

Matienzo Caves Expedition 2022



Torca la Decepción-Rectifying the Count

Introduction

This report covers the expedition's speleological work in the permit area 17 shown in figure 1 below. This covers Ribamontan al Monte south of the A-8 autopista, Solórzano, Entrambasaguas east of the CA-651 and Ruesga north of Cruz Uzano. The permit also covers work in Cueva Vallina which was proved to link hydraulically with the South Vega system in Matienzo in 2016. The expedition has agreed formal agreements with Club de Espeleología la Cambera to jointly work the Ribamontan al Monte area and with Espeleo Club Tortosa to work in Cueva Vallina.

This report covers the period from November 2021 to November 2022. After two years of travel and other restrictions due to Covid-19 in 2022 we got back to a more normal expedition situation. However, there were still some residual effects resulting in some members not being able to join the expedition or reduce their time spent in Cantabria.

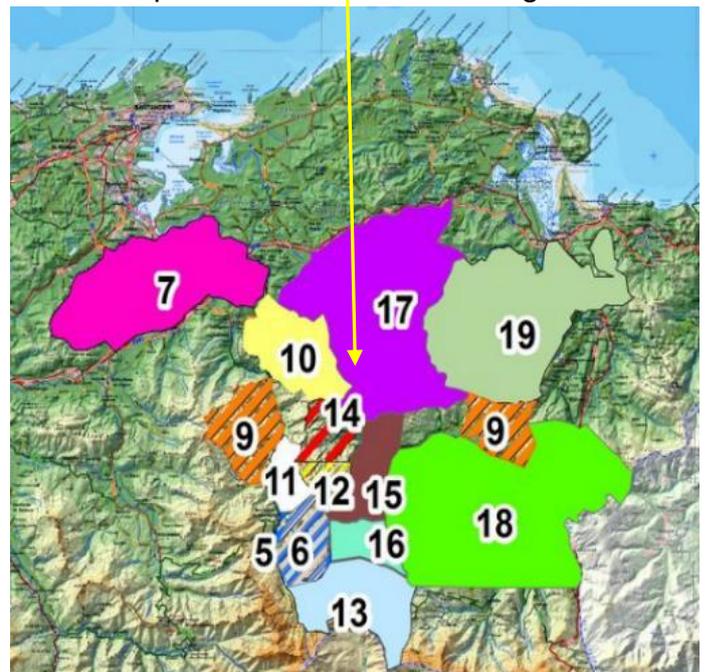


Fig 1 Expedición Británica área de permiso para el 2022

The main finds were in: Torca del Muérdgo (20814); Torca la Decepción (0252); Fridge Door Cave (1800) and Fuente de Villanueva (5023). These four finds themselves accounted for over six kilometres, out of a total of nearly eight kilometres of new passage found and surveyed in 2022.

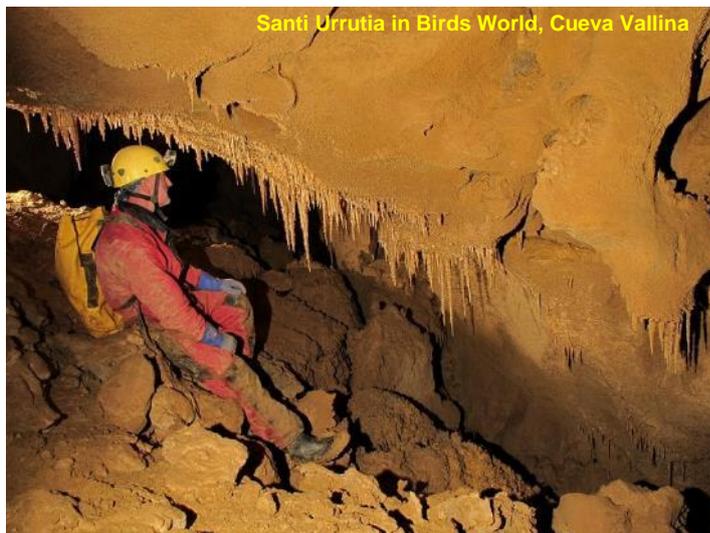
Matienzo Caves - Newly surveyed caves November 2021 to November 2022						
Cave	Name	Grid Reference 30T datum ETRS89	Area	Previous length (m)	New length (m)	Extra length (m)
2081	Torca del Muérdgo	452218 4794249	S Vega	0	2131	2131
252	Torca la Decepción	453024 4798423	La Secada	216	70059 ⁽¹⁾	2119
81	Cueva de Carcavuezo	452787 4797778	La Secada	67420 ⁽¹⁾		273
3234	Cueva-Cubio del Llanio	451519 4800779	Riaño			31
1800	Fridge Door Cave	451162 4800782	Riaño	255	1284	1029
5023	Fuente de Villanueva	447757 4804095	Villanueva	0	795	795
27	Cueva Oñite	454296 4794900	Ozana	11528 ⁽²⁾	11788 ⁽²⁾	208
25	Sistema del Risco	453199 4795845	El Sedo			52
733	Cueva Vallina	450017 4792407	Arredondo	35462	35636	174
98	Cueva de Bollón	452048 4797721	La Secada	1742	2221	107
3991	Cueva de Lolo	452480 4803262	Solórzano	275	367	91
662	Tonsillitis Pot	449054 4793567	La Rasa	25	109	84
79	Sima Wendy	450701 4797006	El Naso	0	71	71
71	Torca del Mostajo	450243 4796764	Cubija	22949 ⁽³⁾	23010 ⁽³⁾	61
810	Shaft	455088 4795391	Mullir	0	61	61
2538	El Cubillion	446058 4796484	Moncobe	2481	2533	52
904	shaft	455787 4794611	Mullir	0	49	49
5035	Cueva de la Llusa 3	449346 4804971	Cierrolinos	0	45	45
5102	Shaft	449318 4804844	Cierrolinos	0	42	42
34	Cuevas los Adillos	451567 4794774	South Vega	20	52	32
904	Shaft	455787 4794611	Mullir	0	32	32
877	Cave	450603 4797017	El Naso	0	29	29
5163	Cave	450990 4796679	El Naso	0	27	27
2134	Shaft	450541 4796552	Cubija	0	26	26
4038	Cave	453265 4802989	Solórzano		23	23
5089	Cueva de Dos Árboles	451771 4794755	S Vega		22	22
4867	Resurgence	451027 4805506	El Rincón	0	20	20
4659	Cave	452102 4793966	Piluca	0	20	20
477	Cave	451492 4795377	South Vega	24	43	19
353	Shaft	452628 4798341	La Secada	0	18	18
2798	shaft	454888 4795565	Mullir	0	15	15
780	Torca de Corcada	448216 4794634	Seldesuto	307	321	14
5140	Cave	454833 4795478	Mullir	0	14	14
5141	Cave	454842 4795464	Mullir	0	14	14
5143	Cave	452139 4794061	Piluca	0	13	13
5206	White Rabbit Hole	450791 4796940	El Naso	0	10	10
1608	Shaft	450966 4796650	El Naso	0	8	8
5142	Shaft	452170 4793989	Piluca	0	6	6
1344	Cave	451837 4794593	South Vega	8	12	4
(1) part of the Four Valleys System, (2) part of the Sima-Cueva del Risco system, (3) part of the Cubija System						
Total Cave Passage Surveyed						7841

