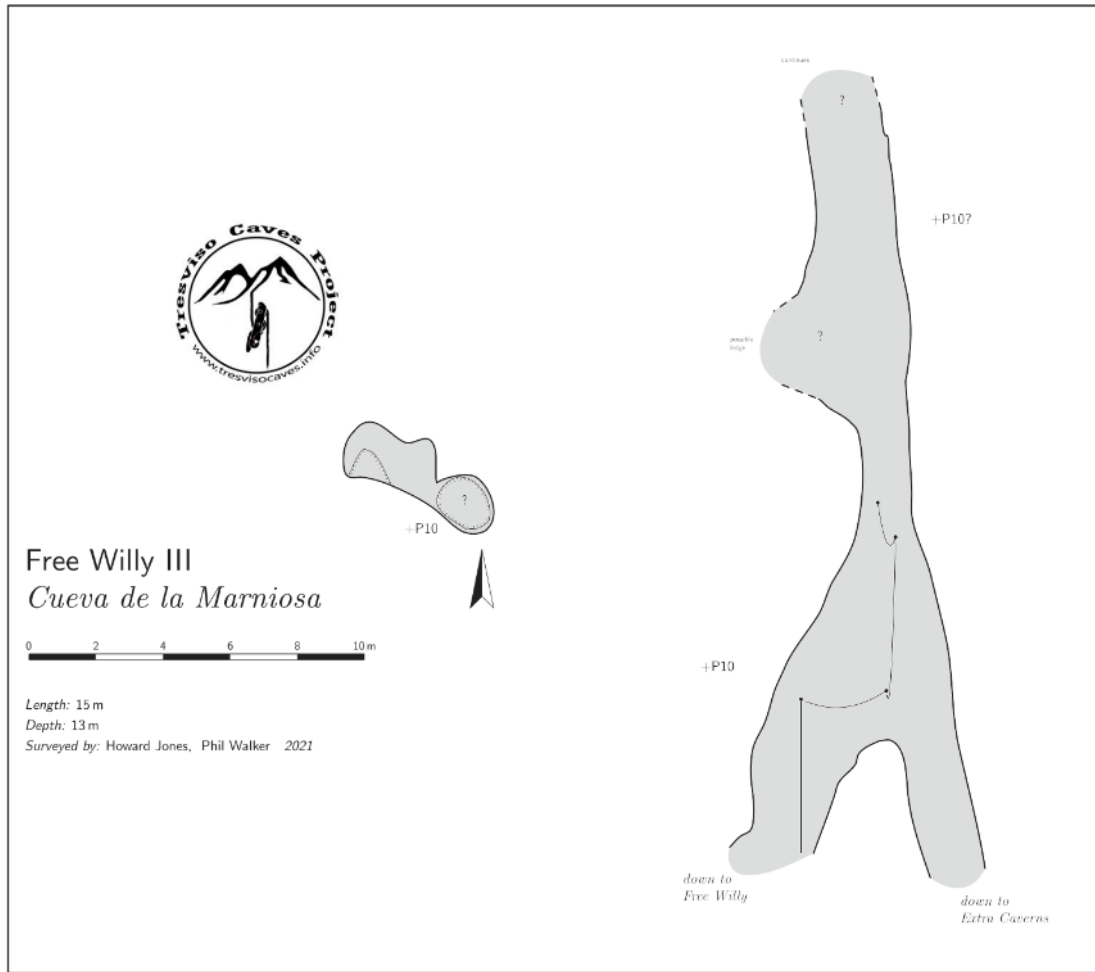
### **Free Willy 3**

From the base of the *Free Willy* aven, a 5m pitch up (*rigged as of 2019*) leads to a large eyehole, climb through the eyehole into a continuation of the aven. Down is tight, but only leads back to the base of the aven. A further 6m pitch up (*rigged as of 2019*) leads to a split in the aven. The right-hand route, *Free Right Willy* splits and right leads back into the main *Free Willy Aven*.



***Picture: Looking up the Free Willy Aven, Cueva de la Marniosa (Phil Walker)***

An initial traverse leads to y-hang and the start of a P10 (*rigged as of 2021*) to another y-hang. This is the limit of the bolt climb currently. The aven continues up for at least another 10m with no obvious closing down of the passage. A further potential ledge can be seen a further 5m up from the current limit.



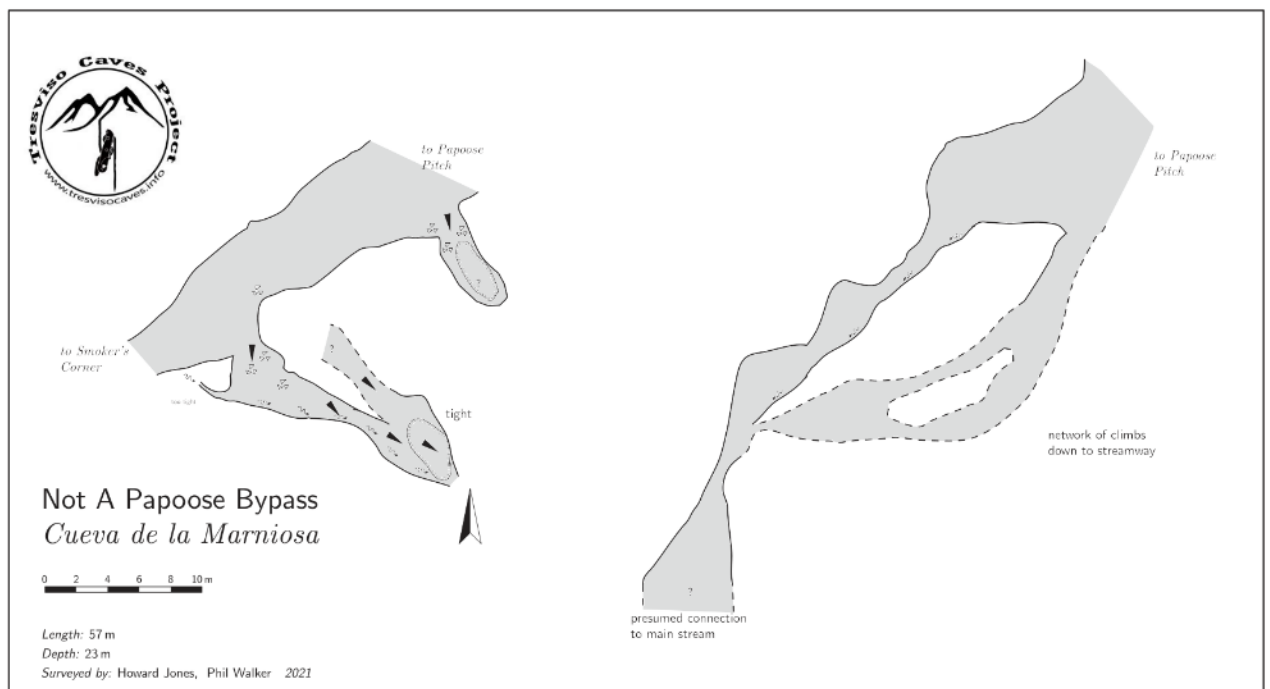
### Not a Papoose Bypass

A roped climb of 3m marks the start of the Moonmilk Crawls, 40m of degraded calcite crawling, that opens out into the start of the passage leading to the top of Papoose Pitch.

On the right hand side of the passage is an obvious hole, with a trickle of water. This can be down-climbed carefully for 5m to a small climb down into immature streamway. This can be followed for another awkward 5m, to the top of further awkward down climbs, that continue down at least another 15m, but have **not been explored**.

Back in the main passage and another 10m along, on the right hand side again, is another obvious hole. This drops almost vertically for another 15m but has **not been descended**.

These 2 passages have **not been fully explored** but are heading down to the mainstream, approx. 15m below.





**BFG-9000**

From the bottom of Papoose Pitch, before heading through the hole toward the main streamway, turn left over a large boulder and then up a muddy slope until you reach a 5m pitch up (*rigged 2021*). At the top there is a short traverse to the left. *Straight over the traverse enters a boulder strewn area that continues to a rift section.* The way on is along the obvious passage which continues 15m to a junction.

*Left at the junction goes to a well decorated chamber floored with boulders. An easy squeeze leads to lower crawling passage that goes under the main passage until it finishes.*

Right at the junction leads to a small chamber where there is a higher level and a window into the rift section, beyond the initial traverse. The rift is over 15m deep, and the sound of water flow can be heard (most likely the main streamway).

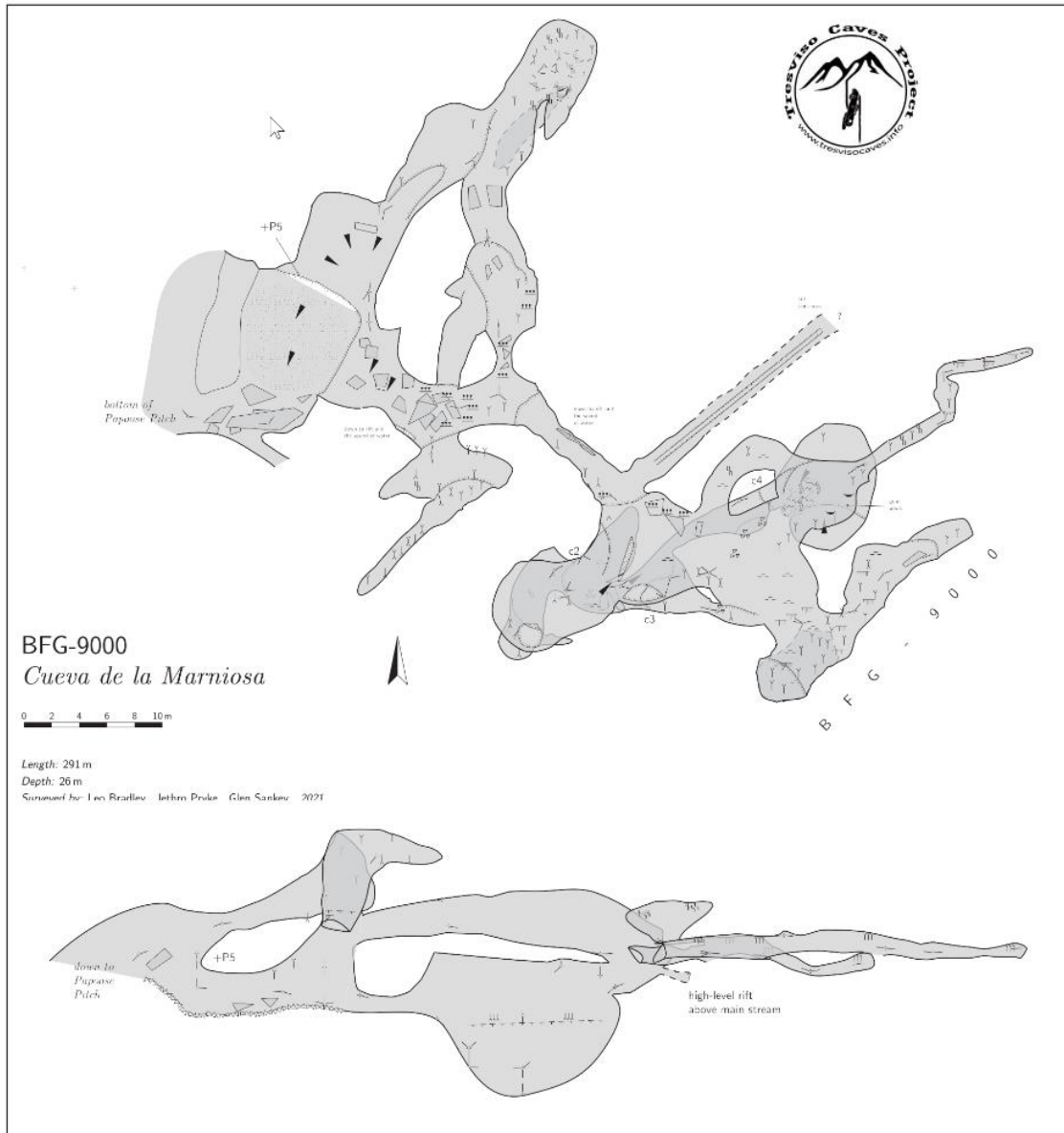
Traversing along the rift for 10-15 m leads to a large window on the right.

*This leads to a further passage, on the left, that continues to a crawling passage and end. On the right is a complicated layered set of passages that go under each other and have signs of old collapse. This area is quite well decorated with lots of fossil stal and flowstone.*

Continuing along the traverse in the rift, it continues northeast at least 20m but has **not yet been explored. A rope would be required to rig a traverse along the rift.** Looking along the rift a passage with a floor can be seen.



**Picture: BFG-9000, Cueva de la Marniosa (Tom Smith)**



## Other Exploration

### **Minas de Mazarrasa**

#### **Pozo del Castillo (T145, Castillo I)**

WGS84 UTM 30T x: 0360524 y: 4785376 z: 1870m

*An attempt was made to continue exploration of Pozo del Castillo, but the previously passable snow plug had once more collapsed, and no further exploration was undertaken in the cave this year.*

#### **RCA22 (T427)**

WGS84 UTM 30T x: 0360430 y:4785161 z:1858m

#### **Location:**

From Caseton de Andara go towards the Pozo de Andara (Lake Depression), then take the obvious path on the left, prior to entering the Lake Depression proper and follow the track through the Mazarrasa mine area. Continue along the obvious track, past *Pozo del Castillo* and underneath the Pico Grajal. The track passes an obvious mine entrance, marked with RCA-22.

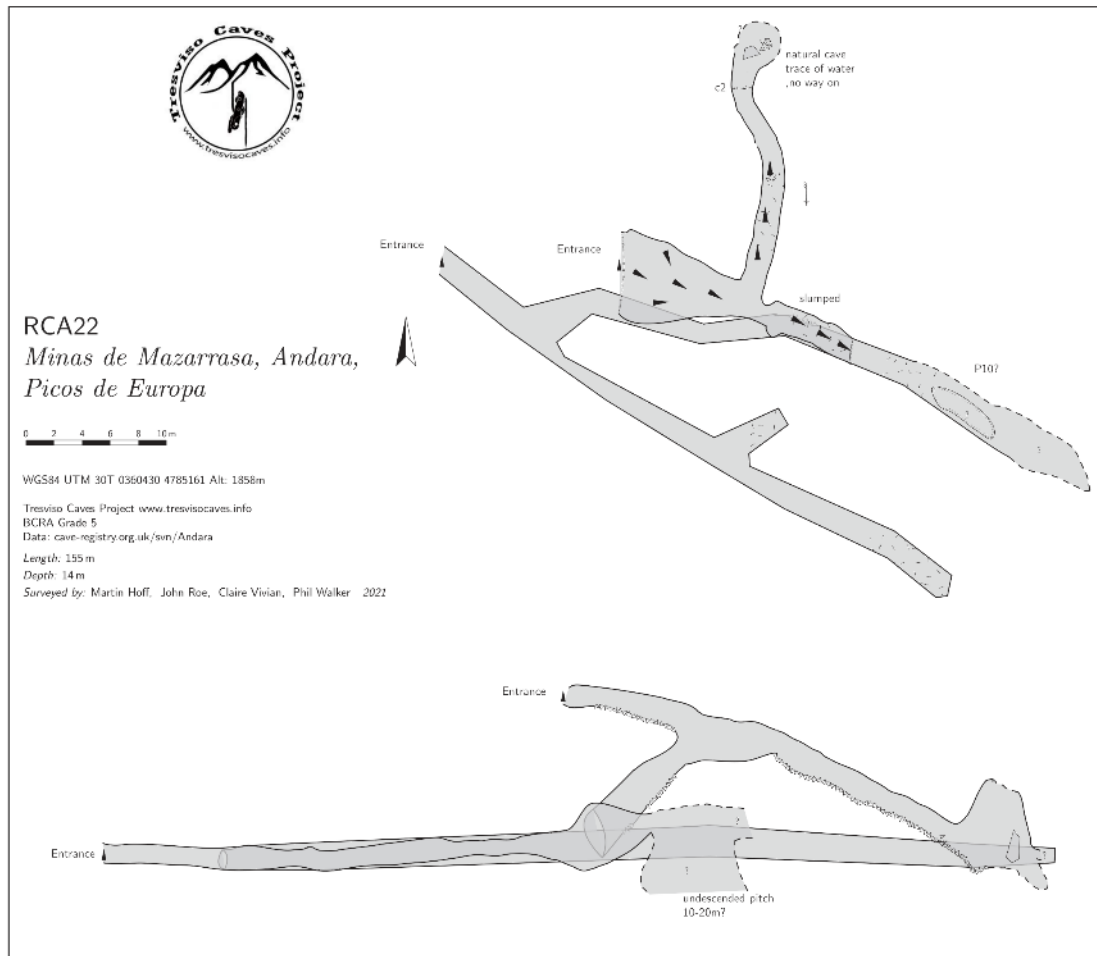


*Picture: RCA22 (Martin Hoff)*

**Description:**

Obvious mine entrance, with a higher entrance visible directly above. Main mine adit is 45m long and blind, but obvious fork on the left, 10m inside entrance, leads to a precarious wooden floor and an **undescended** pitch of approx. 10-20m. Potentially, the adit continues over the far side of the pitch.

