



INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION

# ISCA Newsletter

November &  
December  
2020

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by Alexa Hampel Wuest, PhD

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**Heros Augusto Santos Lobo**, ISCA Chairman in Brazil, tells us about the pandemic in the South-American country and the situation of Brazilian show caves. Do not miss his words and article about Brazil's current situation.

## EISRIESENWELT: 100TH ANNIVERSARY

Our Austrian friends have just celebrated the 100th anniversary of their beautiful show cave. Discover new details about their history in the following pages.



## ARE YOU PLANNING FOR THE IYCK2021?

Let us know your ideas in order to share them with the rest of the ISCA community in the next newsletters.



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# A letter from the President

by Brad Wuest

Dear ISCA Members,

My best wishes to all of you for your health, happiness, and prosperity.

I also hope that your families, friends, and colleagues are well and that your show caves are now open and seeing some respectable visitation. Despite COVID-19 challenges, I am pleased to report that as of June 30th approximately 77% of the worlds show caves had re-opened and by now, I'm sure that percentage is considerably higher.

My families show cave, [Natural Bridge Caverns](#) in Texas, USA opened May 8th and struggled through our summer season with significant declines in visitation as our region experienced a high number of COVID-19 cases but I'm also happy to report that our September and October business has been good. There is certainly a direct adverse correlation between a rising COVID-19 positivity rate and declining visitation.



*Brad Wuest at Eisriesenwelt Cave (Austria, 2015)*

I'm pleased that the health and safety protocols we put in place have been highly effective at keeping our employees and guests healthy and safe, while at the same time we have been able to provide a great experience for the people who are choosing to visit us. I hope you have found the COVID-19 resources ISCA has been providing helpful. In this newsletter, you will see the results of the [International Show Cave Survey](#) that includes an extensive list of health and safety protocols and what percentage of show caves worldwide are implementing them.

Show caves play an important nature tourism role of sustainable economic development, providing jobs, and helping the economy. We all know this to be true, but the data had never been collected to quantify the significance of the show cave industry on a worldwide basis. That is one of the reasons we conducted the [International Show Cave Survey](#) this past summer. Another reason was to determine how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted show caves, our employees, and the economy. A big thanks to all of you who took the time to complete this very important survey! I am excited to share the results of our survey with you in this newsletter! In addition to reading the article about it below, please click on the [link](#) to the detailed report presentation. Use it to your benefit and share.

Speaking of sharing, ISCA will be sending a press release to the media, show cave industry and affiliates to create awareness about the significance of show caves and the impact of COVID-19 on our industry. This will be a great opportunity for you to personalize the message with information about your specific show cave and share with your local media, community, and government officials.

Another great way to create more awareness for your show cave is coming up soon. 2021 is the [International Year of Caves & Karst](#). ISCA is pleased to support and be a partner. In 2019, 144 million people visited show caves worldwide. In addition to the economic benefits, show caves around the world are embracing their role in protecting and preserving caves and providing a place for people to learn about these special, natural, cultural, and historical resources. You will read more about is the [International Year of Caves & Karst](#) further

on in the newsletter and we will continue to share ideas with you for events, activities, and ways your show cave can participate and benefit.

And speaking of the newsletter, I want to give a shout-out to the editor, Juanjo for the incredible job he is doing. I hope you read and enjoyed the last newsletter which was packed full of interesting and important information. I was wondering if Juanjo could do it again and he has! This November-December newsletter is outstanding. I hope you enjoy reading it and find benefit in the contents. Please let us know what you think about the newsletters.

And I hope you have checked out the [ISCA Facebook page](#) lately. In addition to the excellent work Juanjo is doing on the newsletter, he is also managing our social media. Please follow, share, and comment on [our Facebook page](#). And please send content to Juanjo for sharing in the newsletter and on Facebook!

#### BRAD WUEST

President/CEO at Natural Bridge Caverns (Texas, USA) and ISCA President. Born in 1972 in New Braunfels (Texas), Brad is married to Lexi and they have four beautiful children: Ashley, Clara, Millie and Harrison.

Contact: [bwuest@naturalbridgecaverns.com](mailto:bwuest@naturalbridgecaverns.com)

Our Editor, Juanjo has a passion for writing which shows not only in the quality work he is doing for ISCA but also in the book he has written. I am so proud of Juanjo for fulfilling one of his dreams, to write a book. I am also very honored and humbled that he chose to dedicate the English version of his book to my family and his friends at Natural Bridge Caverns. It was also very kind of him to ask my mother, Joye, to write the book's forward. His book, La Cueva (The Cave), is a wonderful read and I encourage you to purchase a copy and support the young author, Juanjo. Better yet, purchase lots of copies to sell in your gift shop! I have had the pleasure of visiting Caves de Sant Josep, or the "Cave of Dreams" as referred to in the book. I have enjoyed remembering the passages and chambers described in detail as I have read about the heroine, Edeta on her adventure through the cave. I truly felt I was walking and swimming along with her in the underground river cave facing challenges and fears!

I know we are living and working in trying times with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. I feel that we can always find something good in every situation. One that comes to mind now is how everyone is so willing to share information, ideas and help each other out. ISCA is like a big family and we are here for each other!

Please let me know if there is anything I can do, or ISCA can do, to help you.

I pray for an end to this pandemic and for all of you, your family, friends, and colleagues to stay healthy and safe. And I pray for your prosperity. And because this is our November and December newsletter issue, I wish all of you season's greetings, happy holidays, and a Merry Christmas!

Blessings to all of you,



Brad Wuest, ISCA President

**BEFORE WE BEGIN...**  
**DID YOU MISS OUR PREVIOUS NEWSLETTER?**

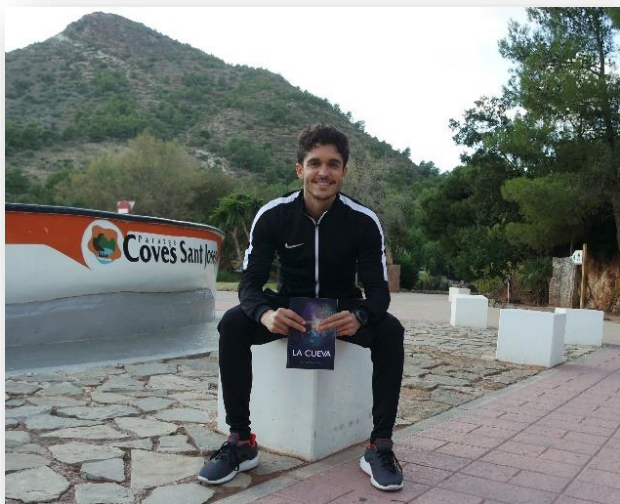


**ISCA NEWSLETTER, SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2020**



# From the editor: Once upon a cave...

by Juanjo Tíscar



*Happier than a bird with a French fry*

Cuban poet José Martí once wrote: "*Plant a tree, have a child and write a book*", meaning they will always live after us and it is the best way to leave our mark in this beautiful place called Earth. Well, I am not a father, yet! But now I can say I have planted a tree...and **written a book!**

It was not easy. Lots of writing, correcting, more writing, more correcting, editing...Plus working, studying and everything involving the life of a 30-year-old guy in the 21st century. I am 32, to be honest. I kept it a secret for almost two years. Only my parents and some very close friends knew about it. But it was worth it and the time spent is now nothing compared to my (and their) happiness.