A further sixty eight new caves and sites have been added to our website since our last report in November 2021. Forty five were found and located during the Easter and summer expeditions and the rest being either identified last winter or by the Club de Espeleología la Cambera who we agreed with to share the Ribamontáin al Monte area south of the A-8 autopista. A number of surveys are in the process of being completed and will appear on the Matienzo Caves Project website (<http://matienzocaves.org.uk/page1.php>) when complete along with details of all the sites and caves found in our permit area.

Southern Sector Cueva Vallina (0733)

The area around *Zona Blanca* and *Swirl Chamber* in Vallina I is very complicated, and it was not clear on the surveys if parts were linked, and some passages found had not been added to the survey. At Easter this area was sorted out with links made between known sections and 174m of new cave survey was added.

The main diving work in the main downstream sumps had to be postponed to 2023 when the key diver had to make an unexpected return to the UK after the gear for the project was installed, and later removed. The work in this cave is shared with Espeleo Club Tortosa who had the permit for this cave in the 1990s when they collaborated with us to explore the system. They again in 2022 organised an expedition to push passages in Vallina II. Their finds will be uploaded to our website but are not detailed in this report. Their work has shown an anomaly in our survey of part of Vallina II and work is underway by the Tortosa group and ourselves to identify the survey error and correct the survey.