10m back from the pitch head is a steep climb up to a junction. Straight on exits at a second entrance. Turning right descends into natural cave, with some evidence of water but no apparent way on



## Sobra Valley / Valdelafuente

### T15 - Cueva Mueria

WGS84 UTM 30T x: 0362410 y:4790133 z: 870m

#### **Location:**

Approach from the Tresviso – Sotres road, parking at the obvious layby at the top of the Sobra Valley. Follow the track down into the valley and cross the Rio Sobra just past the obvious cabanas. Take the track up the south side of the valley until level with the wall downstream of the Sobra dam (visible on north side of the valley).

Climb the hill on the south side of the valley on the same bearing as the wall, heading up towards the GPS location coordinates. The entrance is at the head of a gully, follow the gully uphill past one or two drystone walls to reach the cave mouth.

#### **Description:**

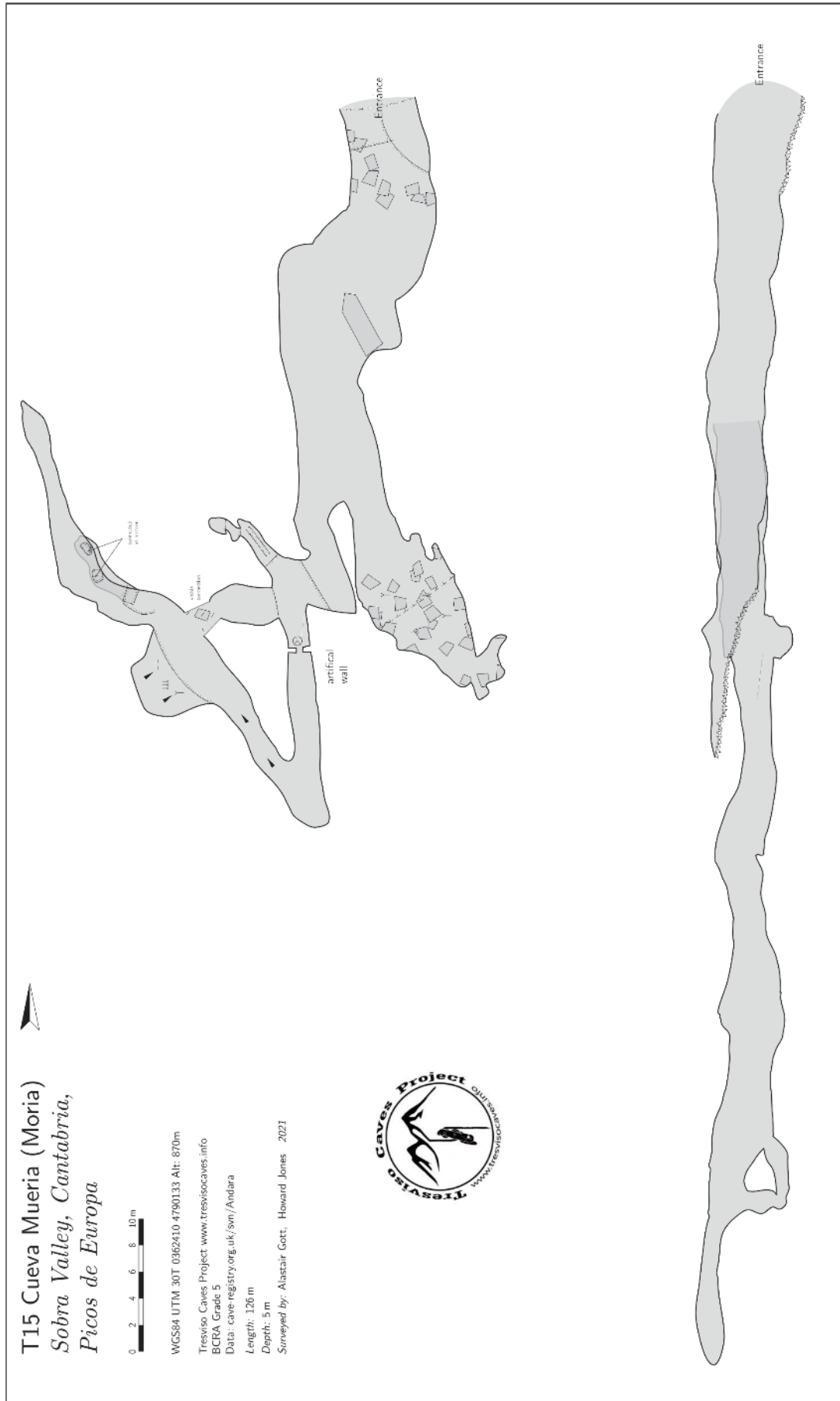
A winding phreatic tunnel 7m wide and 4m high forks after 35m. Left lowers to a bedding plane choked with calcite and no way on. Right continues down a passage which bends to the right and leads to a 1m climb down.

There are three ways on. At the base of the climb, straight on leads to an alcove which has been filled at the end but connects to the left hand from the bottom of the 1m climb. Turning right leads to a 10m blind pitch/bold free climb with no way on.

The left route leads past a drystone wall (originally built for cheese storage) to a right-hand turn and a well decorated chamber. *A rubble filled alcove leads back to the route straight on from the 1m climb down.*

The main passage continues descending to a freeclimb and a crawl at the base, the floor here feels cool (*digging here would be a long-term dig of British proportions but may yield longer term results*). There are two avens in the roof here, but they have been visually connected to the passage above.

Back in the well decorated chamber a climb up the side above the climb down leads to two pits, these are the avens seen from the bottom of the passage below. The end of the passage beyond the pits is a dead end.





**TCOV9 – Torca de la Grenata**

WGS84 UTM 30T x:0361266 y: 4790317 z: 1024m

**Location:**

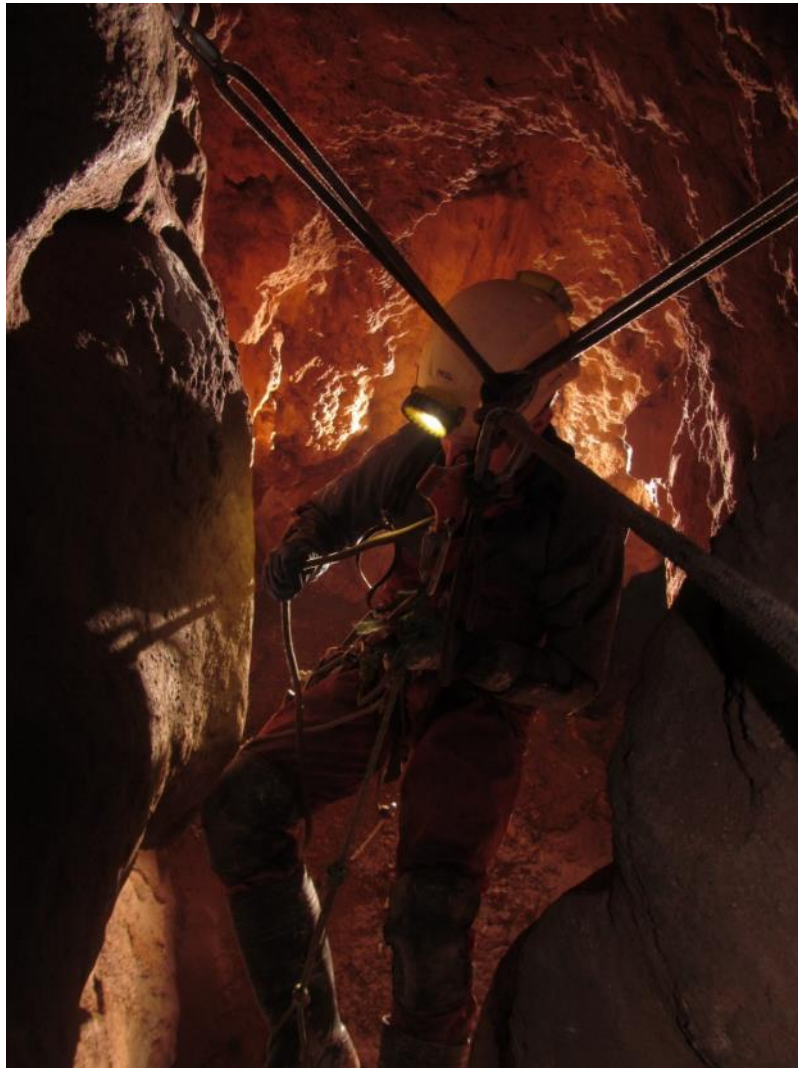
From the Tresviso – Sotres road, follow the track down into the Sobra Valley and head along same route as if going to *Cueva de la Marniosa*. From the cabanas below *Marniosa* follow the concrete track up until it ends (0361213, 4790478 937m). Head in an SSE direction going anticlockwise around the western side of the lump of limestone which contains the *Marniosa* entrance. Heading uphill on a muddy, bramble slope through trees you soon will find the entrance, on the left as the lump of limestone creates a wall to your left.

**Description:**

Once through the entrance, a short slope down where a traverse line/abseil is useful, gains the 18m pitch which lands in a chamber.

Downslope a hand grenade was found in the centre of the passage 2m from either wall. Beyond the grenade chamber, a 1m wide crawling passage continues to a short 5m pitch down into a lower level which can be rigged from naturals. In the lower level, a crawl through into a passage to the right gains a chamber with an inlet in the right hand side, thought to connect back to the grenade chamber.

Continuing over the top of the hole down to lower level, the passage continues. A freeclimb/abseil down a 2m drop leads to a chamber here is approx. 2m wide and 3m long with an outlet at one end, not of human proportions. No way on



**Picture: Torca de la Grenata (Martin Hoff)**

**TCOV14 – Torca de Los Galesa**

WGS84 UTM 30T x:0361844 y:4790099 z:1223m

**Location:**

From the Tresviso – Sotres road, follow the track down into the Sobra Valley and head along same route as if going to *Cueva de la Marniosa*. From the cabanas below *Marniosa* follow the concrete track up until it ends (0361213, 4790478 937m). Head in an SSE direction going anticlockwise around the western side of the lump of limestone which contains the *Marniosa* entrance. Head uphill on a muddy, bramble slope through trees (towards 0361258, 4790317) passing *Torca de la Grenata* (0361266, 4790317 1024m).

Continue heading uphill (towards 0361276, 4790270) then climb and contour left round the hillside staying low to avoid the cliff/crag (0361458, 4790144). Head to (0361855, 4790135) a point north of the hole then climb carefully through the spikey bush down the crag to the cave.

The entrance is on the western side of a shake hole, with an approximately 10m deep East-West gulley (lined with blocks and leaf matter) in one side from the shake hole into the open pothole.

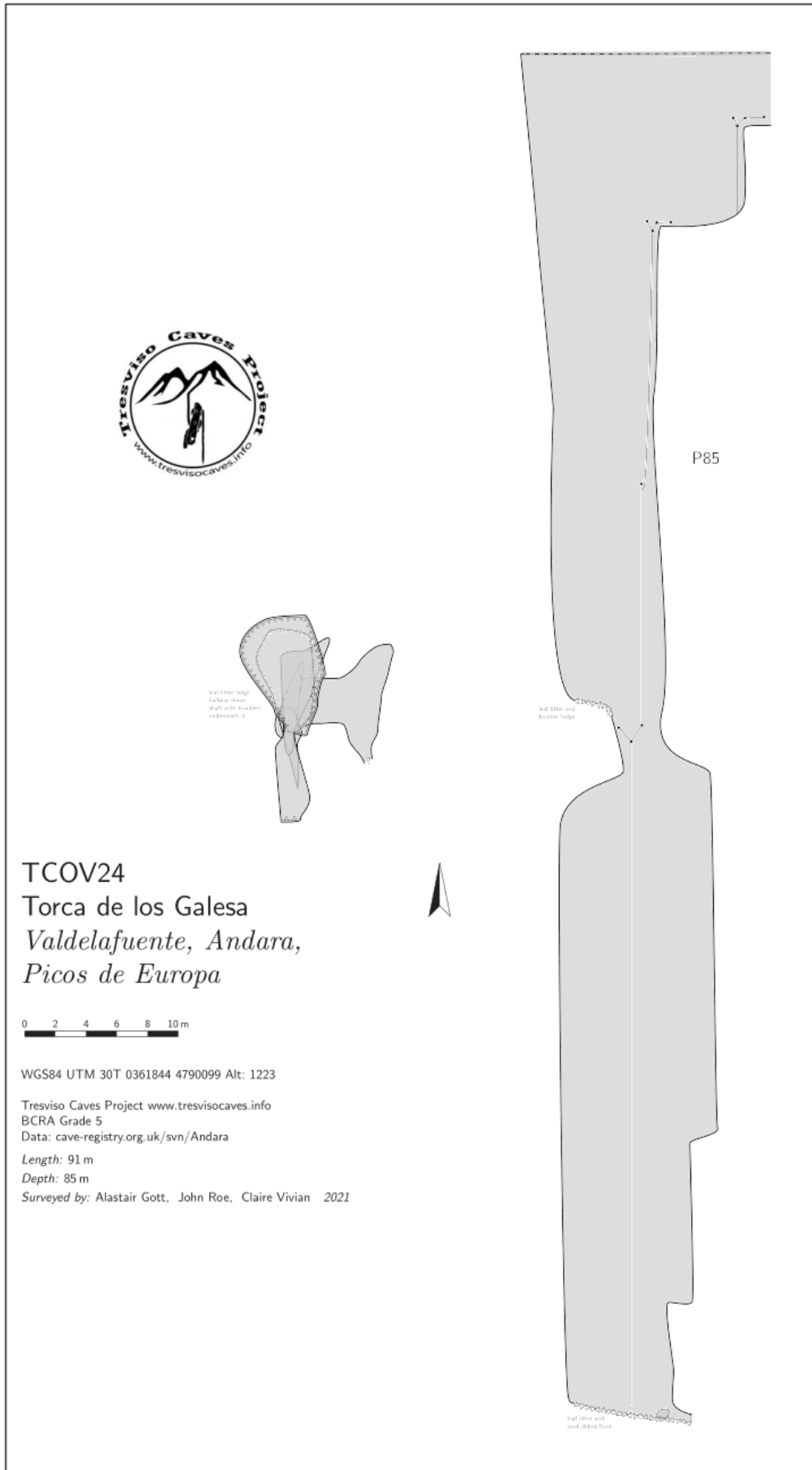
**Description:**

The lip of the gulley, into the pot, is 1m wide from the left to the right hand wall and begins with an airy take-off into the 7m x 7m wide pothole.

A 15m abseil reaches a single bolt rebelay, and after another 40m down from the lip is a boulder and leaf ledge, with a free-hanging y-hang in the narrowing of the shaft. A further 40m abseil gains the floor.

At the base of the shaft, down in the bottom right hand corner, is a long term digging project (*if someone could spare 4 weeks of full time effort in a team of 4+ with scaffolding, timbers etc.*).

The walls of the pot rise impressively from the bottom of the pot.



## Tresviso

### T44 - Minas de Los Ingleses (T301)<sup>5</sup>

WGS84 UTM 30T x:0365799 y: 4790965 z:783m

#### **Location:**

Follow the Urdon path out of Tresviso and go down the first zigzags. On reaching the water trough, continue along the path for approximately 260m, just beyond an obvious tunnel on the left of the path, as far as the second pylon and then bear up and left to obvious areas of exposed reddish gravel.