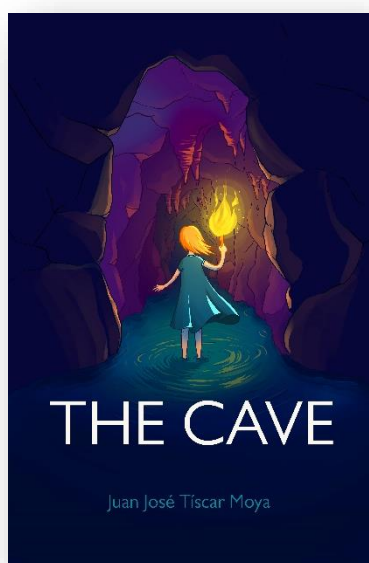
I am very lucky to work in a cave. Thanks to it, I have learnt about other caves and I have met lovely people who I consider very good friends...and even family. Some of them may be reading this right now. I would like to mention **Joye Wuest**, author of the foreword, mother of our ISCA President **Brad Wuest** and one of the most amazing women I have met in my life.

**The cave (*La cueva*)** is now a reality. A novel about a young girl who decides to enter a mysterious cave in order to discover the truth about different myths and legends. But no spoilers needed! I could write a lot about it, but I would prefer you to read it. Thanks to everyone for your kind support and giving me the opportunity to write about my book here. As a sign of gratitude, you can download the first chapter for free by visiting:

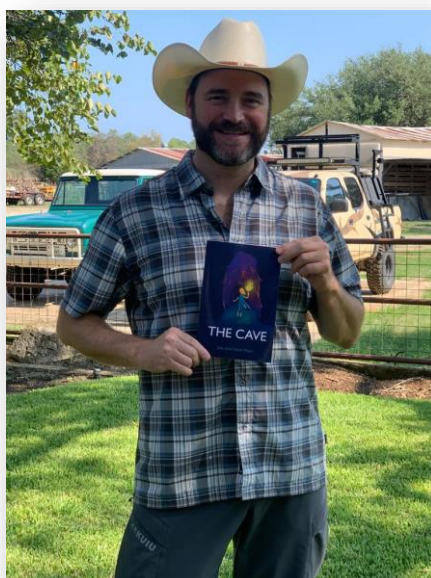
**THE CAVE – CHAPTER ONE: MYTHS AND LEGENDS**



Do you want a copy? I promise to sign it after the pandemic!



**ENGLISH VERSION**



*Brad already has his copy!*



**SPANISH VERSION**



# ISCA show cave survey – Summer 2020

by Alexa Hampel Wuest, PhD

As most of you know, we conducted a study this summer. This was completed for a couple of reasons. The first goal of the project was to establish a baseline for the significance of the show cave industry worldwide and tell the world how show caves contribute to the global economy. This has never been done before and will be incredibly valuable information to have. The second purpose was to find out to what degree the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted show caves, our employees, the economy, and our mission. We had a great response from show caves all over the world – 101 caves in total from 20 countries across 6 continents. The survey data represents 1/16 of the world's show caves, which allowed us to draw important conclusions about the industry and show caves worldwide.

Pertaining to the first goal of identifying the significance of the show cave industry, the data showed that in 2019, 144 million people visited show caves worldwide generating an estimated €1.72 billion (\$1.93 billion) of economic benefit. Further, during show caves' 2019 peak season, nearly 70,000 people were employed by the industry with a payroll of almost €700 million (\$786 million). These numbers suggest that show caves offer a vibrant, important contribution to the economy.

Although these statistics paint a nice picture of the health of the show cave industry and its economic benefit, the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been substantial. As a result of COVID-19, approximately 94% of the show caves in the world closed, and as of June 30, only 77% had reopened. Directly related, in the first half of 2020, show cave visitation worldwide declined 59%, which amounts to a loss of an estimated 42 million visitors. Additionally, visitor spending was down 61% amounting to €514 million (\$577 million) of revenue lost. It is also important to note that 13% (5.44 million) of the lost visitation can be attributed to students and school groups. Of extreme importance, 40,000 show cave employees (58%) worldwide were laid off at some point due to COVID-19. Fortunately, 33,300 (83%) of those laid off had been rehired by the end of June. As can be seen here, the negative impact of the pandemic has been significant and extensive. It is important to emphasize that we still do not fully understand the magnitude of COVID-19 on show caves because these data were collected in the middle of the summer, and the pandemic is still ongoing. More research is needed once the pandemic is over to fully capture the effects.

In addition to collecting information on the economic significance of the show cave industry and effects of the pandemic, we also asked show cave managers to report the health and safety protocols their show cave has implemented due to COVID-19. The linked presentation shows a list of these protocols and what percentage of show caves have implemented them. Practices such as enforcing physical distancing, wearing face masks, and increasing sanitization ranked very high. Some of the less likely reported protocols on the list may be useful for caves to consider and to identify ideas for improvement.

Once again, we'd like to thank all of you who helped us complete this project. This information is invaluable and will be used in the future in a variety of ways. Importantly, please utilize this information to your benefit. Share the data with others in the show cave industry and our affiliates. ISCA will be sharing this information with the media via a press release, and we encourage you to share it as well with your local media to create more awareness and support for the show cave industry. Finally, we plan to continue to further analyze the data and follow up with more surveys in the future to provide a more comprehensive assessment of the effects of COVID-19 and the state of the industry over time.

Please click [here](#) to view the complete survey results presentation.



# World Tourism Day 2020

by Juanjo Tíscar



*World Tourism Day 2020 focused on tourism and rural development*

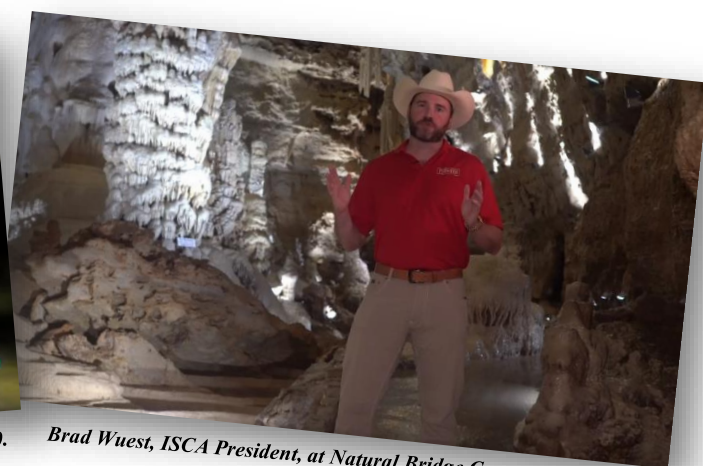
Last September 27th, different organizations, associations and individuals commemorated the **World Tourism Day 2020**, which has been celebrated by the **United Nations** since 1980. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's main theme was '**Tourism and rural development**', which focused on the importance of worldwide tourism in preserving and promoting culture and heritage.