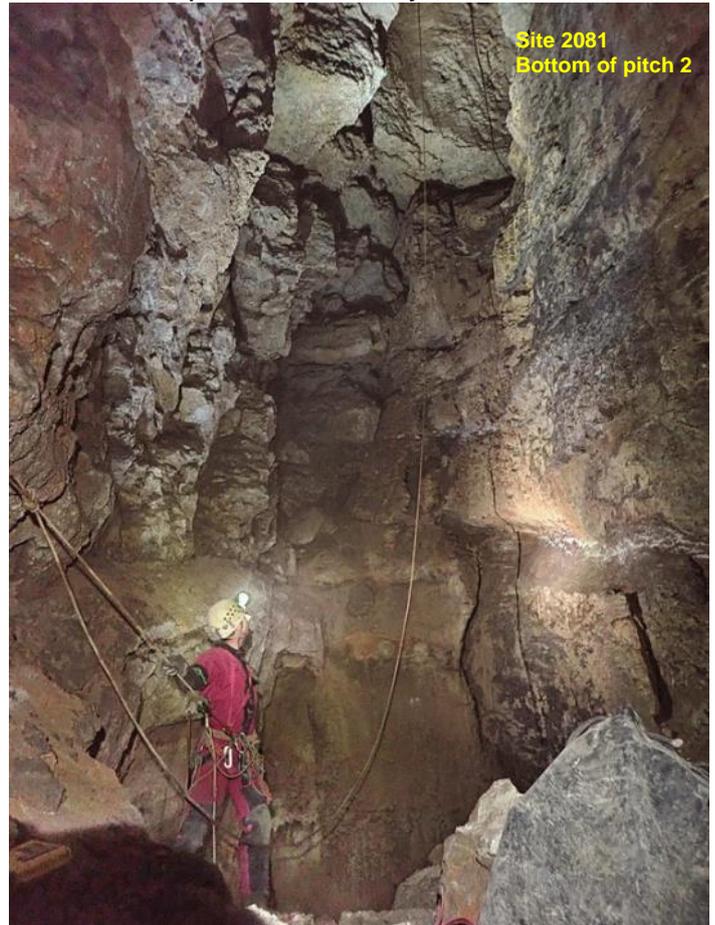
South Vega



Torca del Muérdago (2081) is a major new cave over 2km long and 200m deep, revealed by digging site 2081 first found in 1992, during December 2021. Care is needed throughout the system as poor limestone in places has affected bolt placements, hand- and footholds and required extra care on pitches.



This cave was further pushed during our Easter expedition to well over 2km with a number of leads still to push and surveyed in 2023. The cave

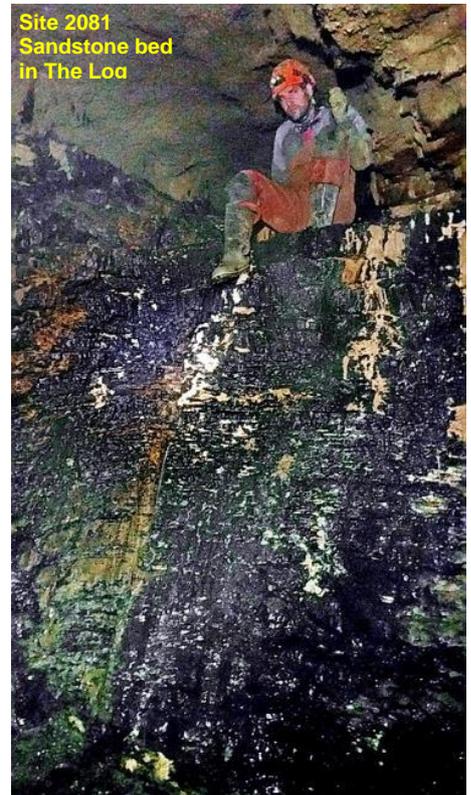


is heading south of the Cruz Usaño ridge with the stream section possibly heading towards the resurgence in Hoyo Mortiro. Another possibility is that it turns again and goes SW towards the Cueva Vallina Rio Rioja area. Water tracing in the summer was not possible given the unusually very dry weather, and so will be now carried out in 2023

The cave has a number of sandstone beds/lenses that form the impermeable bed of the stream passage, in a similar way as occurs in Cueva de los Cantones (0865). This results in the stream passage getting lower until it drops through the impermeable