#### **Description:**

A mined tunnel forks immediately inside the entrance, the right arm leading past some collapsed cheese racks to emerge through a small arch into daylight where a higher entrance intersects.

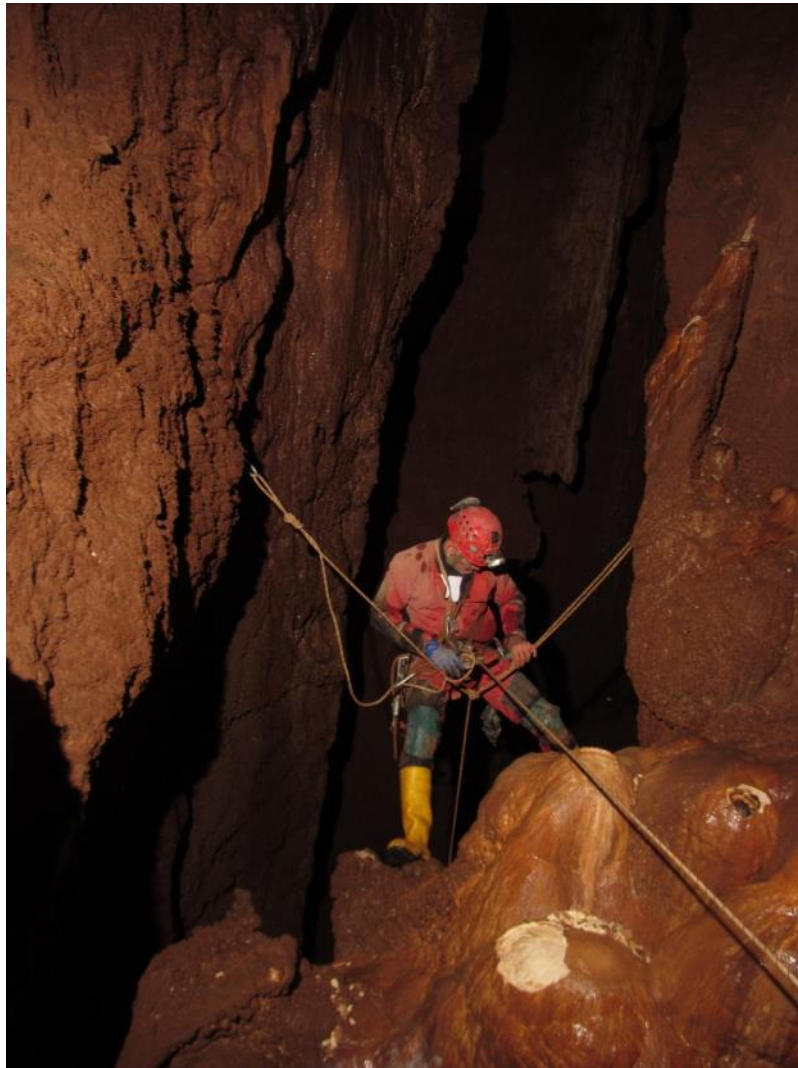
A further undescended drop is to the left at this point. The left-hand side of the pillar ahead is easier than the green mossy climb alternative, both joining to emerge on the surface a short distance upslope and East of the mined tunnel. The left arm of the fork immediately drops into a metre-plus wide rifty pitch on the right-hand side, with a window into a potential parallel shaft a few metres down.

The floor is almost entirely of loose rock with a mix of animal bones, sloping ahead and with an enlargement to the right. A short climb down into a rift can be protected by a handline over a mobile chockstone, the rift continuing and requiring further handline off a convenient stal. The rift passage enlarges and a short scrabble up and to the left emerges on a ledge overlooking the next pitch. At your left shoulder is the beautifully etched historic graffiti from 1882.

This next pitch is rigged by one natural round the large blue stal above and behind you and a second over a small, exposed rock bridge overhead. This area feels more mud than rock and is suitably chocolatey in appearance. A natural thread where the wall to the right (looking down the pitch) bulges out enables a deviation to reduce though not eliminate the rub point. This rope lands in a pleasant chamber with a nice water feature to your left but the way on is using the bolt in the wall ahead to protect your descent of the rottenstone type slope down to your right.

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<sup>5</sup> Originally discovered and explored between 1974-1982. Revisited in 2021 and description / rigging updated.



***Picture: Minas de Los Ingleses (Martin Hoff)***

A bolt into calcite protects a suitably grabby slot before the rope descends to a wide Y-hang, dropping to a balcony ledge with a striking cluster of helictites on the right wall at hip height and with a further 10m drop to a ledge which overlooks a rift a few metres deep and with the wall opposite appearing climbable and to be traversed across to the right.

A blind pot at the bottom leads to a short climb up into a side passage and sloping rift. This is traversed at roof level to a 12m pitch. A dig in the floor leads to a traverse over boulders and an eyehole into large void.

A free-hanging 34m abseil down leads to a boulder strewn floor in a large chamber 8m wide by 35m long and upwards of 80m high. It contains a large amount of debris from higher mine workings. The way on is blocked by the mine debris There are some superb blue stalagmites in the corner. Total depth of -175m (*as at 1982*).



## Summary

The 2021 expedition has continued to build on the successes of previous trips advancing exploration in line with objectives and discovering over 2.5km of new cave and several new leads. Over 1km of existing cave was also resurveyed to improve accuracy of old data and provide a better picture of the interconnected systems.

### **Cueva del Nacimiento**

Following a few years absence, a return to the furthest reaches of *Cueva del Nacimiento* and beyond the *Death Race 2000* chamber saw the expedition concentrating on the *Sandy Dig* lead. After 8 hours digging a breakthrough resulted in over 250m of new passage, continuing in similar large fashion to the preceding sections of cave. This ended in a further draughting hole, which with some more concentrated digging, could provide a further way on.

Likewise, the ramps just above the *Pina Colada* sump continue upwards, with another 160m of cave and continuing ascent.

A small extension was also made nearer the entrance series, in the *Orange Arcade* section of cave. This, coupled with further improved surveying, suggests there are still several leads worth exploring in the early parts of the cave.

### **Cueva de la Marniosa**

The *42 Streamway*, discovered in 2019, was the centre of major gains in *Cueva de la Marniosa*. 900m of new cave was found, mainly in a small streamway. Initially the hope was this passage would head directly south into the mountain, but gradually it trended westwards and currently finishes close to where the *Cueva de la Silvestre* pitch series end, suggesting this is either lower passage to another surface entrance, at the head of the Sobra Valley or linked to one of the streamways below *Waterfall Junction* in *Cueva de la Silvestre*.

Closer to the entrance, before the cave descends to the main streamway, a route over the top was sought. The old boulder choke, near the *Papoose Pitch*, was re-explored and led to around 200m of passage. The first section was known to have been explored in the 70's but a further way on was identified, over the top of the streamway far below. The passage here is large and old, like the early parts of the cave and like *Nacimiento*. Further discoveries in this area would be encouraging for finding routes deeper into the mountain, in a similar fashion to the trend of *Nacimiento*.





***Picture: (Standing L- R) Glen Sankey, Howard Jones, Toby Dryden, Dave Powlesland, Chris Jones, Phil Walker  
(Sitting L-R) Claire Vivian, John Roe, Martin Hoff, Jethro Pryke, Leo Bradley, Tom Smith, Bob Clay, Derek Cousins, Alastair Gott***

## **Appendix A: Expedition Members**

In total 15 people from 6 clubs were involved in the 2019 expedition:

### ***Bradford Pothole Club (BPC)***

Phil Walker

### ***Cardiff Hill Divers (CHD)***

Chris Jones

Dave Powlesland

### ***South Bristol Speleological Society (SBSS)***

Bob Clay

### ***Sheffield University Speleological Society (SUSS)***

Leo Bradley

Tom Smith

Jethro Pryke

Glen Sankey

### ***Technical Speleological Group (TSG)***

Alastair Gott

### ***South Wales Caving Club (SWCC)***

Toby Dryden

Claire Vivian

John Roe

Martin Hoff

### ***Unattached***

Derek Cousins

Howard Jones

## **Appendix B: Permission & Permits**

The 2021 expedition was run in association with the Agrupacion Deportiva KAMI club of Madrid, using their exploration permits, granted from the Asturian Caving Federation, the National Park, and the Cantabrian Government.



**GOBIERNO  
DE  
CANTABRIA**

## Appendix C: Finance

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>PER PERSON</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Balance C/F	£800.00	£53.33	
Deposit	£750.00	£50.00	
Ghar Parau	£1,250.00	£83.33	
Member Contribution	£10,094.00	£715.47	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>£12,894.00</b>	<b>£902.13</b>	

<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>PER PERSON</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>Transport</b>			
Ferries	£3,750.00	£250.00	<i>4 people per car x £800 per car</i>
Covid / PCR tests	£2,250.00	£150.00	
Fuel	£562.50	£37.50	<i>4 people per car x £150 per car</i>
Breakdown cover	£562.50	£37.50	
<b>Accommodation</b>			
Youth Hostel	£1,272.00	£108.00	<i>£6 per night</i>
<b>Catering</b>			
Day Fee	£1,060.00	£90.00	<i>£5 per day fee</i>
<b>Group Equipment</b>			
Static 2x200m reels	£250.00	£16.67	
Dynamic 2x30m	£87.00	£5.80	
150 x Petzl Spoon or Twist Hanger	£375.00	£25.00	
150 x 7mm Long M/R	£285.00	£19.00	
8mm Bolts	£60.00	£4.00	
1 x Accessory cord (100m x 7mm)	£70.00	£4.67	
Petzl 8mm Removable Pulse Hanger x4	£116	£7.73	
Etriers (4-step)	£50	£3.33	
fifi hook x2	£15	£1.00	
Petzl Aress quickdraw 12cm	£24	£1.60	
Petzl Dual Canyon Guide	£30	£2.00	
Misc Hardware	£125	£8.33	
<b>Misc.</b>			
Insurance	£1,950.00	£130.00	<i>approx. £130 per person (dependent on insurer)</i>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>£12,894.00</b>	<b>£902.13</b>	

## Appendix D: Cave Locations

The original locations from the 1970's and 1980's expeditions are largely inaccurate when plotted into modern GPS devices. The following are either new sites or older entrances re-logged. Datum WGS84 UTM.

Cave	Area	Zone	Easting	Northing	Altitude
GA42 (T153)	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	360517	4785248	1905m
RCA22	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	360430	4785161	1858m
GA40/T151	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	360497	4785283	1888m
GA44	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	360539	4785270	1915m
GA43/T148	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	360559	4785270	1901m
GA50	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	360503	4785388	1844m
Fallen Bear	Samelar	30T	362467	4786599	1587m
T301 Minas de Los Ingeleses	Tresviso	30T	365799	4790965	783m
TCOV1	Tresviso	30T	363639	4791029	1141m
TCOV2 - Dog Kennel Cave	Tresviso	30T	362545	4791079	1169m
TCOV3	Valdelafuente	30T	361157	4790102	1077m
TCOV4 - Torca del Hoja	Valdelafuente	30T	361227	4790196	1061m
TCOV5 - Torca Sorpresa	Valdelafuente	30T	361159	4790133	1069m
TCOV6 - High for Signal Hole	Valdelafuente	30T	360975	4789995	1136m
TCOV7 – Toby's Hole	Valdelafuente	30T	360790	4789678	1124m
TCOV8	Valdelafuente	30T	360903	4789504	1220m
TCOV9 - Torca de la Grenata	Valdelafuente	30T	361266	4790317	1024m
TCOV10	Valdelafuente	30T	361617	4790153	1170m
TCOV11	Valdelafuente	30T	361791	4790106	1225m
TCOV12	Valdelafuente	30T	361827	4790061	1230m
TCOV13	Valdelafuente	30T	361860	4790089	1203m
T47A / TCOV14 Torca de los Galesa	Valdelafuente	30T	361844	4790099	1223m
TCOV15	Valdelafuente	30T	361752	4790033	1249m
TCOV16	Valdelafuente	30T	361760	4789996	1257m
TCOV17	Valdelafuente	30T	361806	4790014	1242m
TCOV18	Valdelafuente	30T	361849	4790029	1227m
TCOV19	Valdelafuente	30T	361870	4789995	1220m
TCOV20	Valdelafuente	30T	361996	4789942	1190m
TCOV21a	Valdelafuente	30T	362021	4789995	1174m
TCOV21b	Valdelafuente	30T	362016	4790001	1171m
TCOV22	Valdelafuente	30T	362031	4789997	1173m
TCOV23	Valdelafuente	30T	362045	4790018	1156m
TCOV24	Valdelafuente	30T	362013	4790130	1147m
TCOV25	Valdelafuente	30T	362070	4790183	1116m
TCOV26	Valdelafuente	30T	362044	4790051	1161m

TCOV27	Valdelafuente	30T	361645	4789916	1274m
VA104/FT51	Valdominguero	30T	359190	4784622	2130m
VA2021-01	Valdominguero	30T	359107	4784610	2140m
MA7	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	361211	4785423	1892m
T223	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	361208	4785419	1893m
Long Cabana	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	361136	4785385	1886m
T122	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	361061	4785356	1882m
T110	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	361113	4785615	1857m
MA2	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	361052	4785597	1873m
AN-55	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	360992	4785413	1925m
MA1	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	361023	4785593	1854m
T125	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	360962	4785455	1894m
T114B	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	361031	4785694	1816m
MA4	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	360948	4785459	1903m
FT43	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	360952	4785511	1906m
T104 (Nevera)	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	360974	4785643	1865m
T102 (Nevera)	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	360975	4785636	1862m
T107	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	360967	4785758	1801m
T107A Water supply	Minas de Mazarrasa	30T	361004	4785745	1815m
VS1 - Rock Shelter 1	Vegas de Sotres	30T	357861	4787371	977m
VS2 - Rock Shelter 2	Vegas de Sotres	30T	357965	4787307	1087m
VS3 - Rock Shelter 3	Vegas de Sotres	30T	357981	4787262	1045m
VS4 - Solution pocket	Vegas de Sotres	30T	358136	4787242	1090m
VS5 - Rock Shelter 4	Vegas de Sotres	30T	358151	4787264	1089m

**Table: 2021 grid locations, UTM WGS-84 datum.**

This information is being collated and published on the expedition website: <http://www.tresvisocaves.info/>

Additionally, the large collection of old and new survey data is being updated, modernised and stored with the UK national cave registry archive (<http://cave-registry.org.uk/>) under the *Andara* dataset.