Among the thousands of online contributors, the **International Show Caves Association** became one more participant during this special day. **Brad Wuest**, ISCA President and CEO/President at Natural Bridge Caverns (Texas, USA), shared **an optimistic message** regarding the natural, cultural, historical and economic value of show caves around the world.

We would like to thank those **ISCA show caves** from Austria, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Italy, Croatia and the USA, among many other countries and associations, which joined the **WTD 2020** and organised both virtual and on-site events for visitors to enjoy.



*José Enrique Puchol, guide at Coves de Sant Josep (Spain) on WTD 2020.*



*Brad Wuest, ISCA President, at Natural Bridge Caverns (Texas, USA)*



**WATCH NOW!**



# Heros Augusto Santos Lobo

interviewed by Juanjo Tíscar



Heros with his son (Guilherme) and wife (Silmara)

## CAVERNER INFO

**Full name:** Heros Augusto Santos Lobo

**Date and place of birth:** December 19th, 1976 - City of Itapeva, (São Paulo State, Brazil)

**Profession:** Associate Professor at Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar), Brazil

**ISCA:** Director (Brazil)

**Hobbies:** Caving, snorkeling, trekking, fencing and crossfit.

**Contact:** [heroslobo@ufscar.br](mailto:heroslobo@ufscar.br)

In our last newsletter, ISCA's Second Vice President, **Rafael Pagés**, chose **Heros** as the next person to be answering our questions. Our Brazilian and experienced friend has a lot of interesting things to tell us:

**Q:** When did you first feel interested in the subterranean world?

**A:** My interest came when I was a teenager, just before I started my university studies. I have an uncle who already frequented the caves at **PETAR**, a state park located less than 100km from my hometown. He started taking me to camp there and then I started to get involved with caves.

**Q:** How have show caves changes since you first started working in this field?

**A:** In Brazil, there has been a great evolution on the management of show caves since the early 2000s, just when I started researching. Cave tourism in Brazil is carried out in a very particular way in relation to the majority of show caves in the world due to the fact that most tourist routes are related to speleological and adventure activities. Until the early 2000s, there were many planning and management problems, such as the lack of adequate training and the implementation of impactful visiting practices. These have been modified and professionalized, ensuring greater safety for both the environment and visitors.

**Q:** When did you establish a first contact with ISCA?

**A:** When I started my Master's research in 2005, I learned about ISCA for the first time thanks to a Brazilian friend, former President of **UIS**, **José Ayrton Labegalini**. Coincidentally, in 2009 I received an invitation from colleague **Peter Gazik** (Slovakia). I presented a keynote speaker at the 2010 ISCA Congress and I have been involved with ISCA since then.

## DID YOU KNOW...

Rafael also holds the Vice Presidency of the **Spanish Show Caves Association (ACTE)**, among other relevant positions. It is our pleasure to have such an important figure in the association!

[ACTE's website](#)

**Q:** Could you mention some of your current projects?

**A:** My current research projects are developed in show caves inside State Parks, especially the **caves of Diabo and Santana**, the most visited in the State of São Paulo. My work focuses on the environmental carrying capacity of the microclimate and the social carrying capacity of crowd perception and satisfaction of visitors.

**Q:** How have you lived the COVID-19 pandemic?

**A:** The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted Brazil's political and social fragility. I can say that my family and I are privileged, but that does not reflect the majority of the population of our country. Unfortunately, the central

government did not make enough efforts to contain the pandemic and the population itself adopted a negationist attitude towards it. The result was and remains disastrous.

**Q:** You have written an excellent article about the effect of the pandemic in Brazilian show caves (see page 18). What should show caves do in order to overcome this difficult situation?

**A:** Ah! Thanks for the positive mention, but the initial merit is from ISCA itself. Our chairman of the Scientific and Technical Committee, colleague **Juan José Durán Valsero**, as well as his collaborators, drew up the first guidelines. When we had access to the original document here in Brazil, we felt the need to adapt it to the reality of Brazilian show caves. Some tourist cave managers and researchers also felt motivated about it, so we made a collective effort to produce a version which could be implemented to the reality of cave tourism in Brazil. It ended up being published as a digital book thanks to the collaboration of **ISCA**.



Regarding how show caves are dealing with the pandemic, it is worth remembering that the government is the manager of most of the show caves in Brazil, and only a few are privately managed. This generates different realities and interests, but in the end, tourism service providers in both cases are being harmed the most - with special emphasis on accommodation, restaurants and tourist guides. Local efforts have been made in order to mitigate the effects, including crowdfunding and other cooperative solutions. On the other hand, some caves have already returned to operation, with limited procedures, which will help in order to recover local economy.

**Q:** Despite the bad news, what positive things may come out from the pandemic?

**A:** Without doubt, the union between the interested parties! Government technicians, tourism trade, researchers... The performance of these stakeholders before the pandemic was much more diffuse and the problem on a global scale positively forced the union.

**Q:** Let's see what kind of caver you are, how many caves have you visited in your life?

**A:** I would never be able to answer this question... Many tens or a few hundred must be the most accurate!

**Q:** Which is the last cave you have visited?

**A:** **Santana cave**, at PETAR, for collecting microclimate data in the middle of a pandemic, last July.

**Q:** Could you mention three caves which left you astonished?

**A:** Are you kidding me? Only three? Can it be three groups of three? The ones I think are most beautiful are the **Brazilian Temimina** (PETAR), **Janelão** (Peruaçu National Park) and the **Italian Grotta Gigante**. The ones that most impressed me for their different visitation proposals were **Postojna** (Slovenia), **Coves de Sant Josep** (Spain) and **Eisreisenwelt** (Austria). Finally, the three most important ones for my career: **Ouro Grosso** (PETAR) - the first one I visited -, **Lago Azul** (Bonito city, Brazil) which was the base of my Master's degree and **Santana** (PETAR), where I developed methods of tourist carrying capacity in the doctoral thesis.

#### RANKING: TOP-CAVERNERS

1. Heros Lobo – 101 caves
2. Rafael Pagés – 100 caves
3. Juanjo Tíscar – 25 caves 😊

How many caves have you visited?  
[juan jotiscar@i-s-c-a.org](mailto:juan jotiscar@i-s-c-a.org) and let us know!