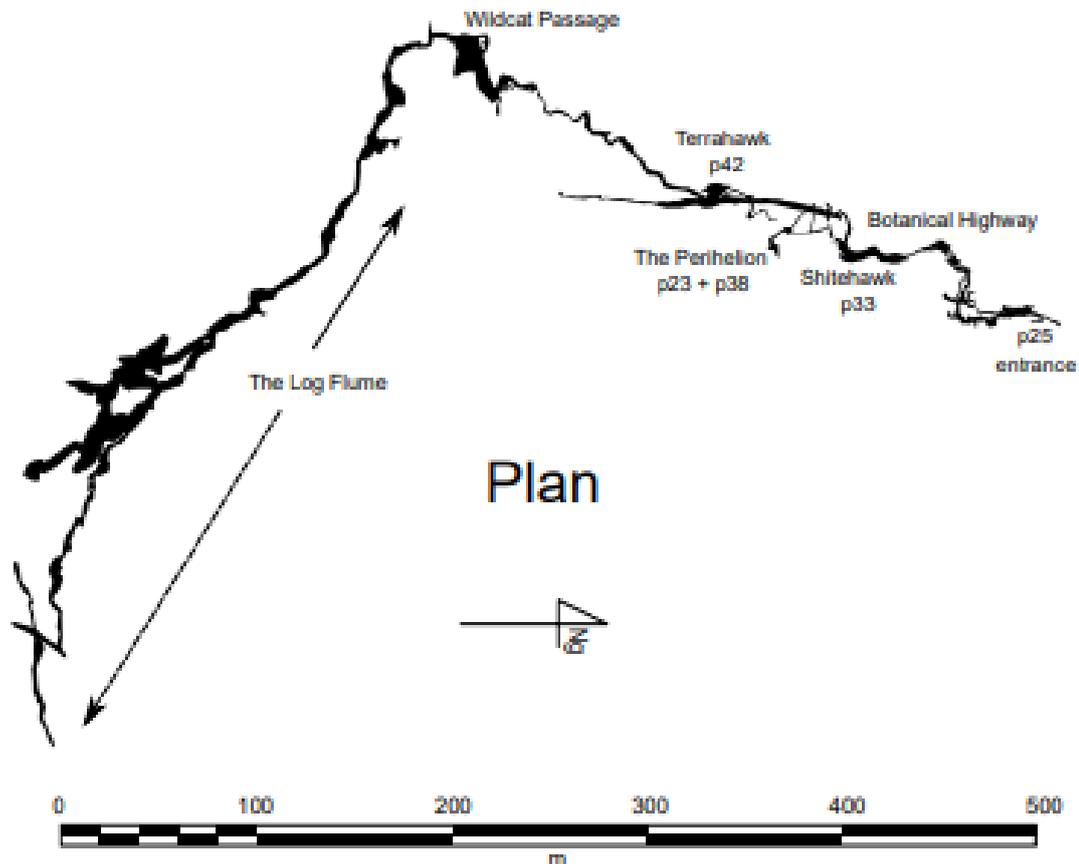


sandstone bed into a bigger passage. In this cave the beds dip down to the south and form a number of slides over the slippery sandstone bed (log flumes) that means if water levels are high it would make getting back problematic. At the end of the Easter expedition the weather turned wet meaning that trips to these lower sections had to be abandoned.

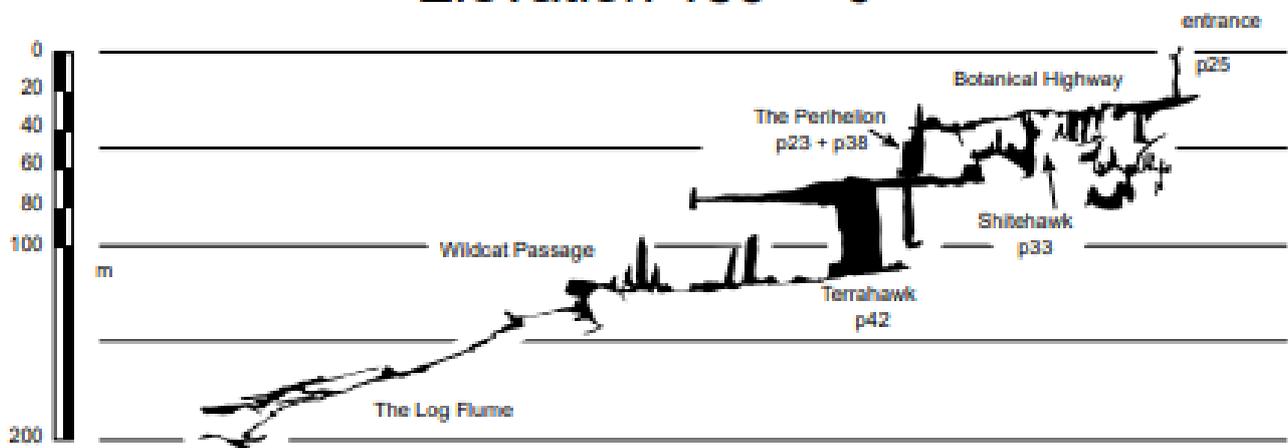


This area was not visited in the summer

as the team was engaged in surveying Torca la Decepción (0252), so was left until 2023.



Elevation 180° - 0°



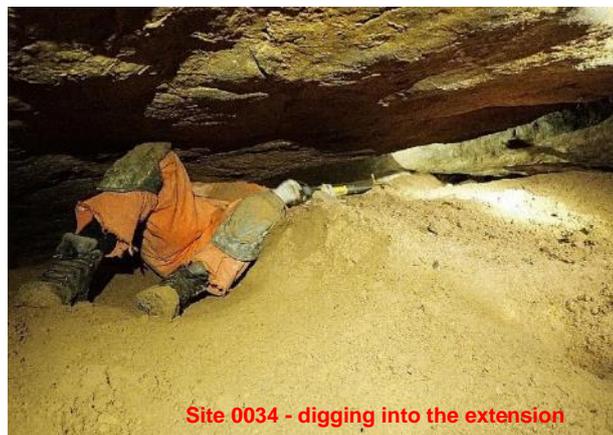
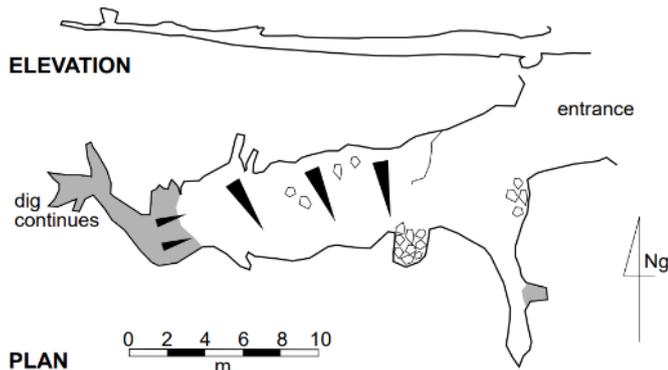
Site: 2081 - Torca del Muérdago (Mistletoe Pot)

Length:2131m Depth:213m Altitude:557m

South Vega, Cantabria, Spain 30T 452218 4794254(ETRS89)

At Torca del Dron ([4669](#)) the sandy dig on the side of the main pitch was dug for 10m with a good draught. The site was found to be a partly filled phreatic tube and must have been a major water course at some time. The dig is seen to continue at least as far as a bend and is considered a

good prospect. At Cuevas de los Adillos ([0034](#)) a 31m long passage at the end on the right was opened with a