## Appendix E: Surveying

The following table details the passage explored and surveyed during the 2021 expedition:

Cave	Survex Name	Date	Surveyors	Length
Cueva del Nacimiento	the_bastard	09/09/2021	CJ, LB	165.48
Cueva del Nacimiento	barney_and_friends	09/09/2021	CJ, DP, JP, LB	269.34
Cueva del Nacimiento	orangeade_arcade_out	12/09/2021	DJC, JR, CV	424.81
Cueva de la Marniosa	42_streamway	06/09/2021	CJ, JR	301.28
Cueva de la Marniosa	corona_climb	06/09/2021	CJ, JR	60.86
Cueva de la Marniosa	sardine_stream	08/09/2021	TS, GS, BC	402.32
Cueva de la Marniosa	tinned_fish	09/09/2021	TS, GS, BC	150.77
Cueva de la Marniosa	elevenses_marniosa	06/09/2021	HJ, AG	160.55
Cueva de la Marniosa	marnentrancefrom4	04/09/2021	HJ, AG	217.86
Cueva de la Marniosa	marn_from_morning	04/09/2021	HJ, AG	73.83
Cueva de la Marniosa	bottom_22_inwards	08/09/2021	HJ, DJC	355.78
Cueva de la Marniosa	smokers_corner_inwards	10/09/2021	DJC, CV, JR	144.43
Cueva de la Marniosa	marn_end_of_moonmilk	12/09/2021	AG, HJ	134.12
Cueva de la Marniosa	predator	12/09/2021	CJ, DP	77.36
Cueva de la Marniosa	smokers_aven_no1	13/09/2021	PW, HJ	24.23
Cueva de la Marniosa	smokers_aven_no2	14/09/2021	PW, HJ	21.04
Cueva de la Marniosa	free_willy_3	16/09/2021	PW, HJ	14.9
Cueva de la Marniosa	not_a_papoose_bypass	14/09/2021	PW, HJ	56.67
Cueva de la Marniosa	BFG_9000	18/09/2021	LB, GS, TS, JP	290.97
RCA22	RCA22	07/09/2021	PW, CV, MH, JR	154.98
Toby's Hole	tobys_hole	09/09/2021	PW, AG	31.44
Torca Galesa	torca_galesa	14/09/2021	AG, JR, CV	90.86
<b>TOTALS</b>				<b>3623.88</b>

**Table: 2021 surveying data.**

## Appendix F: Sponsors and Thanks

The 2021 expedition was sponsored by the following:

**Safety Aloft Ltd (Mark Wright Training):** discounted equipment,



**Ghar Parau Foundation:** financial sponsorship,



**Hotel Torrecerredo,** equipment supply,



*Thanks also due to Ken Daykin, Fernando de la Fuente Moreno, Carolyn Ginnever, Jim Thomson, Ana Moradiellos Barreiros and the people of Tresviso.*



## Appendix G: Expedition Log

### Tresviso 2021 Log

*Phil Walker (PW), Bob Clay (BC), Derek Cousins (DJC), Howard Jones (HJ), Alastair Gott (AG), Martin Hoff (MH), Jethro Pryke (JP), Tom Smith (TS), Leo Bradley (LB), Chris Jones (CJ), Dave Powlesland (DP), John Roe (JR), Glen Sankey (GS), Toby Dryden (TD), Clare Vivian (CV)*

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2021

##### Cueva Mueria

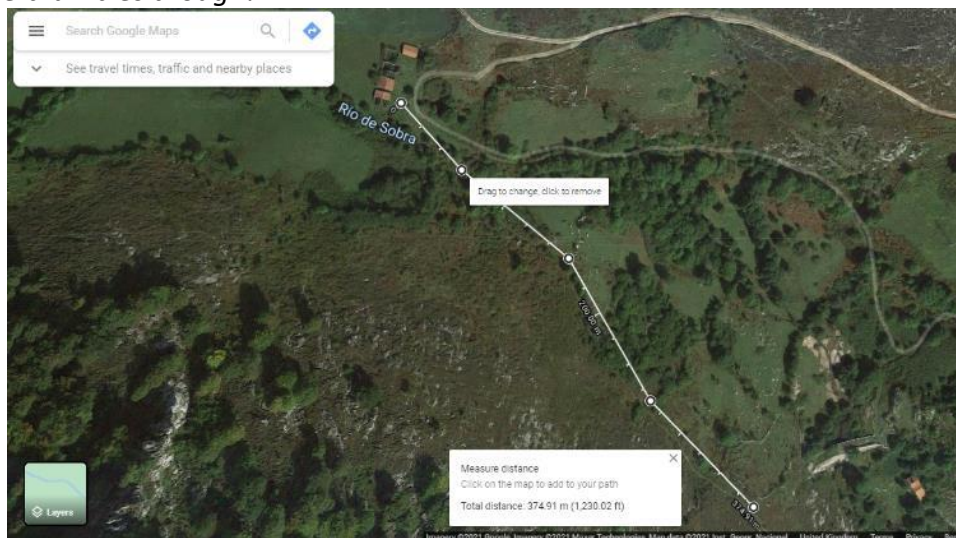
HJ AG

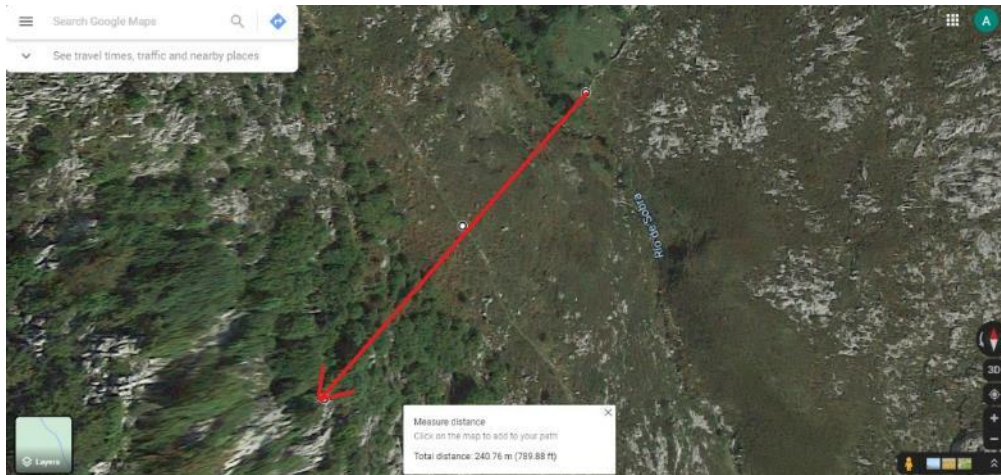
Good trip to start off, investigated the cave. To gain any further progression a dig in the floor (of British long-term digging levels) would need to be undertaken, this is most likely down the right-hand branch near the end at floor level but would require scaffolding and boarded shaft. Far better prospects elsewhere in Andara.

- GPS for entrance 0362410 4790133 108m above the path above the Sobra dam.
- Entrance is at the top of a very shallow gully at the base of a cliff
- Leave path above the Sobra dam at 841m and GPS 0362458 4790211
- Intermediate GPS en route to entrance 0362453 4790196

*Approach: via path on south side of valley from Cabanas (crossing the river sobra quickly after the cabanas) until level with wall downstream of dam.*

*Once level with wall (on N side of valley) downstream of dam, climb the hill on the South side of the valley on the same bearing as the wall, heading up towards the coordinates. This will keep you away from the worst of the cliffs on the hill, there will still be brambles though!*





*The entrance is at the head of a gully, which is blessed relief from all the brambles. Follow the gully uphill past one or two drystone walls to reach the cave mouth.*

*Description: A winding phreatic tunnel 7m wide and 4m high forks after 35m. left lowers to a bedding plane which is not diggable but choked with calcite.*

*At the Fork, right goes down a passage which bends to the right at the end with a 1m climb down with three ways on (A- Left, B- Straight on, C- Right). At the base of this straight on (B) leads to an alcove which has been filled at the end but connects to the left hand (A) route, this was confirmed by digging from the left hand (A) route [2021] leaving a space over the top of the rubble.*

*From the three ways on Right (C) leads to a 10m blind pitch/bold free climb. Left (A) leads past a drystone wall which would have had a draft door on to keep the cheese/meat at a stable temperature, saving it from any extreme changes in temperature from the outside weather conditions. A righthand turn at the end of this passage leads to a well decorated chamber. Ignoring the rubble filled alcove leading to (B) the passage on the floor descends a freeclimb to a crawl at the base, the floor here feels cool (digging here would be a long-term dig of British proportions but may yield longer term results). Above the cool feeling floor there are two avens, which have been visually connected to the passage above (D).*

*Back in the well decorated chamber a climb up the side above the free climb down leads to two pits down, these have been visually connected to each other and to the passage below (D), with a light being shone down one being seen at the top of the other pit. The end of the passage beyond the pits is a dead end.*

#### **4<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

##### Cueva de la Marniosa - Resurvey

HJ AG

A good trip to resurvey the top of Marniosa, with just a little faff of recalibrating the disto after the first 4 readings as I noticed it was a little out, but not massively. So worth recalibrating ready for the rest of the survey. Once down at Morning Chamber we surveyed round the chamber, when I left Howard sat in Morning Chamber, I went off to investigate a climb at the side of the Chamber and found that it went ("Elevenses"), well worth coming back later to survey this passage.

Cueva del Agua and Cueva Chico

MH CV JR TD

Village road to concrete track to grassy meadow to zigzagging, steepening walk down to chain-protected descent to gorge bottom, just upstream of Cueva del Nacimiento de Urdon (Agua) entrance. Nice metal footbridge with ample signage, water level a few inches below the concrete sill on the upper side of the dam. Walked down-gorge along the lip of the concrete canal where the walkway allowed, in the mostly dry canal where not. TD returned to Tresviso; MH CV JR followed our noses along the path to regain the canal then be diverted uphill through the trees. Topped out of trees at a level not much below Tresviso village opposite, quick recap of map & GPS and visible locating clues. Returned the way we came, back in Tresviso for 16.00 to field too much comms traffic about an ongoing rescue in OFD.

**5<sup>th</sup> September 2021**Cueva del Agua

HJ AG MH CV JR

Agua to wigan pier to inflate “dinghy” and install traverse line above entrance pool.

A pleasantly unhurried walk down to find out how the floor-pump + gaffer tape combination didn't make for as efficient an inflation mechanism as CV lungpower. JR started replacing the rope on the roof traverse with everybody's favourite red rope, CV test voyage for the suspiciously pink “dinghy” was successfully completed and then a pause for lunch.

Geared up, variable success on water crossings, first knotted handline found to be washed back up on itself, stream traverse protection rope ripped through by presumed high water in the interim since cavers last visited. Water found to be little over welly deep at the bottleneck where pool turns into canal, as one caver found it simpler to traverse the sloping wall and make a one wet foot stretch to regain the concrete sill than to risk capsize. JR completed the re-rigging of the roof traverse from the inside out, at the same time the collected junk rope fragments were cleared away for removal and AG retrieved a tired-looking SRT rope from a short distance further down the main gorge just beyond the metal footbridge.



*Picture: The dinghy, Cueva del Nacimiento (Martin Hoff)*

### **6<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

#### Cueva de la Marniosa - Elevenses

HJ AG

Marniosa survey of "Elevenses" off Morning Chamber and re-rig of first three pitches.

We set off prior to the 42 streamway team and agreed that we would re-rig the first 4 pitches, we re-rigged the first three pitches then went to Survey "Elevenses" which was incredibly pretty, prettier than I had anticipated on my first quick look in there. A few point and shoot photos were taken to give people back at base something to look at and entice some photographers to come back and have a good go at taking some decent photos.

There was one passage which is heading towards extra caverns which may be diggable but would require a lot of effort and is 12m horizontally from the passage in EC but 60m vertically.

When we had finished this survey, and as HJ will attest, gone down every passage there was up there. We then proceeded to the 4<sup>th</sup> pitch, HJ said that the other team would probably rig this if we didn't get there first. And he was right, we left a bag at the top of this pitch in case it would prove useful for explorers of 42 streamway/Alien Weaponry in coming days, this bag was brought out by the same days 42 streamway/AW explorers, as they were unsure why it was there.

#### Cueva de la Marniosa - 42 Streamway exploration.

JR CJ DP

We knew Phil would be upset, but we did it anyway. Some say the number 42 is special. Some say Dave is very special. With Al refusing to walk into open passage Dave thought this will f\*ck Phil off and said, "let's do the 42 streamway".

Upon entry to The District 9, the trio thought, this is not Alien Weaponry, then wandered to the rear to find a way on. Scooting through the choss on the right side of District 9 they found many survey stations, the previous team had been thorough. Back in District 9 there were circa 3 avens, 2 solid avens and a loose one. Chris headed up the loose slab and predicted certain glory. John and Dave joined him, and we scouted out the main pitch, a large water worn aven. Halfway up, we got scared and retreated. Back to the main objective, f\*cking over Phil and exploring the 42 streamway. (42 is a sh\*t name).

The trio wandered to the end of 42, expecting it to end. It continued through a few interesting side climbs, ending with a larger open chamber with a small bolt climb. We declared this the end of the cave, surveyed, and left.

#### Cueva del Agua - Certain Death

LB JP

As it was the first day of the exped and both of us had (unsurprisingly) not caved much in the past few months, heading all the way into Agua for a Death Race camp was not hugely appealing.

As all our kit was already packed up for transport down to Spain we had no trouble setting off pretty quickly, and after tackling the two years of overgrowth on the Agua path were at the entrance in less than an hour. We quickly changed into caving gear and set off underground, leaving our SRT kits as they were just extra weight. The entrance was incredibly low, and despite the presence of the now infamous inflatable flamingo we didn't find it necessary and were able to traverse around on the left wall, only having to hop over a narrow section of deep water.

The journey into the cave was uneventful, my memory from two years prior served me well and there were just enough reflectors left in to pick our way through to Clapham Junction, only getting minorly lost once or twice, from there a quick ascent of the ramp put us into unknown (for me) territory, and I began to follow the notes I had scratched on a piece of paper that morning.

The R.C.D streamway was an incredibly interesting bit of passage, only a metre or so wide but over 5m deep for the most part, and with incredibly slick sheer walls that made traversing up it a difficult mix of chimneying and squeezing above a sheer drop, eventually we reached the base of the waterfall that was mentioned in the description.

Not wanting to have too short a day we headed back down the streamway and continued up the ramp and through the continuation to Brian Baru's Place, so that Jethro could get a taste of what awaited us on the way to camp. At that point we could go no further without our SRT kits, so we headed out of the cave.

Upon exiting the cave we elected to have a look down the canal, as it was a rare opportunity with the canal bed being bone dry, however we had gotten no further than the second tunnel when we were greeted by two workers from the local hydroelectric company, who reprimanded us for trespassing in the canal, although their moods lightened somewhat when it became apparent that we were the source of the mysterious inflatable flamingo that had appeared.

As it turned out they were there to close the sluice gate that was currently keeping the water levels so low, and we watched glumly as the water rose and once again filled the canal, meaning future trips into the cave would require sailing across the pool to start. At that point we couldn't think of anything else to do, so we took our kit and set off back up the hill (a trek that gets no easier every year) to enjoy a late lunch at the bar while the sun was still out.

Sobra Valley - walk to BPC resurgence.

MH CV TD

All three enjoyed the stroll down the zigzags as far as where the ferns, bracken and brambles started to obstruct the path. Following GPS co-ordinates and directions provided led towards the right hand one of two prominent blocks of rock emerging from the greenery. An obvious rock arch was visible at the base of the rock, but access required traversing a couple of tens of metres of dense bracken with mixed brambles for added entertainment.

Combination of walking poles, full length trousers and caving gloves made it possible to establish that this arch was just a slight rock shelter, not the entrance to inviting black space. Traversing along the base of the cliff was enlivened by walking along the top of a drystone wall, which collapsed under the weight of an ageing caver, who nevertheless avoided landing in a 2m high patch of nettles. Nettles duly bashed down by walking poles, headtorch was required to inspect a two-foot wide, three-foot high opening in the rock which did lead to black space, just not enough space to get fully out of daylight.

Continued traverse out onto easier going of slope of small trees and long grass to make safe descent to lower slopes. Back up the path to find a small flowing resurgence stream on our left, south of the path.





**Picture: Assumed location of “BPC Resurgence” cave**

#### Fallen Bear

GS TS

Initial location and rigging trip. Took a little while to find due to inaccurate GPS coordinates. The new position has been recorded at 362467 4786599. The entrance was re-rigged and a trip to find the route to the bottom and then out proceeded. The reflectors were all in good order and no issues were encountered. The “lead” at the bottom in the stream was debatable person sized but at least 50% submerged in very cold water.

#### **7<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

#### Cueva del Nacimiento – Death Race 2000

CJ, DP, LB, JP

After a lazy start on Tuesday marked by drawn out efforts at packing and a final meal of ham/chorizo and eggs at the local bar, me (Leo), Jethro, Chris, and Dave set off down the hill to head in towards Death Race 2000 for either 2 or 3 nights depending on how things went.

Our plan was to tackle both the ongoing climb that Rob and George had left in "Here's what you could have won" as well as having a team take in caps to try and open the sandy dig at the end of Jurassic World. This unfortunately meant taking in two drills, although we had low hopes overall for the dig and therefore only took in one surveying kit (more on that later...)

The trip in was speedy but otherwise uneventful, and we stopped only to get water a few times, as well as to have a lunch of chorizo and cheese wraps at Consort Hall.