**Q:** Who would you like to be interviewed in our next newsletters? What would you like to ask him/her?

**A:** I would like to read the interview of the colleague and member of the ISCA board of directors, Mr. André Querido Jorge Nuno, for whom I ask: What are the main challenges and, consequently, solutions that you are finding, to deal with the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic?



# ISCA at the Int. Congress of Speleology

by George Veni & Brad Wuest

The **International Congress of Speleology** is organized every four years by ISCA's sister organization, the **International Union of Speleology (UIS)**. Many ISCA members have attended the congresses over the years, but this year we're hoping for something special. The **ISCA Board** has been invited by the UIS to meet during the congress. The times and details will come later, but for now we're encouraging you to make plans for France next year.

The Congress will be held on **25 July through 1 August 2021 in Le Bourget de Luc, France**. It is a beautifully scenic and historic area about 1 hour's drive east of Lyon or south of Geneva. It is easy to reach by car and public transportation.

For more details about the Congress, visit the [UIS website](#).



## Are You Planning for the IYCK 2021?

by George Veni & Brad Wuest

You have probably seen the promotions for the **International Year of Caves and Karst (IYCK)** next year. You may have also forgotten about it. This year has been difficult for show caves around the world because of COVID-19. We don't know when the pandemic will be over, but the IYCK can help.

The purpose of the IYCK is to teach people around the world about the importance of caves and the karst areas in which most of them occur. Millions of people visit show caves each year, so what better places to teach people than at show caves?!

One challenge for show caves is to get people to visit, and to come back and visit again. The IYCK helps solve those challenges. You can use the IYCK to tell people something special is happening at your cave, and you should create some special activities and programs for the IYCK. Think about games and educational programs for children, working with local caving groups to demonstrate caving skills and with universities for special nature programs. But the main power of the IYCK is that you can show that your cave is important. It is part of a celebration around the world. It should not be ignored as a local tourist attraction but valued as part of a globally recognized treasure.

What about **COVID**? Until a vaccine is found and distributed, COVID-19 will continue to make things difficult. But you can still attract more visitors because of the IYCK. You can organize virtual activities and tours that will generate interest and excitement about your cave for people to visit now or whenever they feel it is safe.

The IYCK is not only to teach the general public. Caves often do not get the protection they need. Show caves often do not get the respect and support they deserve as economically important members of their communities. The IYCK will teach community leaders that caves and especially show caves are valuable resources to their communities. With your support, the IYCK will create a healthier natural and economic environment for your show cave.

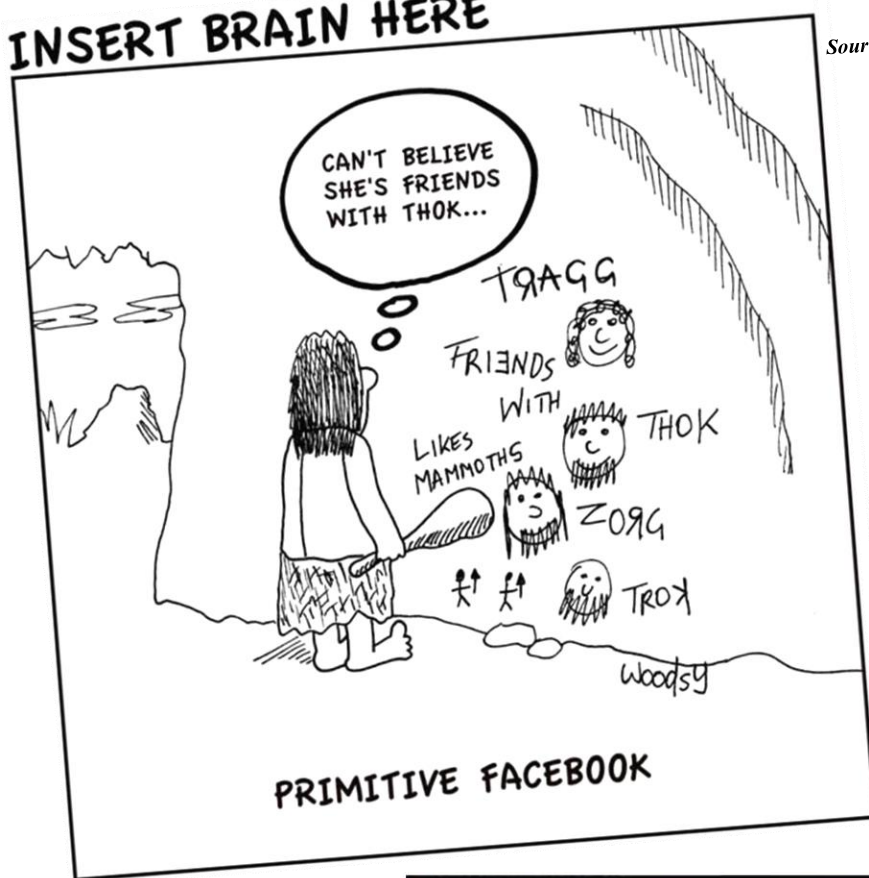
For more information about the IYCK, go to <http://www.iyck2021.org>, or contact us.



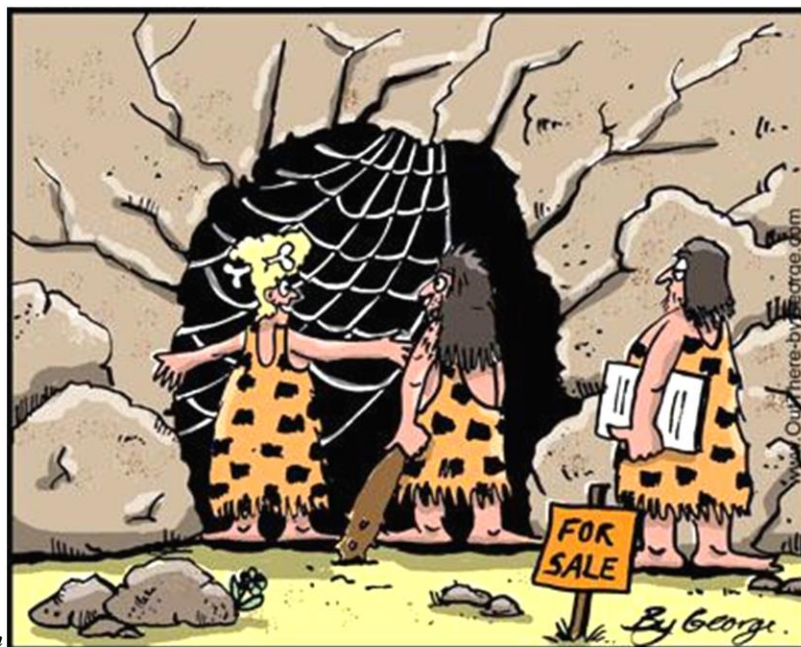
# The funny side of life

by Juanjo Tíscar

INSERT BRAIN HERE



Source: Ovi Magazine



Source: Check My Dream

"I know it's out of our price range Rex...but this is the dream cave I always wanted"

# Eisriesenwelt Cave: 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary!

with the collaboration of Friedrich Oedl



**Eisriesenwelt** is located near Salzburg city, Austria – the worldwide famous city of Mozart. The geological situation in the North of the Alps and the special climate circumstances during summer and winter are the most important attributes for the existence of this unique ice cave, which is the largest in the world prepared for touristic visitation.