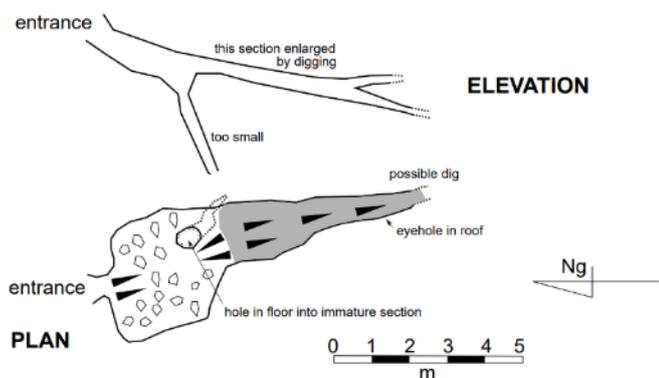


Site 0034: Cueva de los Adillos

South Vega 30T 451567 4794779 Altitude 420m
Surveyed 2022 to BCRA 5c by DistoX

Length 51m
Drawn by NJD

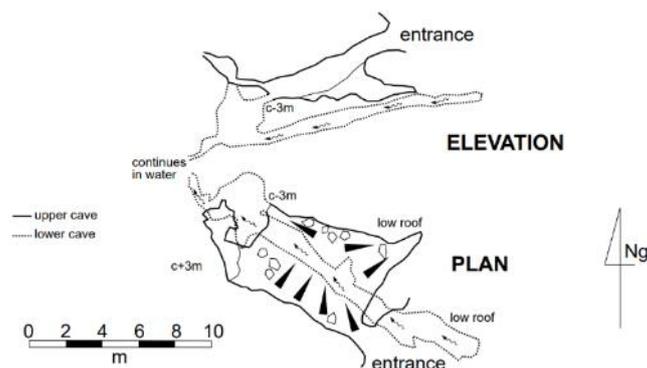
small draught and a dig where the cave can be seen going on into the hill side. Also dug were



Site 1344: Cave

South Vega 30T 451837 4794593 Altitude 484m
Surveyed 2022 to BCRA 5c by DistoX

Length 12m
Drawn by NJD



Site 0477: Cave

South Vega 30T 451492 4795369 Altitude 106m
Surveyed 2022 to BCRA 5c by DistoX

Length 39m
Drawn by NJD

sites [1390](#) (Twin Streams Dig), [1344](#) and [0477](#) where some progress was made but more work is required. Four previously undescended shafts were

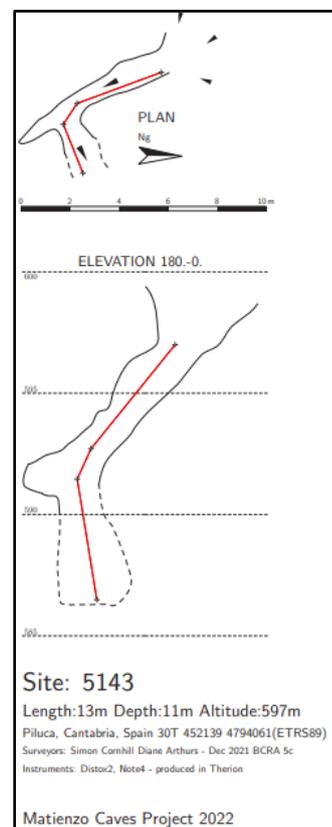
visited on S Vega to the SE of Codisera ([0039](#)) [5106](#) and [5109](#) were descended to chokes at 9m and 10m respectively. Shaft [2913](#) was



found to be a free climb in a choked rift 7m deep. Shaft [5162](#) was found under gorse bushes and, on a later visit, to be a 6m pitch (bolt placed) to a rubble blockage that was dug to an oscillating boulder jammed over an echoing second pitch of about 7m – work is now required to remove this to drop the pitch. Two shafts were found, the first [5142](#) was choked at 6m and the second [5143](#) choked at 7m. At site [0476](#) (now called



Goat Shaft) a goat was rescued at the request of a farmer. The animal had been down for over a day and seemed ok on exit. Cueva de los Dos Árboles ([5089](#)) was pushed and two chambers found, and a number of short passages located that closed down. This site is of a fossil nature and, given the lack of draught and no open leads, it is now considered a



Site: 5143

Length:13m Depth:11m Altitude:597m
Piluca, Cantabria, Spain 30T 452139 4794061(ETRS89)
Surveyors: Simon Cornhill Diane Arthurs - Dec 2021 BCRA 5c
Instruments: Disto2, Note4 - produced in Therion