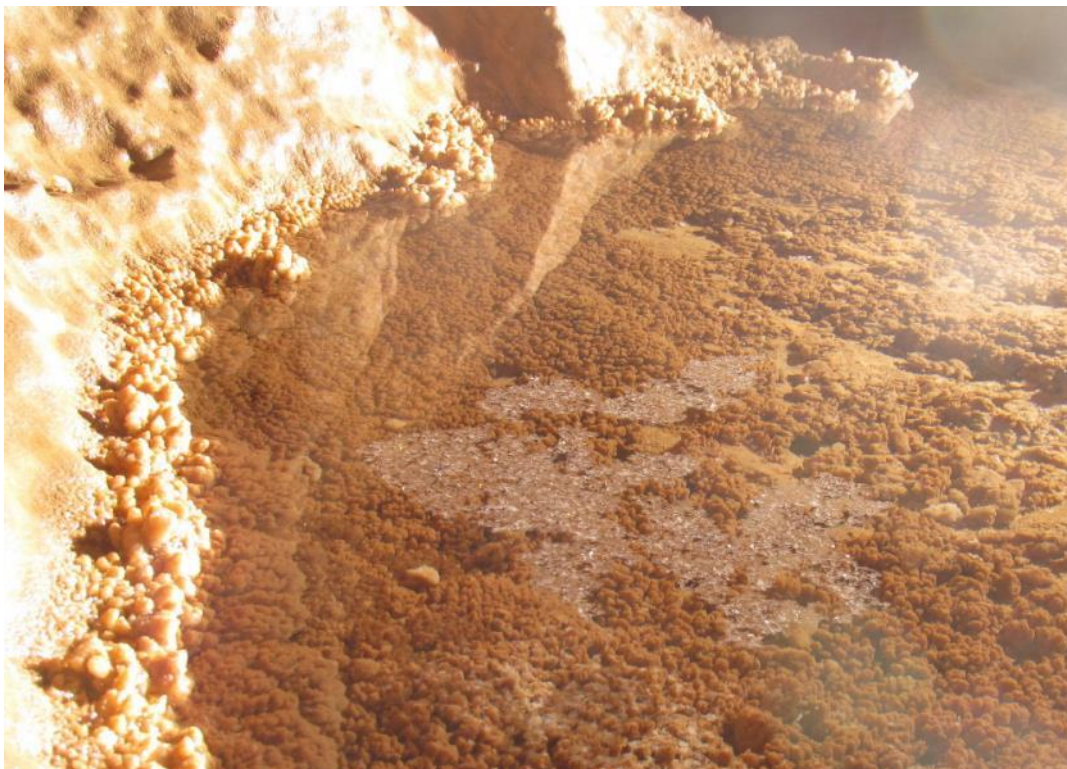
Arriving at camp it became apparent that the food situation was more dire than expected, and the previous team there (which included myself) had not left any water to cook with. Chris however remembered a way out of camp that took you close to the water source above the traverse and was able to grab about 3 litres from a small puddle he found, not ideal but enough to tide us over for the night. Some careful measuring of what was left in the food stocks meant we could survive for three nights, though that meant eating every ration pack left, including the ones that were several years out of date, as well as the single pack of unflavoured plain rice.

Chris was delighted to find his favourite camel slippers were covered in a wet slimy mould and his full size etriers were also hanging up on the wetting line – after spending several weeks looking for them.

#### Cowshead Cavern

PW, JR, CV, MH

Nice gentle trip to see no musk ox head, pleasant bits of stream passage between sections of higher-level passage, some growing baby calcite raft and a fun climb to get to a vantage point above the sump at presumed dive base.



***Picture: Calcite Raft, Cowshead Cavern (Martin Hoff)***

#### Minas de Mazarrasa

Following trip to Cowshead, took the car up to Caseton de Andara to show the others a bit of the higher Andara plateau.

#### Segura 2 – Pozo Castillo

Checked on condition of snow-plug and the 'way on' to Castillo proper. The snow plug had receded somewhat again, but in totally different pattern than previously. The '5m' pitch was exposed, but floor of pebbles could not be seen under snow.



Snow had receded high along the left wall, revealing some extension of the chamber, but also 2 boulders, one TV sized, one sofa sized, both held up by the remaining snow. The winch found a few years back has also slipped part way down the pitch and now lies at 45-degree angle. No progress to be made this year, will revisit but starting to look a lost cause!

GA42 / T153 (0360517 4785248 1905m)

Crescent shaped surface feature, blocked at N end, S end descends over timbers on delightfully unstable slope of loose rock, further descending to visible arch in the distance. Lovely cold sink, nice and refreshing on first patch where timber delays rocks succumbing to gravity.

RCA22 (0360430 4785161 1858m)

*From KAMI 1998 - Adit after a few metres forks, the right branch is blind. Following the left-hand path leads to precarious boulders on a wooden floor (care). Continuing leads to a P30 - not descended.*

Possibly the best surveyed and photographed mine-meets-cave site in the Eastern massif. Miners' drill hole remnants visible, plenty of moths and the apparently deliberately buried under rocks skeletal remnants of a rebecca. Wooden bridge not a tempting prospect to visit without fresh security provided by some bolts and a rope but that job wants doing to establish depth of pitch below.



**Picture: Wooden bridge / platform, RCA22 (Martin Hoff)**

GA40/T151 - 0360497 4785283 1888m (incorrectly marked as T154 on old LUSS map drawing)

*a snow plugged N to S natural rift 30m deep and inclined at 70 degrees. The rift becomes too narrow*

GA44 - 0360539 4785261 1915m

No entry in database, but obviously a KAMI marking from early exploration

GA43/T148 - 0360559 4785270 1901m

*A 17m pitch to a descent over boulders and 5m pitch. A short hand-line climb drops you to the head of a fine 23m rift pitch and shortly following 21m pitch split by a bridge of rock, but with no way on. A series of tight rift passages can be followed from the bottom of the 23m pitch, but all either choke with snow or become impassable- Kingswood 1979*

GA50 - 0360503 4785388 1844m.

No entry in database, but obviously a KAMI marking from early exploration

Walk up from Tresviso towards Tajadura

AG

A pleasant walk up the hill, found a few entrances one with a terraced slope about 20m long "TCOV1". The second entrance was "dog kennel cave" (TCOV2).

- TCOV1 – 0363639 4791029
- TCOV2 – 0362545 4791079 (dog kennel cave)

### 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Walk down valley above 42 streamway/HOMK

AG TD

- TCOV8 – 0360903 4789504 (3m leafy hole), not really worth looking at.
- TCOV3 – Approx. 0361157 4790102 (grid ref lost in GPS but track of my travels puts it in this vicinity) – shaft with two holes down into leafy floor where it looks like you could walk/crawl when at floor level, needs looking at.
- TCOV4 (Torca del Hoja) – 0361227 4790196 – drop into leafy hole, needs looking at
- TCOV5 (Torca Sorpresa) – 0361159 4790133 – hole in the side of the hill looks like it goes down at least 2m but may have a continuation round the corner.
- TCOV6 (High for Signal Hole) – 0360975 4789995 – Big drop into hole right at the top of the knoll, needs looking at.
- TCOV7 – closest grid reference following Toby and Al's meeting 40m from Silvestre – Toby's hole is 40m SE of Grid ref on top of crag. 0360790 4789678

Cueva del Agua – Howling Hole

PW JR CV

This was the second visit to Agua for John and me, having gone as far as The Road to Wigan Pier. With Phil showing us the way, we made speedy progress past Clapham Junction, up the Ramp and the Comedy Climbs, down the pitch, through Boulder Hall and on past the Hole in the Wall. What an incredible part of the cave!

The plan was to use the pump Phil had made to lower the water level enough in Howling Hole to be able to see further, and even pass through to the area beyond, if possible. Claire went into the alcove to have a closer look at Howling Hole. There was indeed a massive draft howling through it, but there was also a lot of water in the pool. The pump was drill-powered and worked exactly as intended after some initial tweaking and the water started to pour out.

Phil, John and I spent just over 1 hour rotating roles and ensuring the pump continued to function. However, at the end of this time there was only a barely discernible difference in water depth in the pool. A bigger pump, possibly also setting up a syphon, is needed as there is a lot of water to remove before anyone will be able to fit through here.

Phil tried capping the outer edges of the hole just after we finished pumping, but the lack of a proper hammer made this impossible and the caps failed to detonate.

On the way out we talked about potential projects for the rest of the week and Phil mentioned a couple of potential leads in Orangeade Arcade. With this in mind, we left the drill at Orangeade Arcade, so John and I could return later. A very worthwhile trip - and no-one fell off the flamingo.

***Warning: firing pin is left in situ, with 2 caps not fired, immediately by the entrance into the Howling Hole. Next trip must take PW's firing pin setup and a larger hammer!***

The battery power pump comprised:

- Wolfcraft 2202000 1,300l/h pump
- 5m ½" reinforced tubing
- 2x jubilee clip
- Small plank of wood
- SDS drill adaptor

Bigger pump available, Wolfcraft 2207000 3,000l/h

### Cueva de la Marniosa

DC HJ

The plan was to survey from the bottom for the 22m pitch (following on from AI and Howard two days earlier). We did a couple of legs and then got distracted by a slippery upward slope (not completed). Returning to the main route, Derek took a different climb down (avoiding the arrow made from three stall)- although more pleasant as a climb down, he didn't want to reverse it.

After reconnecting, we got a couple more legs until we reached a three-way junction, we took a route upwards and to the left and found an aven (first unsurveyed passage) that went nowhere. We went back a couple of stations and tried again, this time we found another aven that became a climb past a large false floor (not attempted) that looks to have passage leading away from above it. We

backed away a few stations and followed the main route a bit more. At which point I asked Howard what's under that alcove.

Howard disappeared for 10 minutes, so we then surveyed along a tube 1m with many helictites and a false floor for 50 m until it dropped down into a sand choked tube. We surveyed back along the middle route (the water route?) and then we surveyed back along another route (the route with shiny stickers). Having sorted this choice of routes, we continued another station to another choice of routes (just two this time) we took one routes to Smoker's corner. What's this over here was asked, so we followed a side passage (a dotted line on the survey) to find a short climb up with a loose false floor that turned back on itself and probably appears 5 m above where we entered. On the way back we did the other route down the two ways to find a large 'P' opposite the 'P' was an aven 16m upwards unclimbed, to be continued...

#### Cueva del Nacimiento – Death Race 2000

CJ, DP, LB, JP

The next morning after a breakfast of porridge, crystalized honey, and cherry flavoured caffeine rehydration tablets Chris and myself set off down the pitches towards Pina Colada, while Jethro and Dave headed up the M6 Toll traverse towards the sandy dig, armed with caps, the drill, and various tools for digging, including the adorable micro-crowbar that Glen had provided us with.

Chris and I steadily made our way down the sharp knife-like passage towards the pitches to Pina Colada, cursing our large bags and the at times terrifyingly brittle passageway, which requires one to sometimes tiptoe across glass-thin layers of rock above drops of several metres or more. The heavy winter rains appeared to have done little to most of the rope on the pitches down, although one unfortunate wear point meant that we had to sacrifice one of our two static ropes to replace the in-situ one (although we were able to salvage 13m of it to use later)

We had a lunch of Serbian-fried mackerel, which thoroughly impressed Chris, and then headed into the canal before Pina Colada, and around the "newly" rigged traverse up into "Here's What You Could Have Won", the impressive chamber that Rob and George had made it to three years prior.

Chris took point on the bolt climbing, after I posed some vague excuse about lower efficiency, having a reach about a foot shorter than his, and within just over an hour he was at the top of the impressive flowstone formation, 30m higher than where we started. He rigged up the static rope he had bought with him, and I prussiked up to join him, where we swapped over, and I traversed around the top of the formation to the other side of the chamber.

I set up a perfectly fine traverse (NB calling b\*llsh\*t on the 'perfectly fine traverse') so that Chris could join me, and then headed around a large column and bolt climbed up the other side, with Chris belaying through a small hole in the calcite, while precariously balanced on top of a small stalagmite.

With the remaining rope we had I was just able to reach a small chamber on top of the flowstone ramp, and we began surveying back towards the main chamber floor, annoyed that our lack of rope meant we could not continue our ascent, as a potential lead lay just 3-4m higher than where we had gotten to. We elected to leave the bolt climbing kit there, expecting to return the next day to finish it off before we made our way back to camp.

We arrived at camp at about 10:30pm, to find it suspiciously empty, as we'd expected Dave and Jethro to be long back. After a meal of ration packs, vegetable soup mixed with ramen noodles and hot orange rehydration mix Chris set an alarm for their callout of 1am before we went to bed, fully expecting to have to get up in two hours and go look for them. Thankfully shortly before midnight we heard voices from the traverse, and only a few minutes later the digging team appeared, making their way around the chamber towards us.

Upon their arrival it became apparent why they had been so late, as they had dug for a solid 8 1/2 hours, and after shifting a great many enormous rocks had managed to break through to the other side, into a long walking passage similar in profile to the rest of Jurassic World. We all went to bed excited to explore and survey the new passage the next day.

#### Cueva de la Marniosa - 42 Series

BC, GS, TS

Aiming to continue the exploration of 42 series from the day before the team made it eventually to the last survey station from CJ, DP and JP. Their progress was halted by a short climb which required bolting. The pitch was largely made up from soft black sedimentary layers between limestone layers which appeared to offer ideally shaped hand and foot holds that sadly turned out to lack any strength.

The pitched was bolt climbed using the marginal limestone facets between the black layers and eventually rigged with 15m of rope. BC had a brief reccy of the passage beyond the pitch and reported a continuation of at least 150m which included an old fossil chamber, a sandy crawl which had a significant draft and what looked like a short duck to more passage beyond.

At this point we ran out of time and left the excessively heavy aiding kit and drill on a sandy ledge in the pool chamber for continuing the following day.

### **9<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

#### Cueva del Nacimiento – Death Race 2000

CJ, DP, LB, JP

The third day of camp and we all made our way to the new passage, and Dave and I headed onwards to rig our way through, while Jethro and Chris surveyed from the dig. We managed to make about 250m of easy-going passage before being halted by a tiny calcite choke where the strong draft was coming from. Our efforts with a hammer didn't yield much result, so disappointed, we decided to head back, with myself and Dave exploring a couple more leads on the way out, while Jethro and

Chris high-tailed it to camp and then to Pina Colada to finish off the climb and bring the kit back to exit with the next day.

At Pina Colada Jethro and I (Chris) managed to climb the last 3-4m that we couldn't on Wednesday. A simple bolt traverse leads to a short free climb of 4m then into interesting phreatic ramp of 30-40m. This began to get steeper and without kit or full surveying gear we left it open for the next team. Slight draught present. With two bolts & hangers left I wanted to back up the 2 one bolt wonders on the way down to Pina Colada whilst JP brewed up a Sardine treat. On reaching Pina Colada, which was flat as a mill pond on the way in, it was a frothy mess, and the small inlet was deafeningly loud. I beat a quick retreat to JP, wolfed down some flaming sardines and had a micro discussion about staying in 'Here's what you could have won' where it was dry, but there was no food or sleeping bag. 30seconds later a unanimous vote to 'f\*ck off' saw us high tailing it back to camp. The pitches were 'interesting' although fortunately they were also bolted in flood conditions, otherwise we wouldn't have had a chance. Arrived back at camp at midnight after a 14-hour trip – I wonder if anyone will ever push both ends of the cave in one trip again...

*NB: Steve Jones (one of the team who climbed the Satans/Beasts ramps in the 80's) visited Tresviso to catch up with Howard. He asked Phil if anyone ever found a bolting bag which he thought had been left at the top. Yes, and the hammer he left was in use at the back end of Agua when he asked!*

#### Cueva de la Marniosa – 42 Series

BC GS TS

Following on from the previous days rigging the pitch was quickly climbed and surveying of the new passage commenced. The passage varied in significantly in character from clean washed immature stream passage and calcited stream passage to chert, quartz, and low sandy crawls.

The passage meandered and the overall sense of direction was hard to gauge. After just over 300m of passage had been successfully surveyed a promising ramp was located on the righthand side of the passage. A quick c.18m climb of the thin calcite crust and sand/mud below reached a dog leg which appeared to continue up another 15-20m, this would require a rope for a safe descent.

At this point or time ran out and we decided to continue the following day.

#### Minas de Los Ingleses

JR, CV, MH

#### **Revised - 30T 0365799 4790965**

Follow the Urdon path out of Tresviso and go down the first zigzags. On reaching the water trough, continue on the path for approximately 260m, just beyond an obvious tunnel on the left of the path, as far as the second pylon and then bear up and left to obvious areas of exposed reddish gravel. A mined tunnel forks immediately inside the entrance, the right arm leading past some collapsed cheese racks to emerge through a small arch into daylight where a higher entrance intersects. A further undescended drop is to the left at this point. The left-hand side of the pillar ahead is easier than the green mossy climb alternative, both joining to emerge on the surface

a short distance upslope and East of the mined tunnel. The left arm of the fork immediately drops into a metre-plus wide rifty pitch on the right-hand side, with a window into a potential parallel shaft a few metres down. Enjoy the through-bolts placed 09/09/2021 into rock pre-stressed by miners' shot holes, several of which are evident at the pitch-head.