It had already been discovered by 1879 but, due to the exposed location in the steep slope of the mountain, the cave was not studied in depth again until 1913. The wide dimensions of this cave were discovered after World War I.

## CAVE DETAILS

**Cave name:** Eisriesenwelt Cave

**Location:** 40km South of Salzburg City, near Werfen, Austria. **Office at** Getreidegasse 21, 5020 Salzburg, Austria

**Email address:** [info@eisriesenwelt.at](mailto:info@eisriesenwelt.at)

**Phone number:** 0043 662 842690-14

**General Manager:** Friedrich Oedl ([oedl@oedl.at](mailto:oedl@oedl.at))

**Type of member:** Full member

**Website**

Its current length is over 42 km and most of its beauty can be found in its enormous ice formations. The first kilometre is almost completely covered with ice, and stalagmites and stalactites meet as columns from the bottom to the ceiling. The thickest part of the ground ice is more than 20 metres and one of the biggest ice figures has a circumference of 70 metres.

**100 years ago, on 26th of September, 1920**, the cave was officially opened for touristic tours, which were offered from May to October without interruption. Not even World War II closed it! However, the danger of avalanches and extreme conditions make it impossible to open in winter time.



*Eisriesenwelt (1922)*



*Eisriesenwelt (1938)*



At the beginning visitors had to hike up for about one kilometre from the nearest valley until they reached the cave entrance. Then, people often spent a whole day in order to visit the cave. They also had to use crampons to climb over the steep ice formations during the visit.

During this century, a road was built in order to take people until the first way up the mountain, and a cable car was then installed to take visitors to the cave, in which they can find perfect stairs and pathways with stainless, steel handrails, restaurants and a visitor centre. In addition to the previous elements, full infrastructure including water and electric supply, sewage disposal, and more were installed over time.

It should be mentioned that the cave is located on state property and it is leased by a private company whose shareholders are descendants of the founding members, who also belonged to the local club of speleology. The **Oedl family** took control of the cave management and the third generation is still in charge of it.

Over 3.000 visitors/day and 170.000 visitors/year enjoyed the cave last year, and more than 8 million (!) people have already been there during summer time since the 1920 opening.

In 2020 Coronavirus also affected **Eisriesenwelt**, which led to the cancelation of a special event with regards to the anniversary. However, a big celebration was prepared on 26th of September 2020, and the cave visit was offered - as a kind of birthday gift - for a historical price of 1€!



*There are many stories to be told at Eisriesenwelt*







## CUEVATUR 2018

photos by José María Lorenzo

[Click here to DOWNLOAD](#) 



# Cave Lighting: Baumann Cave

by Alexander Chapkro, CEO at Cave Lighting

According to a fictitious legend, the cave was discovered and named after its discovery around 1536 by the miner Friedrich Baumann. **Baumannshöhle** consists of several interconnected cavities and a beautiful one-meter high stalagmite. The largest room is the Goethesaal, with around 2500 m<sup>2</sup>, in which concerts also take place and plays are occasionally performed during the school holidays.

In 2010, **Cave Lighting** made its first contact with Baumannshöhle management thanks to the Harz cave researchers. In the same year, the first lighting tests were carried out in the show cave and an installation was even implemented in the crystal chamber of the neighboring **Hermannshöhle**.

After about 6 years and two lighting tests, we visited the **Dechenhöhle** in 2016 together with **Mr. Schult** and **Mr. Mende** in order to examine the system installed by Cave Lighting. This tour was very helpful, as the **Baumannshöhle** managers were able to exchange ideas with the managing director of Dechenhöhle, **Stefan Niggemann**, and discovered completely new perspectives in the show cave business.

The actual installation of the new system started in August 2020, the execution will take two and a half months and will be completed by the end of October. The project was realized by Cave Lighting, in cooperation with the local electrical company **Jaguscho Elektro**. A number of five of our specialists transformed the old show cave into a new underground experience. According to the manager, **Thomas Schult**, the show cave is “no longer recognizable by visitors because the artistic lighting design and intelligent lighting control have changed the cave landscape”. Therefore, the cave is now being “re-explored”.

Under the direction of **Adrian Kondacs**, the **Cave Lighting Team** has succeeded in setting new standards for lighting in underground objects and creating a tremendous natural experience. Thanks to the newly installed lighting system, visitors are no longer irritated and visits will now be much safer, too.

From November 1st, 2020, cave enthusiasts will discover the technically improved **Baumannshöhle** by means of an excellent guided tour which includes a large variety of speleothems and 3D images.



*Baumann Cave before the project*



*Baumann Cave after another outstanding lighting job by the Cave Lighting team*

Check out Cave Lighting website!





# Gouffre de Padirac: Culture & Gastronomy

## 100 metres underground!

with the collaboration of Magdalena Mauguieret



### CAVE DETAILS

**Cave name:** Gouffre de Padirac

**Location:** Lot, France

**Contact - Website**

**Phone number:** + 33 (0)5 65 33 64 56

The **Gouffre de Padirac** is the largest underground natural heritage site in **France**, located in the heart of the Dordogne Valley, near Rocamadour and Sarlat.

A natural cavity with a diameter of 33 meters and a depth of 75 meters that is the beginning of an underground walk and boat ride of 2.2km at 103 meters below the surface of the Earth.

More than 25 million visitors have marvelled at the cave since its discovery by **Édouard-Alfred Martel** in **1889**.

### CREATION & BURIAL OF THE "130<sup>TH</sup> YEARS CUVÉE"

To celebrate the 130th anniversary of its discovery, the Gouffre de Padirac has collaborated with **Jean-Luc Baldès - Clos Triguédina** wines to create an exceptional vintage: the **130th years cuvee**.

Nearly 500 bottles of this cuvee made from centennial vines (pure Malbec AOC) were deposited **103 metres underground** on May 12, 2020, at the foot of the incredible hall of the Grand Dôme, where 13°C and 98% humidity reign all year long. The wine will improve in this natural cellar in the centre of the Earth for one year, until spring 2021. An auction of a few magnums will be organized for the benefit of an association, as well as a sale at the Clos Triguédina and at the Gouffre de Padirac delicatessen.



### PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION «EXPLORATIONS AND HIDDEN FACES»

This year, the Gouffre de Padirac extends the visit experience with an exclusive photo exhibition set up 103 metres underground. An installation of backlit panels offers hidden faces of the Gouffre, whose underground network extends over 40 kilometres of galleries inaccessible to the public. The 10 photographs exhibited, captured during speleological expeditions, reveal the beauty and scope of this mysterious universe. The photographs are taken by **Kadja Bidovec**, **Jean-François Fabriol**, **Peter Gedei**, **Arne Hodalic** and **Christoph Gerigk**, an immense German artist known for his underwater photographs.



Photos by:  
C.Gerigk / SES de Padirac  
Eure-K / SES de Padirac  
P.Gedei / SES de Padirac

# Michel Renda: a subterranean artist



## PERSONAL INFORMATION

**Full name:** Michel Renda

**Date of birth:** March 3rd, 1957

**Current job:** Project Manager at [Cave Lighting](#)

**Others:** Lecturer, explorer, speleologist, photographer, topographer

**Contact:** [michel.renda@neuf.fr](mailto:michel.renda@neuf.fr)

Michel Renda is also a member of the [French Federation of Speleology](#), [Co-founder at La Salle 3D International Team](#), member of the Board of Directors of [IFREEMIS](#), and many other associations focused on preserving karst including APEK (Association for the Protection of the Kart Environment) and the Speleological Society of Cuba, among others.

At the age of 15 he started visiting caves and other cavities, and his passion would soon become a profession. He has been to around 30 countries in order to visit some of the most incredible caves in the world. Among some of those expeditions, it is worth mentioning his five visits to [Lechuguilla Cave](#) (New Mexico, USA), one of the world's largest caves.



*Lechuguilla Cave (New Mexico, USA) – Photo by Michel Renda*



During his life as a cave explorer and accompanied by his speleologist colleague, Jean-Marie Chauvet, they have discovered cave painting at different cavities. Michel has also participated in many scientific and didactic TV documentaries, as well as scientific articles which were published in important magazines. He is a passionate of the subterranean and every aspect related to it, and he is working hard to get 18 French caves be named World Heritage by UNESCO.

The following are only an example of the impressive work of **Michel Renda**, a subterranean artist.

[DOWNLOAD MICHEL RENDA'S FULL QUALITY PICS HERE](#)





# The pandemic in Brazilian show caves

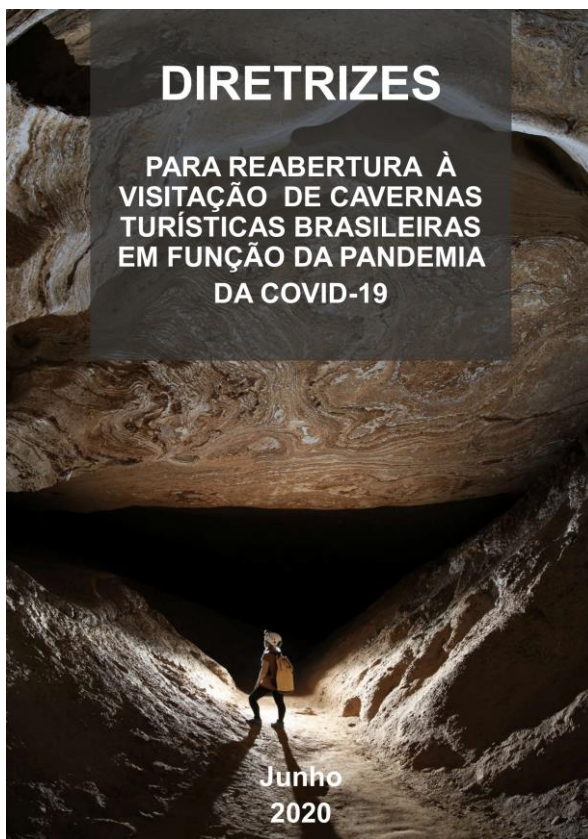
with the collaboration of Heros Augusto Santos Lobo

After the pandemic, specific measures and guidelines were needed to guarantee the safety of the staff and visitors at Brazilian show caves. Those preventive measures were established by cave managers, researchers and other Brazilian experts with the collaboration of ISCA and other organisations which promote the preservation and excellence of show caves. Visit the links below to read the full document and learn more about the best ways to keep your caves safe for everyone. The English version which served as original document is also provided.

[DOWNLOAD & READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)



[ISCA RECOMMENDATIONS \(ENGLISH\)](#)



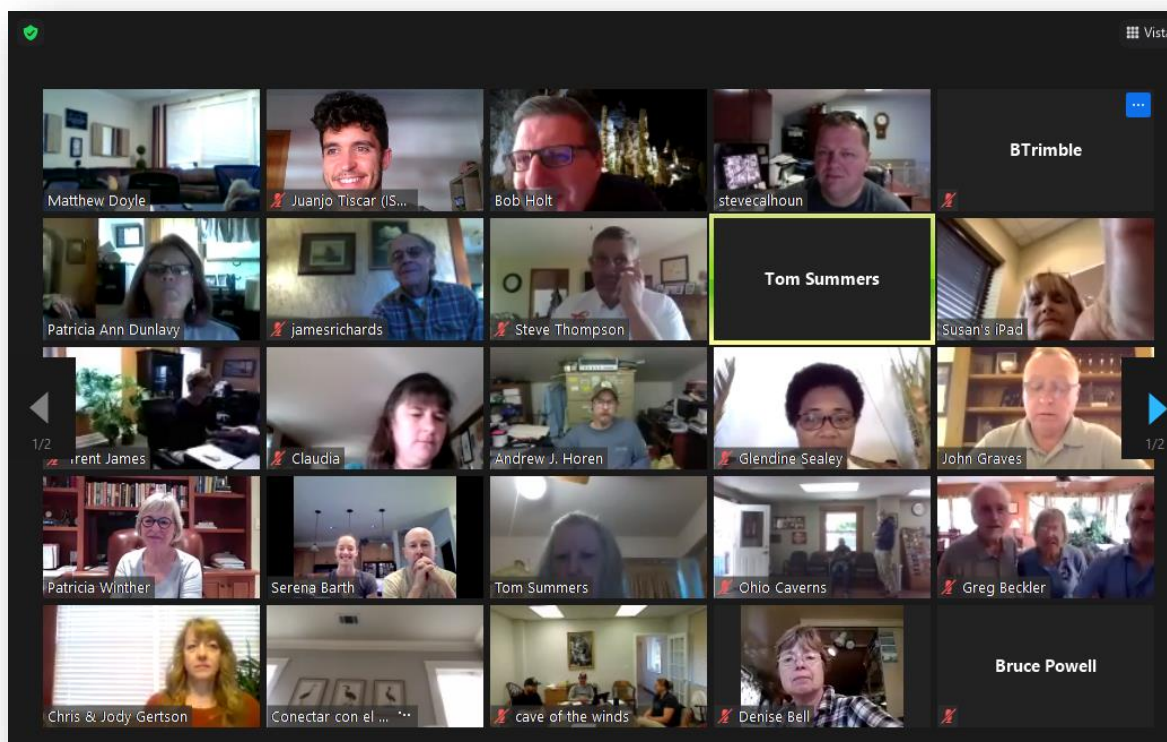
*Guidelines to visit Brazilian show caves after the pandemic*

## Source:

LOBO, H.A.S.; VALLE, M.A.; DURÁN-VALSERO, J.J.; MORALES-GARCÍA, R.; ROBLEDO-ARDILA, P.A.; DURÁN-LAFORET, S.R.; TRAVASSOS, L.E.P.; ALT, L.; MARQUES, E.L.S.; TRAJANO, E.; BICHUETTE, M.E.; SALLUN FILHO, W.; COSTA JR., E.P.D.; MOURA, V.; FERREIRA, R.L.; LOPEZ-RICHARD, V.; KOPPE, V.C.; TIMO, M.B. **Diretrizes para reabertura à visitação de cavernas turísticas brasileiras em função da pandemia da COVID-19**. Indaiatuba/SP: International Show Caves Association, 2020. 28p.