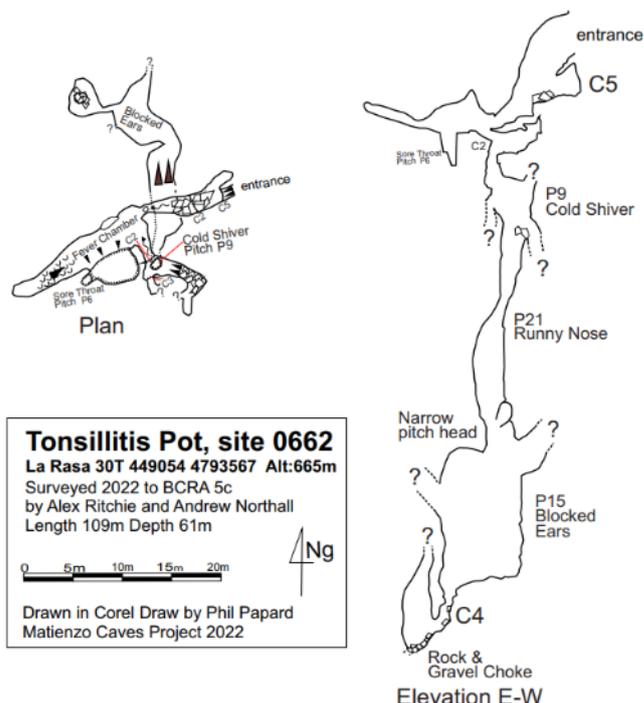
Matienco Caves Project 2022

poor prospect. A number of new sites were located that may be dug in the future, all are documented on our website

Seldesuto On the north side of ridge called La Rasa a crawl in Tonsillitis Pot ([0662](#)) was dug to a series of pitches and passages that eventually choked. In total 84m of new passage and shafts were surveyed making the site 109m long and 61m deep.



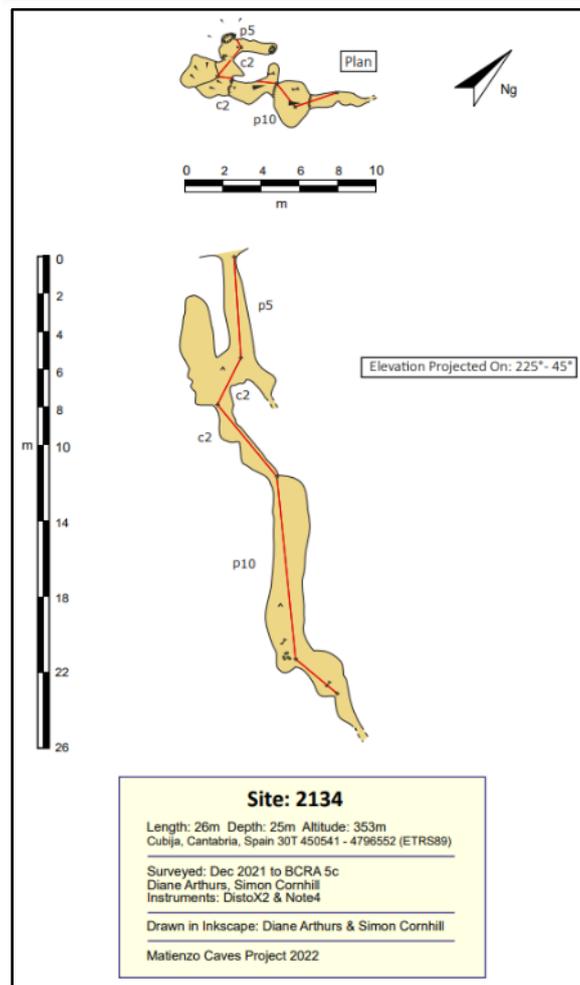
The dig at the end of the *Fossil Route* in Torca de Corcada ([0780](#)) was worked on and 14m was surveyed back to the previous end point of the survey. More work is needed at this important site. A flood resurgence [1900](#) near to Cueva Arenal was capped open, but the ways on were found be blocked by stal and were far too tight.



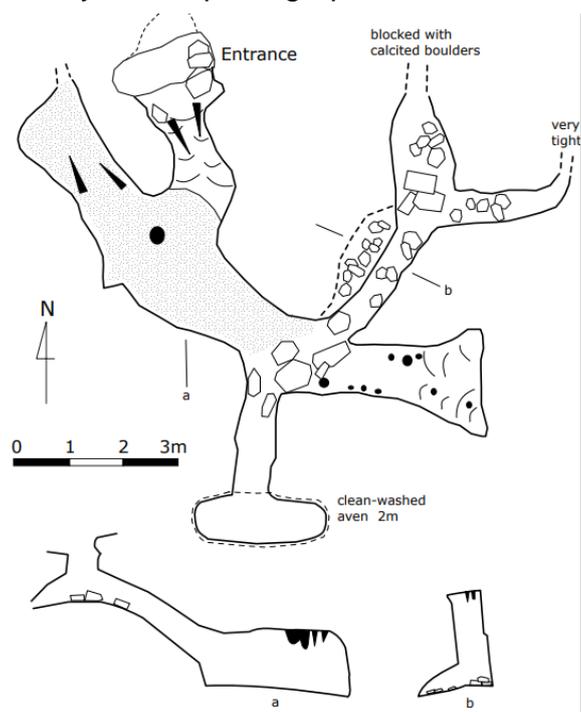
Las Calzadillas - it was hoped that the lorry that had been dumped into a shaft (Lorry Pot ([1776](#)) would have partly rusted enough in the past 23 years to

allow access below. However, it was found to have only broken up a land to have slipped down into the hole with rock and rubbish on top of the lorry remains. It was too dangerous to try to descend!