The floor is almost entirely of loose rock with a mix of animal bones, sloping ahead and with an enlargement to the right. A short climb down into a rift can be protected by a handline over a mobile chockstone, the rift continuing and requiring further handline off a convenient stal. The rift passage enlarges and a short scabble up and to the left emerges on a ledge overlooking the next pitch. At your left shoulder is the beautifully etched historic graffiti from 1882. This next pitch is rigged by one natural round the large blue stal above and behind you and a second over a small, exposed rock bridge overhead. This area feels more mud than rock and is suitably chocolatey in appearance. A natural thread where the wall to the right (looking down the pitch) bulges out enables a deviation to reduce though not eliminate the rub point. This rope lands in a pleasant chamber with a nice water feature to your left but the way on is using the bolt in the wall ahead to protect your descent of the rottenstone type slope down to your right.

A bolt into calcite protects a suitably grabby slot before the rope descends to a wide Y-hang, dropping to a balcony ledge with a striking cluster of helictites on the right wall at hip height and with a further 10m drop to a ledge which overlooks a rift a few metres deep and with the wall opposite appearing climbable and to be traversed across to the right according to previous info. To be continued...

#### Valdediezma Shafts (Toby's Shaft)

PW, TD, DJC, AG

Several promising sites were identified on the surface, above the area of Alien Weaponry. A relatively quick walk through the undergrowth and up the side of the Valdelafuente saw us at 'Toby's Shaft'. It looked promising, a large 5m diameter open shaft with a possible black space leading off to one side. PW rigged down gully to steep mud / leaf floor. Using the rope as a handline down a further 5m to a lip over a small chamber. 2m climb / pitch down to choked floor. No way on. Exited to downpour and back to Tresviso.





*Picture: TCOV7 entrance (Phil Walker)*

**10 September 2021**

Cueva del Nacimiento – Death Race 2000

CJ, DP, LB, JP

The final day began with some frantic packing and a brief inventory of the remaining camp supplies (4 packets of instant noodles being about the extent of the food...) before we all set off out of the cave. We quickly separated out into distinct speeds, with Dave and Chris storming off ahead while Jethro and myself brought up the rear.

Once again, the trip out was uneventful, although we all regrouped at the streamway near the entrance, as the rains had raised the water level quite significantly and the traverse line required some extensive rerigging, sacrificing both a sling of mine and Chris' haul cord. Despite our pleas nobody had left any beer for us in the entrance, though it was thankfully (relatively) cool and overcast, so the walk back up the hill was less painful than usual.

Back at the hostel at about 4:30 for beers and Picos cheesy chips :)

In Summary:

**Jurassic World - "Barney and Friends"** 270m surveyed (*the name comes from both the dinosaur theme of the previous passage and the prominence of a large, purple-tinted stalactite in the middle of the passage, which Dave dubbed Barney the Dinosaur*). Ongoing lead, small calcite choke with a strong draught, may need some persuasion.



**Pina Colada - "The Bastards Ramp"** 82m surveyed, 73m vertical climbing (*the name comes from Phil's referral to Chris & Dave as "The b\*stards" upon learning that they had stolen the 42 streamway lead in Marniosa before he had arrived*). Ongoing lead, slight draught present, mix of free and easy bolt climbing for 20m or so.

***No tipex in survey gear (though possibly some nail varnish – LB), LEFT HAND BOLT on the PENULTIMATE Y-Hang is the last survey point***

***Camp – No food left and very little kit. Plenty of wet wipes. 30m dynamic rope.***

Cueva de la Marniosa – Photography trip

PW, HJ

The plan was to bolt some climbs at Smoker's Corner but the AI lurgy struck us both, so we voted for an easier outing and decided to photograph the well decorated extension off Morning Chamber found by AG and HJ a few days ago. The entrance to the extension is up a 5m calcite climb on the bottom RHS of morning chamber which opens out into walking passage with a profusion of helictites, and other magnificent calcite formations. DC, CV and JR joined us for a while, hence some of the photos include JR's yellow wellies. 150 photos were taken including several in morning chamber on the way out.

Shaft-Bashing Above and West of Marniosa Entrance

MH, AG

Easy walk up the ongoing concrete path into the bracken, bearing left up the green slope between big white rock lumps took us up a gully to gain an area of exposed washed limestone between trees. Top of the gully at 0361258 4790317. By this point it had become apparent that a crucial piece of bolting equipment was not available to us today and that we would be enjoying the versatility of rigging off naturals.

Two parallel shafts comprise TCOV4 - "Torca de las Hojas". The first site entered dropped only a short distance into a choked rift passage. The second, adjacent, landed on a bigger floor with complete cover of leaf litter (both at 0361227 4790196). A small salamander disappeared into the leaf litter at the E end. The floor was approximately 3m lower at the W end and disappeared into descending cracks but the volume of leaf litter to be removed would be prohibitive, but could be possible for determined diggers, promising levels of cool air could be found at leaf litter level.

We decamped a bit over 100m to find the third site TCOV3 (0361157 4790102), another small slot between two walls a little over a foot apart. Again, two naturals served to allow controlled descent to a mud floor, from where it became apparent that no more than a handline was necessary. After exiting to swap SRT kit for hammer, a few chunks were removed from the edge of the wall beneath the entrance climb and this combined with a brief excavation of the floor enabled arm, shoulder, and head to fit through the gap and see ongoing passage of dimensions requiring capping to make it human-navigable. The other end of the rift was then attacked, with enough rock removed at the wider point to establish that there would be lots more rock to remove to get anywhere with this site.

A stroll up and down the area revealed no further sites of interest and though there may be something we missed up there, there's nothing the scale of Alum Pot hiding in that part of the woods. We gradually made our way back down to the area just East of our approach gully and a radio call was made to secure transport back into Tresviso. Rounding a corner on the path, a fourth site TCOV9 (0361266 4790317) was encountered and explored to its full extent, providing more horizontal development than any other site visited today. Rounding the next corner in the path revealed an altogether more substantial site, to which the previous is probably a minor contributing inlet. A quick step down the first climb landed on a ledge. A further step forwards dropped down to the lip of what looked from above like 10m of clean washed pitch with a clean, broken limestone floor in a modest sized chamber. Also, to be continued...

### Marniosa survey

CV JR DC

We hitched a lift down to Marniosa with Phil. After realized that we had both planning to take photographs of the new Eleveses passage, Derek re-planned and agreed to just do the survey part of the trip. Phil and Howard went first, then we followed. We climbed into Eleveses chamber and realized and got to a junction. After heading down the wrong route (tight squeeze- Howard wouldn't go this way) we backed out a little and went the correct way. Having reached the chamber, we were shouted at "Stop, turn your lights out"- we're in the right place then! After a bit of a look about we were told to b\*gger off by the guy behind the camera.

Onward we went to the two avens Howard wants John to climb and then to the end of the previous survey. John wanted to learn to operate the tablet/phone so after setting up a first station he was put in charge of the phone. Along the way we noticed and recorded a side passage (that probably isn't an oxbow) before taking a break at the roped climb. We tipex'd a '60' station marker onto the wall. After a short (and cold break) we continued up the climb and surveyed the squalid bit. On regaining 'nice' passage we finished the day's work and left an annotated paper to mark our progress.



*Picture: Elevenses, Cueva de la Marniosa (Phil Walker)*

On leaving we paused in Morning Chamber and looked above the climb to Elevenses: there seems to be a passage leading off about 10m off the floor. It'll be interesting to get there.

On exiting we tried texting for the agreed lift back. Unfortunately, there was no phone signal until high up. On walking along the road Caesar stopped in his van and asked if he could take our bags. We were then three people, two dressed in under suits and John 'Normal' Roe in hiking clothes walking along the road.

### **11<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

Torca de la Grenata (TCOV9 0361266 4790317)

MH, AG

Excellent service by HJJ Taxis of Tresviso saw two cavers plodding down the Marniosa track a little after 10.30, to return to the previous day's end of day discovery. Returned to the right place without difficulty, kitted up and started figuring out how to make a mess of bolting a descending tube with one mossy wall and one more cracked wall. Big natural off a rock on the surface, one bolt in the wall and adequate protection to visually inspect the previously spotted shaft from a position of greater safety. The first bolt of what would be a Y hang finished off the first short rope and the second short rope was duly provided to demonstrate that reaching the floor was not going to happen without using the big rope.

Exit for the big rope, adding a second bolt closer to the surface for greater protection while ascending the gully of loose rock, back down to complete the Y hang and jettison some of the loose ammunition from the ledge before it had a rope hanging

below it. Beautiful shaft in mostly grey-white limestone walls, one possible parallel shaft to the side for checking later and so on to a floor strewn with blackened former fenceposts, some wire fencing loops and assorted bones. Ahead the passage flared into a modest chamber, narrowing into a rift passage in the middle of the further wall. Turning round to tell the now descending AG what I'd found, a regular round shape caught my eye. A key ring? Closer inspection revealed a less commonly experienced sight, the round shape was the pin pulling ring of a flipping hand grenade (actual words not reported).

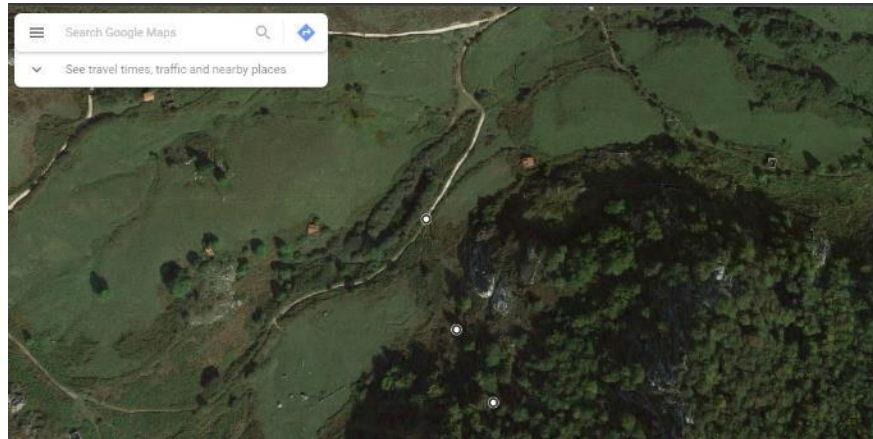
Reasoning that an explosive device that had not gone bang in all the decades it had lain there probably wasn't going to be set off by idiot cavers if they left it alone, we examined the ongoing passage across a section of false floor to a short drop which didn't quite look free climbable from above. AG set to bolting while MH left the cave to retrieve photo kit. Grenade duly photographed, we returned to drop the short metres into the small chamber and find it blind for the purposes of human-sized cavers. A tiny inlet ran across the right-hand side of the chamber, disappearing into a similarly small gap.

Free climbing the short pitch proved simple enough for the longer-legged of the party. A two natural Y-hang enabled AG to slip down into the bigger space beneath the false floor and inspect another small chamber off to one side through a near-squeeze and MH followed. Some nice little bits of stal in the roof, up a step to look into further ongoing but too small rift.

AG went up to the head of the main hang, to add another bolt to make the Y hang a bit more amenable to traffic, MH followed and then descended again, this time a matter of half a dozen metres to swing into the side passage of no parallel shaft, which required another bolt to gain further horizontal distance in order to confirm that rocks chucked down the furthest gap nevertheless arrived at the same shared floor as before.

The disto revealed the main hang to be 18m deep, rigging required a 40m rope and 5 hangers and maillons, blast-proof underwear optional.

*Approach: Head as for Marniosa, till you cross over the Sobra river, keep on the concrete track ignoring the fields on the left which would normally be used to access Marniosa. From the end of the concrete (0361213, 4790478), head in a SSE direction going anticlockwise around the western side of the lump of Limestone which the Marniosa entrance goes into. Heading uphill on a muddy, bramble slope through trees (towards 0361258, 4790317) you soon will find the entrance (0361266, 4790317) on the left as the lump of limestone creates a wall to your left.*



*Entrance is a Man sized entrance, not to be confused with the hole 5m to the right which is a crawling sized entrance.*

*Description: Once through the portal of the man sized entrance, A short slope down, traverse line/abseil useful gains the pitch. Landing in a chamber, downslope a hand grenade was found in the centre of the passage 2m from either wall. A survey of the cave was not conducted after this point to reduce time shared in the Presence of the Grenade.*

*Beyond the Grenade chamber, a 1m wide crawling passage continues to a short 5m pitch down into a lower level which can be rigged off naturals. In the lower level, A crawl through into a passage off to the right gains a chamber with an inlet in the right hand side, thought to connect back to the Grenade Chamber.*

*Continuing over the top of the hole down to lower level, the passage continues. Some largely pointless bolts (by his own admission) were placed here by AG, but a freeclimb/abseil gets you to the bottom of the 2m drop. Chamber here is approx. 2m wide and 3m long with an outlet at one end, not of human proportions.*

#### Cueva de la Marniosa – 42 Series

BC, GS, TS

After a break for a day the team returned to continue surveying the new passage. Progress continued from the base of the ramp partially climbed 2 days previously.

The streamway from this point upstream was much lower and wider with a cobbled floor which the streamway sank below and re-emerged frequently. There were a few sections where false floors had formed from washed out calcited sections. Some had to be crawled under, some could be passed to the side, one larger section was named the Gazebo due to the large umbrella that had formed.

Progress was a little harder this day as several sections of the streamway whilst being 3-4m wide were less than ½m high and keeping dry was as challenging as finding suitable survey stations.

A section was reached where the air temperature dropped noticeably and a large calcited ramp emerged to the left of the passage. This looked quite reasonable to climb up but was also likely to need some rope for the return descent.

Past this passage the streamway split. To the left, a smaller flow emerged from a well decorated calcited passage whilst most of the flow emerged from below a short duck to the right. The water in the duck was partially drained by some tactical excavation and while this took effect the passage to the left was explored.

After carefully crawling under the false floor / umbrella which gated the passage the passage was surveyed up to a small climb over a small pool. This needed careful negotiation as a 2-2½m straw hung at the edge of the climb. After a sort while more the passage meandered to a small loop which contained a clean washed limestone aven which also had bands of the soft black sedimentary layer. This would be another good prospect to climb with the caveat that the black layers would not make a straight-line bolt climb possible.

At this point the loop in the meander was closed on the survey and a significant error was noted. At this point the accuracy of the disto was questioned and our time had run out. We decided to return the following day with a different disto.

On the way-out BC passed the drained duck and gained some further passage which resulted in a boulder choke which appeared too tight to pass.

#### Duje Valley Walk

CV, DJC, JR

We needed an easier day (as we were suffering from Al's lurgie). We drove to Sotres with intension of disproving the theory that there were no pizzas there. We arrived a little early for Pizza, so wandered about the village and take a coffee/coke. Having waited until lunch time we were able to order pizza, ham/cheese & a blue cheese pizza. Between the three of us we were unable to finish eating. We then drove to the Unquera junction to find no parking signs and a full car park. We drove back to Sotres and started walking from there.

The track was quite good and could have taken a road car. We got as far as Vegas del Toro o de Sotres), noted most of the buildings had no windows (are they just for hay storage?), we continued up the track a little, passing a herd of tame sheep, before taking a break. We returned, practiced our up-hill tactics by following the road up to Sotres.

#### Pizzas in Sotres

CJ, DP, LB

Suffering a severe case of 'too much caving' we decided to head to Sotres for a Pizza and down to Poncebos for a refreshing dip in the Rio Cares. The pizzas were both excellent and humongous. The Rio Duje provided a quick dipping spot just below the hairpin out of Tielve. After our dip we decided we hadn't done too much caving and did some mild prospecting in the valley below Tielve. Several entrances were discovered to be Goat Palaces, including one with some impressive wooden cages

which was maybe the Goat Prison. In a truly useless fashion, no information was recoded about these caves, although Dave did take a lot of photos of Leo instead.