# 2020 Virtual NCA Convention

On September 29th and 30th, the 2020 Virtual NCA Convention took place...online! During two sessions full of interesting talks and presentations, **more than 70 attendees** shared their ideas, opinions and feelings about many topics of interest. Hopefully, the next annual meeting of this beautiful association will be held in California in 2021. I would like to thank Bob and the rest of NCA members who let me participate and learn a lot from them.



**Robert A. Holt, NCA Executive Director**, is in charge of editing **Cave Talk**, the official newsletter of the National Caves Association.

You can **download, read and enjoy** the latest issue (**November 2020**) by following [this link](#).

Visit [CAVERN.COM](http://CAVERN.COM) to discover more about NCA and their members.





# Lipa Cave, Montenegro

with the collaboration of Milena Raičević



## CAVE DETAILS

Cave name: Lipa Cave

Location: Cetinje, Montenegro

Email address: [info@lipa-cave.me](mailto:info@lipa-cave.me)

Phone number: +38 267 003 040

Website

Approximately 2.500 meters of explored hallways offer a variety of several interesting halls, galleries and an abundance of cave ornaments. Underground streams, lakes and springs accentuate the cave's natural beauty making it striking. The authenticity of the cave rests in its truly wild beauty, which captivates and makes the visit a memorable experience.

The cave's beauty has been well known since the 19th century. Among many other Montenegrin dignitaries, **Petar II Petrovic-Njegos** and **King Nikola I** paid it great attention. The first written record of the cave was published in 1839, which is deemed as the actual date of discovery, even though it is known that the cave had been discovered much earlier by the villagers of **Lipa Dobrska**. It was **Henry Layard**, an English archeologist, who visited the cave in 1839 and made the first written record.

Lipa cave has many tales which were passed down from one generation to the next. Today, our guides tell them as passionately as they were told in the past. The locals remember

the cave having been used as a source of drinking water by their ancestors, who named some of the springs inside the cave, such as **Iconostasis**, **Gemini**, **Intestines** or **Tongue**, among others.

During his reign, King Nikola I used to bring international officials, who were staying in Montenegro at the time, to visit the cave. Today, we walk in the royal footsteps through millennia-old underground corridors.

Lipa cave also collaborates in many **projects** which can be found [here](#). 

## LIPA CAVE: FULL GALLERY



*The magic of Lipa's subterranean galleries*





# You cannot miss...

by Juanjo Tíscar



## #SPELEOMEDIT



### SPELEOLOGY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION:

WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF  
THE SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF ITALY & TETIDE

Further information [HERE](#)



**14 PSEUDOKARST**  
Chęciny 22-25.06.2021

### 14TH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON PSEUDOKARST



APRIL 22ND-25TH, 2021

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW [HERE](#)





## VISUAL KARSIS ONLINE COURSE

2ND – 3RD DECEMBER, 2020

COMING

SOON!

## 2ND COLUMBIAN CONGRESS OF SPELEOLOGY

8TH - 13TH JUNE, 2021



## 36TH BRAZILIAN CONGRESS OF SPELEOLOGY

2ND - 5TH JUNE, 2021



## INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HYDROGEOLOGISTS CONGRESSES

BRAZIL, 47TH IAH CONGRESS – BELGIUM, 48TH IAH CONGRESS

22ND - 27TH AUGUST, 2021 // 6TH - 10TH SEPTEMBER, 2021



**47<sup>TH</sup> IAH  
CONGRESS  
BRASIL 2021**



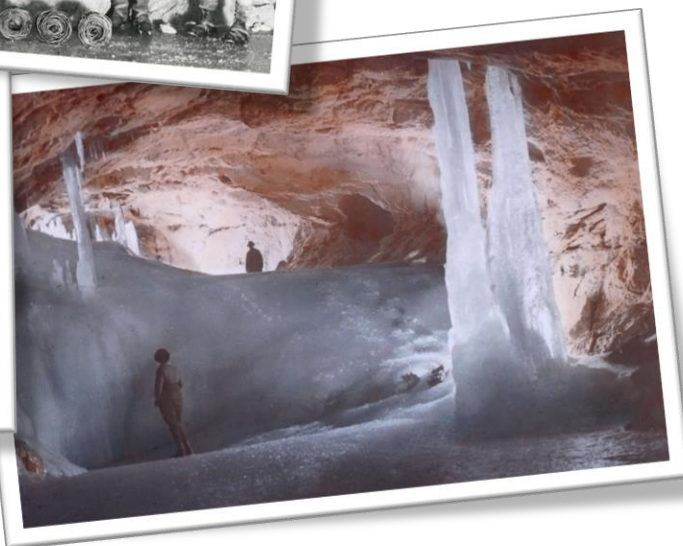
**48<sup>th</sup> IAH Congress**  
BRUSSELS BELGIUM 2021  
Inspiring Groundwater

# A look at the past: Eisriesenwelt (Austria)

by Juanjo Tíscar

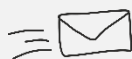


*The beautiful history of Eisriesenwelt (Austria), the largest ice cave in the world. These pictures were taken decades ago and, 100 years later, the cave is more alive than ever. Happy anniversary!*



## CONTRIBUTE!

Send your **old pics** and a **short description** of your beautiful spot. You will be appearing in upcoming newsletters!



[juanjotiscar@i-s-c-a.org](mailto:juanjotiscar@i-s-c-a.org)



# What caves are these?

by Juanjo Tíscar



## CAVE #3

### Hint 1:

These caves are located in **Australia**.

### Hint 2:

Winner of the **Steve Irwin Ecotourism Award** in 2008 and 2009.

## CAVE #4

### Hint #1:

The indigenous meaning of the caves' name is "**high place**".

### Hint #2:

There are over **300 entrances**.



## SEND YOUR ANSWERS

No correct answers in our previous newsletter!