Cubia, At Torca del Mostajo ([0071](#)), the remaining open leads in the MUSC Series were checked out. The best one looked good at first but closed down after a short passage. Surveying of this find and some known, but not surveyed passages, were surveyed at 81m. A strongly draughting dig ([0813](#)) that sits above a blank area of the Cubija System was dug, and will be pursued in 2023. Two new sites were located: a shaft ([5165](#)) was a blind 1.2m wide pitch of 7.8m behind a strawberry tree, but with no draught; and a 9m deep shaft ([5189](#)) that was descended to a choked base. **Site 2134** was capped at the dig, 25m down but the way on turned out to be drainpipe sized.



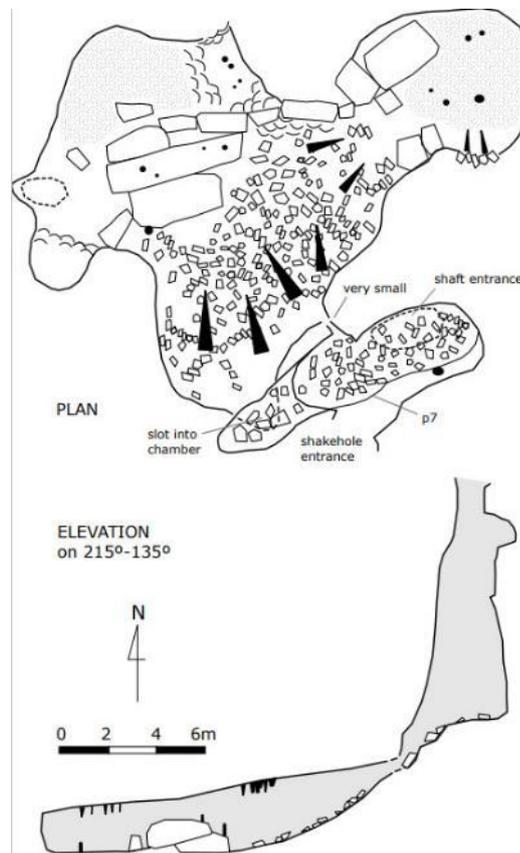
El Naso Sites Sima Wendy (0079) and site 0877 were surveyed and photographed.



0877 (El Naso, Matienzo) 450603 4797017 455m
Length: 28m, July 2022, A. Quin & P. Smith



Site 0877

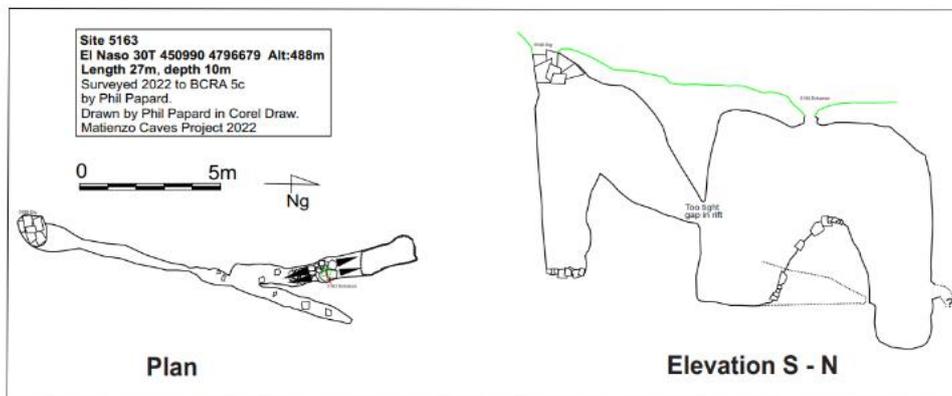


0079 Sima Wendy (El Naso, Matienzo)
450701 4797006 463m
Length: 70m, Depth: 15m, June 2022, A. Quin & P. Smith



Sima Wendy 0079

A new site 5163 was opened up into an old rift system with a second possible entrance (5198). However, to open up this hole would need a lot of rock removing for little gain.



Site 5202

A new dig (5202) was found together with a stuck calf, which was rescued – now called Calf Dig – but, with no draught it is a poor prospect.

At the entrance of Cueva Coberruyo (0138) below the climbing routes, a possible flint knapping stone was visible. Due to the proximity and use of the area by climbers it was removed and reported, as required by our permit, to the Cantabrian Ministry of Cultura and taken on their instructions to the research offices of the Museum of Prehistory and Archaeology of Cantabria.