### **12<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

#### Cueva de la Marniosa – Alien Weaponry

MF, GS

No log written

#### Cueva de la Marniosa – Survey

HJ, AG

AG and HJ entered Marniosa with the intention of completing the survey from where DC finished 2 days ago and to the bottom of Papoose pitch.

An efficient trip to DC last survey station, where we started our survey. The tools were troublesome at first and so the first 3 stations had to be repeated. A hole down in the floor on the RHS of the main passage just before the gour pools was noted. We got to Papoose pitch and AG descended and tied it into the previous survey station in the streamway

On the way out HJ descended the hole in the floor some 20m. It appears to be where the water flows into the streamway below at times of flood.

#### Cueva de la Marniosa – The Predator

DP, CJ, LB

After a "rest day" following on from our four-day camp in Death Race 2000, myself, Chris Jones, and Dave Powlesland set off to Marniosa, aiming to hit one of the many leads off the relatively new Alien Weaponry chamber. Our main goal was to finish off an aid climb above Corona Climb in the area known as District 9, which had previously been visited by Chris and Dave at the start of the exped, where they decided that they lacked the kit needed to properly climb it.

The trip in was relatively uneventful, thankfully Glen was headed in the same direction, and although we couldn't catch a lift, we still managed to shove the bulk of our kit into the Land Rover, to be driven down the track to the cave for us. To escape the heat of the midday sun we got changed in the entrance chamber, before heading further into the cave and down to the streamway. Shortly into the trip I realized that the top bobbin of my stop had worn to the point of the bolt threads being visible, so I became a lot more tentative on the pitches, though thankfully got to the bottom without anything breaking on me.

Upon reaching Alien Weaponry we encountered Glen and Martin on a photography trip, we said our hellos and quickly stopped to enjoy a light lunch of bread, jam, cheese, and leftover pizza, before heading up Corona Climb to the start of the unclimbed ramp.

As I was starting to get cold, I elected to lead the climb. Unfortunately, we didn't have a dynamic rope, although from the ground the climb looked easy enough, so I doubted there'd be much chance I'd fall. I made my way up the pitch with relative ease, only having to put in one bolt on the way, before I was joined at the top by Dave and Chris.

This is where things start to get spicy.

At this point we quickly realized that the passage continued in a sharply ascending slope, and therefore we would need to continue climbing, despite our now dwindling gear. I therefore went back on belay and began the next section, a near vertical climb of about 7m to a ledge on the right.

The rock I was climbing was banded by large areas of pale beige rock, which sharply jutted from the wall and seemed at first glance to make excellent hand and footholds. Unfortunately, this was not the case, as even the gentlest touch caused the banding to shatter, scaring me and showering Dave and Chris with rocks from above. I later learned that it was at this point where Dave grabbed a spare tackle sack and began employing it as a sort of riot shield, attempting to use it to protect Chris, who was himself desperately trying to focus on belaying me.

I managed to place a single bolt in a good bit of rock before continuing through a short overhanging section, which I just managed to avoid getting pumped out on. I made my way up to the ledge and placed two further bolts for Dave and Chris to prussik up on. The ledge was tiny and made up of tipping boulder, my offer of gardening was met with cries of 'NO' from the two below – their riot shield failing. Meeting me at the ledge we gingerly gardened our little haven, diminishing its size from a comfortable position for 2 people to 1 in the process.

Having had enough of the boulder showers Dave tackled the next section, Chris still belaying, and traversed around onto a huge slope of popcorn like formations, which shattered while he climbed on them, raining down on myself and Chris, unable to move out of the way “don't look up” became the mantra. We'd left the riot shield below.

After what seemed like ages, Dave finally managed to find a suitable bit of rock to put a belay on, and in turn we traversed around to join him, past two deviations which I was certain were going to fail, as they were around stalactites no thicker than my thumb. Finally in walking passage we set off, staying close together as the passage was still steeply sloping and covered with boulders with a strong affinity for the floor, now 60m below us. Fortunately, the walking passage soon ended, and we could settle comfortably into the now well practiced mode of 'don't move'.

We were now at the base of a vertical shaft, filled with immense boulders, smaller boulders, falling boulders, water and, rather unfortunately, a way on. Dave was quick to take lead, adamant it was the safest place to be. Chris found a very small dry, safe alcove and hid there. I belayed in the spray of pebbles and water, delightful. After 10m Dave reached as far as he could go, and not wishing to play Jenga with the stacked boulders we declared it finished. Chris headed up to survey and I hid in the dry, safe alcove which, for some reason now smelled like wee....

Chris and I surveyed out whilst Dave descended and re-rigged the rope away from the worst parts, reconvening in District 9 a long time after we began. Well, that had



been fun.

At the bottom of Papoose Pitch, Chris came up with a plan to rid himself of the surplus rope and maillons. We headed over to the far side of the chamber and he climbed up a further pile of loose boulders, seemingly immune to gravity. Two passages lead off from here, much more like the entrance series than the streamway, it was late, these were to be left for the next team. Chris showered down a series of expletives when he realised Dave had left with his pantin! Reconvening in the entrance chamber we headed out, followed back to the car by an eerie heard of horses.

#### Cueva de la Marniosa – 42 Series

BC, TS, JP

With a tested replacement disto, we returned to the clean washed aven where the loop error had been discovered the previous day. The loop was resurveyed with an acceptable error and the disto deemed accurate.

We first pushed the remains of the calcited passage to its conclusion where it closed, too tight to pass. Several potential inlets and holes in the ceiling were explored, all were too tight.

We then returned to duck drained the previous day. We all passed the duck and surveyed into the bolder choke. With a little more conviction than the previous day BC managed to pass a couple of squeezes, followed by TS & JP with some ease.

The far end of the bolder choke ended in a chamber which showed signs of water showering in from many locations in the ceiling and the streamway was lost in the floor somewhere. We deemed this the end of the practical extension and returned to climb the ramps.

TS climbed  $\frac{1}{2}$  way up one side of the large ramp before BC fetched the rope so he could continue to the top where it closed. JP climbed the other side to another inlet which also closed.

We then returned to the first ramp we'd found with the dog leg. We attempted to place a bolt  $\frac{1}{2}$  way up however the drill seemed to have a flat battery. Returning with a second battery the drill seemed as slow. TS then drilled the slowest bolt hole ever before placing the bolt and BC belayed JP up the climb. This ramp ended in a small hole some 8m off the top of the ramp which would have needed more determination to climb.

On returning to the streamway we discovered the drill had an 'utterly cr\*p' setting which it had flipped on to, although why anything would be made with a cr\*p setting was beyond us.

We then continued to survey out, replacing the questionable survey bearings from the previous 2 days.

Cueva del Nacimiento – Premier Chamber

DJC, JR, CV

We made it across the lake in the flamingo without incident. At the top of the ramps, I quizzed John and Claire about the direction of the water (towards Boulder Hall- given away by the sand at the top of the ramp down). At the Orangeade Arcade turning we went up the slope and down the far side.

We continued along the passage, with Derek pointing out the various known side passages. We continued up the passage until Premier chamber gets smaller. From nice wide passage (8m) it narrowed to just 2m. We then came to a junction with lots of orange calcite. There were three ways on. We first chose to go down (on orange calcite) until we came to a low pretty chamber that we would have to destroy to pass. We started to survey out with Claire learning about using the tablet/phone. At the junction we continued upwards (still on the orange calcite) until the top of the passage. The top of the passage was a perched pool about 1 m diameter surface, no way on. We returned to the junction where Claire investigated the low archway and after removing her SRT kit she was able to pass for about 10 m. We continued surveying out, passing one lead that we said we would come back to. At Premier chamber we had a bit of an explore and continued. There was a passage off to the left (going outwards) that we surveyed into. It split into two, the right returned to the main passage, the left was a low crawl that turned into stooping passage (for Claire). We decided to leave this as an open lead and continue outwards to join with Mark's survey limit. After some long legs (~30m) we managed to get to the 2012 survey limit. Yea.

We continued out with a pause to look down the drop that Derek fell in 2012. We used the 30m rope on it and came to a 10m+ calcite drop that needed more rope. Oh well, let's head out and bring more rope another day. *Greasy slope with 30m line used off natural anchors. Estimate a further 20m of relatively easy slope but wanted a hand line for ascent so turned around at end of my 30. Passage had evidence of having been descended previously.*

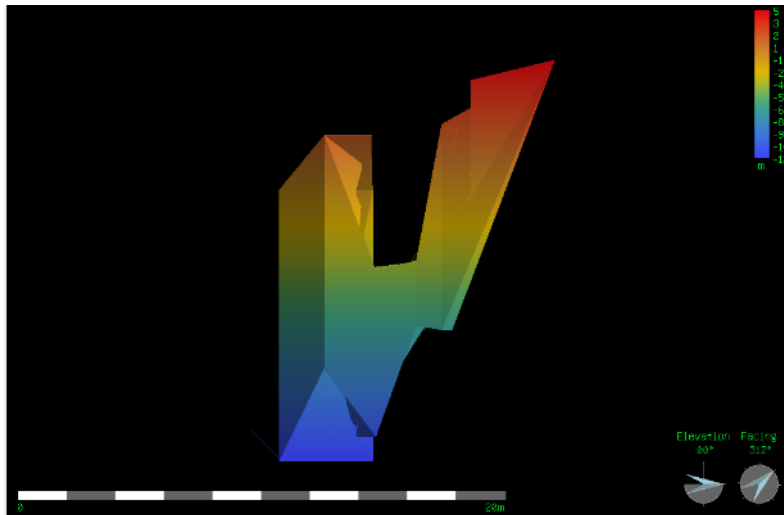
**13<sup>th</sup> September 2021**Cueva de la Marniosa – Bolt Climbs, Smokers Corner

HJ, PW

An early start saw us at the entrance at 10.00 a.m., not raring to go as both still suffering from Al's lurgy! 30 minutes later were at the bottom of the first of the avens in Smoker's Corner.

Phil led the climb, partly free, but mostly on retrievable bolts. HJJ belayed on the ground at first and latterly on a hanging belay. Some 20m up it pinched out, no way on. Phil surveyed back down to ground level. We transferred all the kit to the bottom of the next climb 100m further along the passage.

An efficient exit saw us back at the entrance at 15.30 with much coughing and spluttering on the 20m pitch.



*Picture: Smoker's Aven No 1 (Phil Walker)*



*Picture: Smoker's Aven No1 (Phil Walker)*

### Rio Chico

We walked down to Agua (this was the first time GS had visited Agua). At Agua we said Hola to two people who had just walked up the valley and were eating lunch. We jumped over the gate on the bridge as if we owned the place leaving the two walkers somewhat bemused at these foreigners who just ignore no entry signs. At Agua, Derek took some measurements of weir dimensions for later use. We then

DJC, GS

put on our wellington boots and squeezed through the fence and climbed down into the canal- almost exactly boot depth.

Once in the canal we looked at the gate and realized that it wasn't locked (doh!). We started the long walk to Chico. Partway down the canal we came across a gate in the canal. It closed downwards to the surface of the water. There were stemples in the wall so we could climb around this obstacle. Continuing we could climb out of the water for some of the way before re-immersion for the final part of the journey. On approach we could hear a roaring sound that was the Chico water pouring into the canal. The walk upstream was slower as it was against the flow. Having reached Agua, we both needed a break and to warm our toes.

#### Valdediezma surface work

AG, CV, JR

- TCOV10 – 0361617 4790153 (1170m elevation) – 3m deep x 0.5widex 5m long cleft
- TCOV11 – 0361791 4790106 (1225m elevation) – “lots of interesting features”
- TCOV12 – 0361827 4790061 (1230m elevation) – cleft inside of shake hole
- TCOV13 – 0361860 4790089 (1203m elevation) – 3 holes with cold air coming out of them
- TCOV14 – 0361844 4790099 (1223m elevation) – “Torca de los Gales” Pot of the Welsh (T47?) = 5 second drop pot 7m wide and 5m long (**most likely same as T47**)
- TCOV15 – 0361752 4790033 (1249m elevation) – interesting shake hole with vertical sides (not descended to check for holes)
- TCOV16 – 0361760 4689996 (1257m elevation) - 5m by 10m shake hole
- TCOV17 – 0361806 4790014 (1242m elevation) – leafy hole
- TCOV18 – 0361849 4790029 (1227m elevation) – 5m+ deep rift development
- TCOV19 – 0361870 4789995 (1220m elevation) – leaf filled pot at 2m depth
- TCOV20 – 0361996 4789942 (1190m elevation) – 4m deep, continuation?
- TCOV21a – 0362021 4789995 (1174m elevation) – 5m leafy hole
- TCOV21b – 0362016 4790001 (1171m elevation) - leafy cleft, possible continuation
- TCOV22 – 0362031 4789997 (1173m elevation) – other side of TCOV21a, proved by noise connection with a rock, drafts, possible continuation.
- TCOV23 – 0362045 4790018 (1156m elevation) – 1 second drop with draft.
- TCOV24 – 0362013 4790130 (1147m elevation) – slight drafting hole with rift 5m deep. (**Possibly same as T47b**)
- TCOV25 – 0362070 4790183 (1116m elevation) – point of interest, worth a return to get a better idea on the hole. Time was short for logging entrances.
- TCOV26 – 0362044 4790051 (1161m elevation) – top of interesting gully, worth a return to see if there are any holes down the gully.

#### Jitu de Escarandi

TD

Approx. 500m NE of car park in flat area, approx. 4ms long 1 1/2 wide at widest, floor on South end about 1 1/2 m below, North end, floor about 3m depth, looks like rift under end goes off to the east. Could not get a good look in to this hole. This hole cannot be seen from 3m away



**Picture: Unexplored lead, Jitu de Escarandi (Toby Dryden)**

#### **14<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

##### Cueva de la Marniosa – Smokers’ Aven No 2

PW, HJ

An early start but inefficient as we returned to base to collect forgotten belongings more than once.

Efficiently through to the climb where Phil set up the video and started up the climb.

10m up it closed so Phil surveyed back down. We moved forward towards Papoose to look at the climb down in the floor. A 20m descent was made in a passage which was clean washed on one side and moon milk on the other and was heading down towards the stream below.

Several squeezes were passed in unpleasant going. Stopped at another squeeze. Surveyed back up to the main passage. We went to look at Papoose where CJ had said he had rigged the climb, but we couldn’t find his rope. Moved all the climbing gear back to Extra Caverns.

##### GA42 – Minas de Mazarrasa

GS,

TS, JP, LB

No log written

##### TCOV14 - Torca de Los Galea

AG, CV, JR

**Note: further investigation would suggest that this is the same as LUSS discovery T47.**

A route up to the top of the hill took us past another interesting area of shake holes we didn't have time to investigate further, which needs looking at TCOV27 (0361645, 4789916), we found a suggested "easier" route to get to TCOV14.

#### *"Easier" Route to TCOV14*

Waypoints for route

From the stream/bridge below Marniosa head up the concrete track till the concrete stops then go uphill through bracken and some brambles and head towards the top of the gully/Torca de la Grenata, 0361250, 4790317. Stay left to trend up gentle slope through the woods.

*Trend uphill*

- 1) 0361276, 4790270
- 2) 0361243, 4790165
- 3) 0361307, 4790094
- 4) 0361372, 4790076
- 5) 0361416, 4790037
- 6) 0361476, 4790031

Stay high and aim towards 0361612, 4790045

Contour towards - 0361715, 4790090

TCOV14 0361844, 4790099 1223m

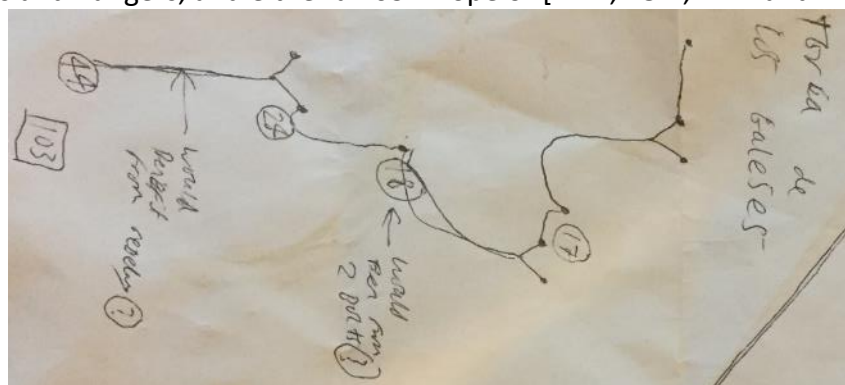
We arrived at Torca de Los Galesa at approximately 12am, and kitted up - sorting rope, drill, and bolts. Short work was made of the first pitch and a short interlude for collection of the second drill battery saw us swiftly at the bottom of the 85m pot (broken by 3 rebelay and a deviation), with a leaf ledge, approx. 45m down the pot.