Cave #1 was **Black Chasm Cavern** (California, USA)

Cave #2 was **Cango Caves** (Western Cape, South Africa)

Do you want to try again? Send your answers!

Contact: [juanjotiscar@i-s-c-a.org](mailto:juanjotiscar@i-s-c-a.org)



# Bats need our help!



"Bats lead us to the best opportunities to protect nature anywhere in the world." (Mike Daulton, BCI Executive Director)

Experts at **Bat Conservation International** try to ensure the worldwide survival of bats. Almost 200 species are threatened with extinction and they are in need of urgent help.

[MAIN SITE HERE](#)



The Federally endangered Florida **bonneted bat**, the rarest bat in the United States, is in risk of extinction. Right now, one of only two critical areas for Florida bonneted bats in Miami Dade County is under imminent threat of development.

Miami Wilds is a proposed hotel and water park adjacent to Zoo Miami. In its current location, this development project will lead to the irreversible decline, and possible extinction of the second largest population of Florida bonneted bats.

The Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners are scheduled to vote on leasing this environmentally sensitive land to developers which will lead to the loss of one of the most important foraging areas for this species of rare bat. A vote right now to lease the land for private development is premature. Any lease approval should be delayed to fully assess the irreversible impacts to florida bonneted bats and to evaluate other sites for Miami Wilds.



[TAKE ACTION NOW](#)



[ADOPT-A-BAT](#)

& BECOME A **BCI MEMBER**





# ISCA Calendar

## PLEASE NOTE

Some of these events may suffer variations due to the pandemic.  
You may contact them for confirmation.  
Do you want to add or modify an event? Contact me! [juanjotiscar@i-s-c-a.org](mailto:juanjotiscar@i-s-c-a.org)  
Visit our [Facebook page](#) and [ISCA's website](#) for further information.



## 2020

- 12th - 15th November, 2020 – [European Cave Rescue Association Meeting 2020](#)
- 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2020 – [British Cave Research Association Science Symposium](#)
- 2nd - 3th December, 2020 – [Visual KARSIS online course](#)
- 5th - 8th December, 2020 – [ALCADI 2020: International Symposium on History of Speleology and Karstology](#)

## 2021 - International Year of Caves and Karst



- 12th - 16th April, 2021 – [16th Multidisciplinary Conf. on the Engineering and Environmental Impacts of Karst](#)
- 17th April, 2021 – [National Bat Appreciation Day](#)
- 22nd - 25th April, 2021 – [14th International Symposium on Pseudokarst](#)
- May 2021 – [US Geological Survey Karst Interest Group Meeting](#)
- 3rd - 7th May, 2021 – [Australian Cave and Karst Management Association Conference](#)
- 2nd - 5th June, 2021 – [2nd Columbian Congress of Speleology](#)
- 6th June, 2021 – [Int. Day of Caves and the Subterranean World](#)
- 8th - 13th June, 2021 – [36th Brazilian Congress of Speleology](#)
- 14th - 18th June, 2021 – [28th Int. Karstological School "Classical Karst": Regional Karstology](#)
- 22nd - 24th June, 2021 – [EuroKarst 2021: The EU Congress on Karst Hydrogeology and Carbonate Reservoirs](#)
- 28th June - 2nd July, 2021 – [NSS Convention 2021 \(Weed, California\)](#)
- 11th - 14th July, 2021 – [Karst Record IX \(KR9\) Conference](#)
- 25th July - 1st August, 2021 – [18th Int. Congress of Speleology \(France\)](#)
- 16th - 20th August, 2021 – [34th Int. Geo. Congress: Global Karst Critical Zone and Land Use Planning](#)
- 22nd - 27th August, 2021 – [47th IAH Congress \(Brazil\)](#)
- 28th August - 4th September, 2021 – [19th International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology](#)
- September 2021 – [Fort Stanton Cave Science Conference](#)
- 6th - 10th September, 2021 – [48th IAH Congress \(Belgium\)](#)
- 30th September - 3rd October, 2021 – [26th International Cave Bear Symposium](#)
- 21st - 24th October, 2021 – [Cave Lighting Workshop](#)
- 26th - 30th October, 2021 – [6th EuroSpeleo Protection Symposium](#)
- 29th October - 2nd November, 2021 – [Speleo Kamaraton](#)

## 2022

- 29th September – 8th October, 2022 – [ISCA's 9th Congress and NCA Convention and \(San Antonio, Texas\)](#)
- 2022 – [NSS Convention 2022 \(Custer, South Dakota\)](#)

### ISCA deadline!

Everything sent **before December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020** will be collected and taken into account to appear in ISCA's newsletters.

@ [Contact: juanjotiscar@i-s-c-a.org](mailto:juanjotiscar@i-s-c-a.org)



# 2021, International year of caves and karst

**ISCA** is pleased to support and be a partner in the **International Year of Caves & Karst 2021!** ISCA feels that caves and karst landscapes are truly deserving of international recognition at this level due to their worldwide significance. We commend the efforts of **UIS** and other partners in this worthy endeavour. We also greatly appreciate UIS's support of ISCA's efforts to establish an International Day of Caves & the Subterranean World.

ISCA and its worldwide membership of show caves proposes to support the international year by offering free admissions to show caves at various times throughout the International Year of Caves & Karst 2021. Concepts to distribute these free admissions tickets include the following: trading them with media outlets in exchange for promotion, social media, caves and karst trivia, photo contests, learning projects for schools, ticket distributions to school groups and economically challenged families, and traditional methods of marketing and public relations efforts.

Participation will be the choice of each individual show cave. Visitation to show caves is one of the primary ways millions of people worldwide learn about caves and karst every year. ISCA's efforts will be aimed at increasing education and awareness of caves and karst. Please join us in supporting the International Year of Caves & Karst 2021!

**VISIT THE IYCK WEBSITE AND LEARN MORE ABOUT KARST**



**INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION**



# What's to come next?

## NEW ARTICLES

### Latest news

#### INTERVIEWS

Let's learn about our ISCA friends

#### CAVES

We have got plenty of these to show

#### GALLERY OF PHOTOS

Philippe Crochet

#### AND MORE...

Do not miss anything!



Join us and become an ISCA Member  
Visit [www.i-s-c-a.org](http://www.i-s-c-a.org) for details and  
follow us on Facebook!





## INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION

### ABOUT INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION

The [International Show Caves Association \(ISCA\)](#) was founded in 1990 and is headquartered in [Frasassi/Genga, Italy](#),

ISCA is an international organization of persons, associations, corporations, and government agencies who own, manage or operate [show caves](#) that are open to the public. ISCA provides a critical forum for show caves to network and collaborate on matters that pertain to their caves. ISCA aims to promote, encourage, and support the cooperation of show cave operators, speleologists and cave enthusiasts through the sharing of information and to promote the preservation and conservation of caves, while increasing public interest in the world of show caves by way of unique marketing and the evolution of methods to enhance the show cave experience.