A mud, leaf and rock filled floor was inspected for any leads and an interesting lead was found in the southeast corner of the pot floor, which is a mud/rock dig with a sound/rumble of a stream below.

A return is planned tomorrow, with a crack team of diggers.

Rigging required:

9 maillons and hangers, and either a 103m rope or [17m, 18m, 24m and 44m]



*Directions: 2 different approaches, it is believed LUSS approached from the cabanas at the bottom of the valley just upstream from Cowshead cavern and just climbed straight up the hill on the south side of the valley (towards 0361844, 4790099).*

*Whereas preferred approach for 2021 expedition was uphill behind Marniosa entrance as below.*

*Head as for Marniosa, till you cross over the river sopra, keep on the concrete track ignoring the fields on the left which would normally be used to access Marniosa. From the end of the concrete (0361213, 4790478), head in a SSE direction going anticlockwise around the western side of the lump of Limestone which the Marniosa entrance goes into. Heading uphill on a muddy, bramble slope through trees (towards 0361258, 4790317) passing Torca de la Grenata (0361266, 4790317). Continue heading uphill towards 0361276, 4790270. From here climb and contour left round the hillside towards 0361486, 4790180 staying low to avoid the cliff/crag at 0361458, 4790144. Next point to head towards is 0361535, 4790114. Then past 0361656, 4790105 before heading to (0361855, 4790135) a point north of the hole. Head from here climbing carefully through the spikey bush down the crag to the cave at 0361844, 4790099.*

*Some deviations from the above route are ok, but don't climb to the top of the hill at the start of the contour/climb, the going is extremely tough and you will have to downclimb back to the entrance. Also there are two crags which it is worth knowing about, so you can avoid them.*

- 1) Avoid the Top of a big cliff at 0361740, 4790147 by going higher than it/further south.*
- 2) A crag located at 0361458, 4790144 Grid reference marks the eastern side.*

*A lower route may also be possible, contouring from 0361276, 4790270 to 0361617, 4790153 before heading uphill towards 0361715, 4790090 then veering towards 0361855, 4790135 and ultimately entrance at 0361844, 4790099.*

### **15<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

#### Torca de los Galesa

AG, BC, MH

A trip to dig at the bottom of the cave and derig. Bob and Martin were assembled as crack diggers and dispatched to Torca de los Galesa, further routes up and down the hill were tried, mostly successful and without too much slippage in the wet conditions on the way back down the hill.

The dig itself was attempted, but it's feared that it is more of a long-term affair, the likes of what we see in Britain, and not suitable for a two-week trip. The noise that can be heard through the dig is thought to be that of air rather than water and the mud and rock fill is probably going to be at least 3-5m deep, to make any significant progress a full two weeks would need to be spent digging.

The team decided that if any further work were to be done on the hillside, the systematic investigation of all the holes on the hillside would probably yield greater results.

**Description:** *The lip of the gully into the pot is a 1m gap from the left to the right hand wall and an airy takeoff into the 7mx7m wide pothole. A approx 15m abseil reaches a single bolt rebelay. Approximately 40m down from the lip is a boulder and leaf ledge, with a free-hanging Y-hang in the narrowing of the shaft. Below the narrowing in the shaft, a further 40m abseil gains the floor.*

*At the base of the shaft down in the bottom right hand corner is a long term dig which could prove a good dig, if someone could spare 4 weeks of full time graft in a team of 4+ with scaffolding, timbers etc. as in the tiny crack a whistling/rushing sound could be heard. Which was thought to be air passing through the crack. The walls of the pot rise impressively from the bottom of the pot.*

### Pico Valdominguero

CJ, PW, DP, TD

Dave and Chris to Valdominguero to look at some sites spotted on their run the day before. Phil and Toby to Mazarrasa to look at some sites above the Torca Mazarrasa. Torrential downpour stopped effective exploration.

- VA104 / FT51 – 0359190 4784622 2130m – no snow patch as reported in 1981 LSD report
- VA2021-01 – 0359107 4784610 2140m - small

### Minas de Mazarrasa

- MA7 0361211 4785423 1892m
- T223 (part of T111) 0361208 4785419 1893m
- Long Cabana 0361136 4785385 1886m
- MA6 0361061 4785356 1882m
- T110? 0361113 4785615 1857m
- MA2 0361052 4785597 1873m
- AN-55 0360992 4785413 1925m
- MA1 0361023 4785593 1854m
- MA3 (walled shaft) 0360962 4785455 1894m
- T114 0361031 4785694 1816m
- MA4 0360948 4785459 1903m
- MA5 0360952 4785511 1906m
- T102 0360974 4785643 1865m (part of Nevera – boulders across entrance)
- Higher ent. To T102 0360975 4785636 1862m
- T107 0360967 4785758 1801m
- Shaft - Water Supply 0361004 4785745 1815 (above T107)





*Picture: PB-02, Cueto Teyau (Chris Jones)*

### 16<sup>th</sup> September 2021

#### Cueva de la Marniosa – Free Willy Aven

PW, HJ

Didn't seem like only two years since we last visited this little bit of paradise. An efficient start with no items left behind in the hut. We ascended the fixed rope to the ledge at 10m where HJ took up the belaying duties on a drippy ledge thanks to last night's rain, and Phil charged onwards and upwards.

Eight bolts were placed, by which time the hard rock had flattened the two drill batteries. PW had a few anxious moments placing the final bolts to abseil from but some knitting and lowering enabled a retreat. 5m above the high point there appears to be a ledge and the aven continues beyond. An efficient exit was made and a return in 2022 is scheduled.

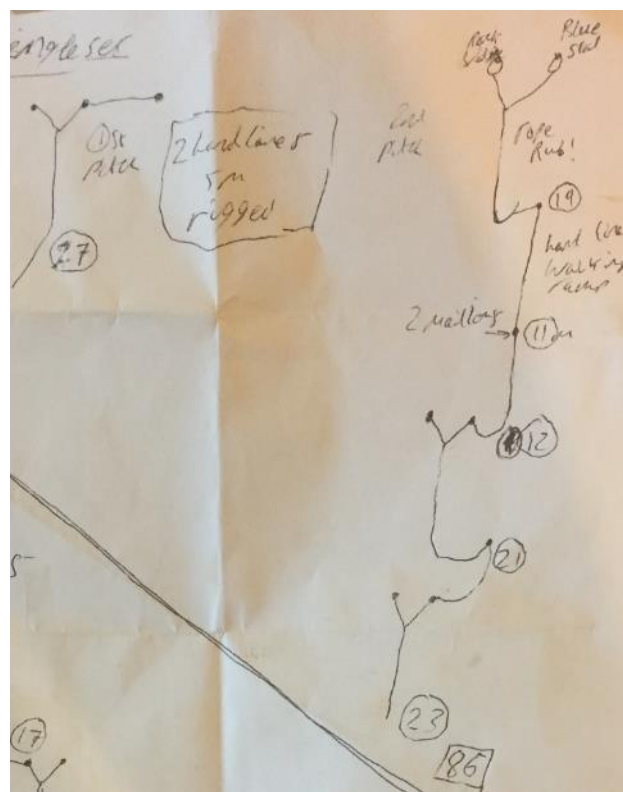
#### Minas de Los Ingleses

MH, AG

A successful derig of a lovely mine not far down the hill from Tresviso. The mine has some rubble movement but is otherwise quite nice and with one constricted pitch head. Earlier reports suggest a hop over the rift after the end of this rigging guide will gain further pitches. The mission for this trip was a simple derig with only two people, so the idea of carting more rope, a drill and hangers in only to carry out all the gear on the same day was not on our to do list. But it was good to know that further progress could be made by a team in future years.

Tackle required:

- 1<sup>st</sup> pitch, 3 hangers and maillons, and a 27m rope.
- 2 handlines between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> pitch, already rigged (5m each).
- 2<sup>nd</sup> pitch, 2 medium-long slings, 10 maillons, and either an 86m rope, or [19m, 11m, 12m, 21m and 23m].



### Cueva de la Marniosa – Papoose Climb

GS, JP, LB

Jethro, Glen, and I headed down to Papoose Pitch in Marniosa, in order to revisit the area to the other side of the Papoose Pitch chamber, looking for a high-level continuation to the cave. Upon climbing the rope rigged by Chris Jones at the end of his last trip, we found footprints from previous visits, as well as a Mars bar wrapper from an unknown date (although it did cost only 11p so make of that what you will)

Upon resurveying the new passage, we found that it wasn't hugely different from the previous efforts in the 70s/80s, although we did manage to get up to a higher-level passage and traverse across the streamway into a continuation which unfortunately quickly choked into calcite above a large stal boss.

Looking downstream in the main streamway rift, Jethro managed to spot a large, older looking chamber only 20 or so metres away. I derigged the traverse we had installed, and bolt traversed across to the new chamber, which we found to be a large muddy breakdown chamber, with floors which seemed false and a fair amount of dried broken gour pools and mud coated stals.

We surveyed several potential routes on, however found that they all became too collapsed or choked with mud and calcite to proceed. We left two potential routes on for the next day, before calling it due to hunger, as at that point it was past 6pm and we hadn't had any dinner.

#### Cueva del Nacimiento – Attempt to collect drill

BC, TS, JR, CV

The plan was to go to Colin's Climax to retrieve Chis' drill and Phil's capping kit. We set off bright and early with enough food for a long day and arrived at the entrance in good spirits. However, it soon became apparent that the rain from the night before had been heavier than we'd anticipated.

The first clue had been on the walk down when we could hear the water from halfway down the path, then as soon as we could see the canal, we could see the water washing over the walls of the canal for a good 20m of canal below the covered section.

At the entrance, the water level in the lake was only just below the dam and was boiling up from below. We could see from the speed the water was flowing that a swim would be out of the question and think dive line would make a poor safety line.

No one fancied riding the pink flamingo across the lake. Several people had fallen off in relatively still water so the speed of the water would only increase the risk.

We decided to use the ceiling traverse, so John set off to see what the streamway was like and whether the booming noise from the water was as ominous as it sounded.

Tom followed John across, followed by Bob. Claire decided the route was a little too gymnastic for her so waiting for our return. On arrival at the streamway we were greeted with a boiling mass of white water which none of us wanted to cross.

We returned to the entrance and crossed the ceiling traverse again. Reluctantly we conceded that the time it would have taken to negotiate the traverse, how wet we would have got, and the level of risk meant the trip was off and we washed out kit and walked back up the hill.

#### **17<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

PCR Tests

MH leaves

Biblioteca Universitaria (Torrelevega)

PW

Appointment with library to gather information on Minas de Mazarrasa schematics. Spent a couple of hours scanning various documents from topo. Cantabria 7-2. This includes plans for *Aurelia*, *Blenda II*, *Cuesta I and II*, *Italianos*, *Pendiente*, *Queso*, *Rosario*, *Segura*.

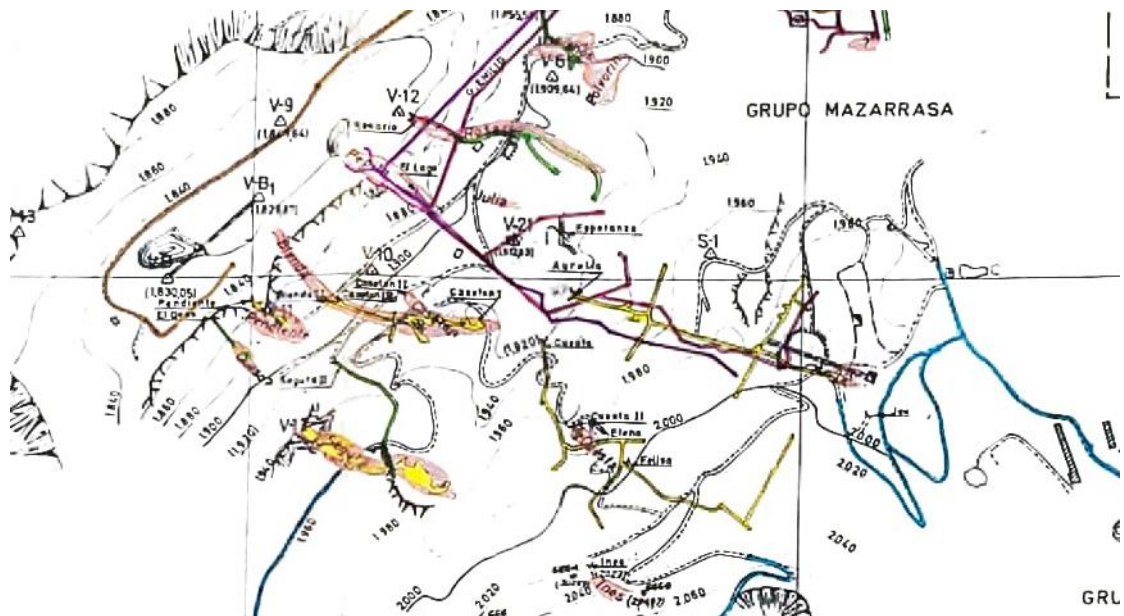
Need to repeat visit and request access to the following:

- Cantabria 7-7, 8-9, 8-21, 13-1 (*further info on Mazarrasa mines*)
- Cantabria 11-10, 114-32, 115-1, 115-2, 115-3 (*general mines in Andara*)
- Cantabria 6-6 (*related to Providencia mines - Sara depression*)

Biblioteca Universitaria

Division de Ing. de Minas y Energia

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Picture: 1974 Minas de Mazarrasa schematics

**18<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

CV, TD, JR leave

Canalon de Baniella (Vegas de Sotres)

PW, HJ

Running from the western slopes of Pico Boro down to Vegas de Sotres is an obvious gorge/ravine, which follows a fault. The lower passages of Sima 56, specifically the FUZZ ramp, take an obvious left turn, which would appear to coincide with hitting the same fault. This has only become 'obvious' in the past couple of years as data has been digitized and included in Google Earth.

A quick trip was undertaken to check out the nature of the terrain in this location, as at first glance it appears quite steep and rugged.



**Picture: End of Sima 56 in relation to Canalon de Baniella (Phil Walker)**

We spent about 4 hours climbing up the ravine, generally exploring the left (north) hand side of the valley. Several rock shelters were found, but nothing of major interest. The southern side was generally more tree covered and steeper cliffs. An intermittent river flows down the middle, sinking and resurgence in boulders along its length. We turned around about halfway up, as weather turned. The terrain was getting steeper and in future, exploring from the top (vicinity of Pico del Moro northern slopes) might be easier.

- Rock Shelter 1    0357861 4787371 977m
- Rock Shelter 2    0357965 4787307 1087m
- Rock Shelter 3    0357981 4787262 1045m
- Solution pocket    0358136 4787242 1090m – 4m to 2 small holes in roof
- Rock Shelter 4    0358151 4787264 1089m

Cueva de la Marniosa – Papoose Climb

GS, JP, LB

No log written

Cueva del Nacimiento – De-rig the Entrance

BC, AG, DJC

No log written

**19<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

HJ, AG, TS, GS, JP, LB leave

PW, BC, DJC clean equipment, stock take and clean hostel.

**20<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

PW, BC, DJC leave



**Notes on Nacimiento rigging / replacement requirements:**

- The first down rope after Brian Barus place is still a single bolt. **Priority**
- Flake Pitch, the sling around the stal and maillon need replacing.
- The krabs backing up for the first climb after flake pitch are very badly corroded. replace with a single maillon
- The big rift into Green Domino needs to be re-rigged as a priority - maillons are getting dangerously corroded and the rope is pretty knackered. It might be possible to find a different route down here, avoiding the wet humid and annoying rift it's currently in.
- There are 3 deviations in a row near the bottom of Satans Ramp. The krabs on this need replacing.
- There is a dodgy rub point on the rift climb out of Pina Colada. A deviation from an in-situ hanger should fix it.



**Appendix J: Cueva de la Marniosa Plan (2021)**