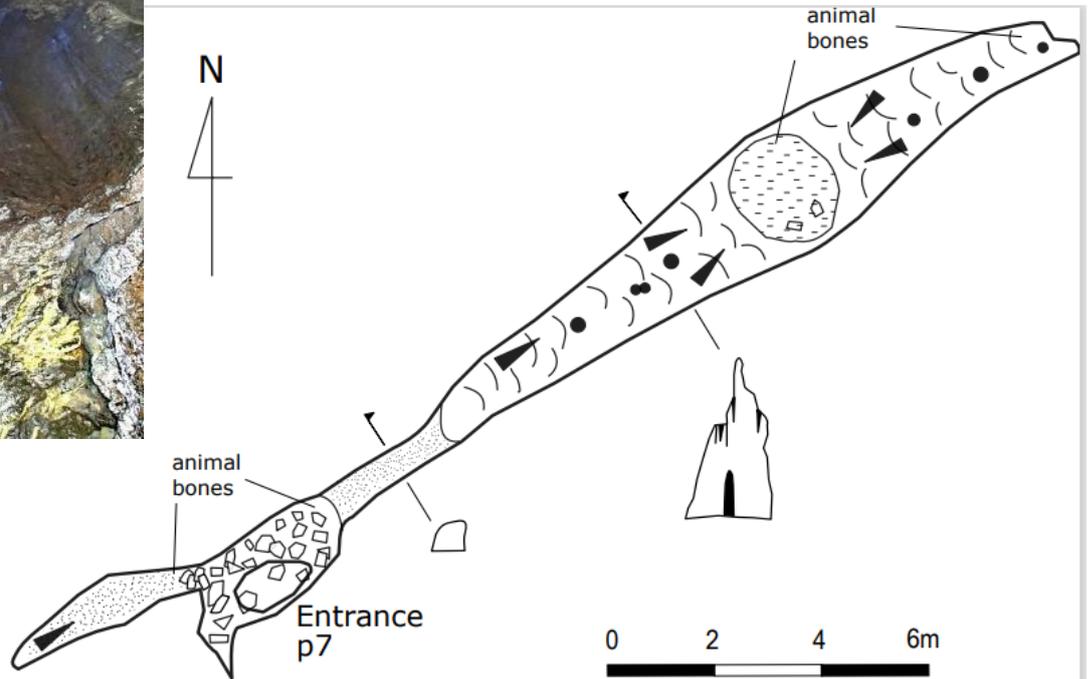


Cueva Coberruyo (0138)
knapping stone

Shaft [1544](#) was checked out hoping that the state of previously reported dead animals would have ameliorated. It had not, as there are now even more rotting animals in plastic bags. However, the site was surveyed.



The strongly draughting Palindrome Dig ([0535](#)) was dug and capped on three occasions, but it became clear that there is no



solid bedrock in the dig and digging down may undermine some of the blocks, and would be a massive engineering exercise. A small hole, White Rabbit Dig ([5206](#)), in a path was noted nearby site was opened up into an old cave fragment, very well decorated on all walls and floor, but with no realistic dig at bottom and no draught.

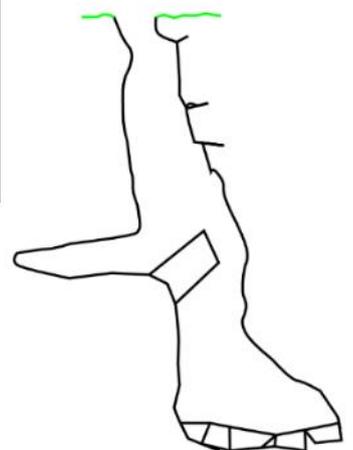
1544 El Nanso, Matienzo 451343 4796755 418m
 Length 32m Depth 10m Survey September 2022 PS

Site [0614](#) was dug to access a 3m deep shaft that was draughting in but lost its draught due to dropping soil down and blocking the bottom. The location is important being over the eastern end of the Cubija System and work will continue in 2023.

The shaft [1608](#) was opened up and a boulder blocking the way on was removed, the supposed chamber below did not exist and ended in a floor of boulders.



Site 1608 El Naso
 30T 450966 4796650 Alt:496m
 Length 8m, depth 6m
 Surveyed and drawn
 by Phil Papard to BCRA 2b
 Matienzo Caves Project 2022

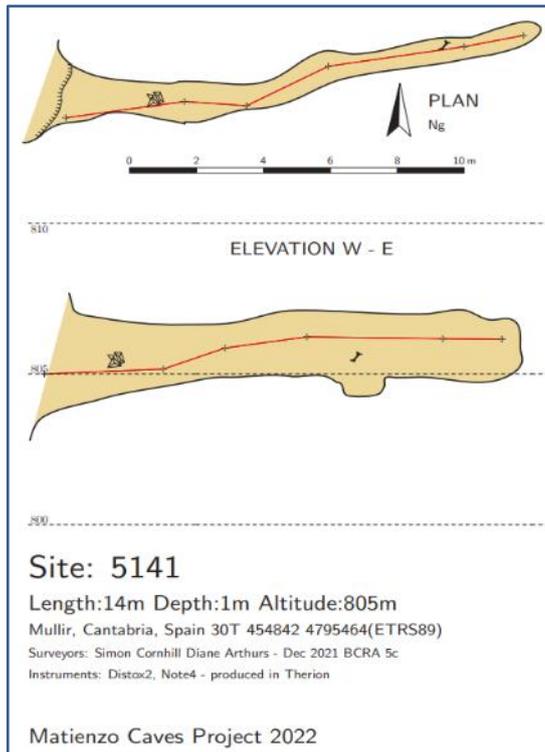
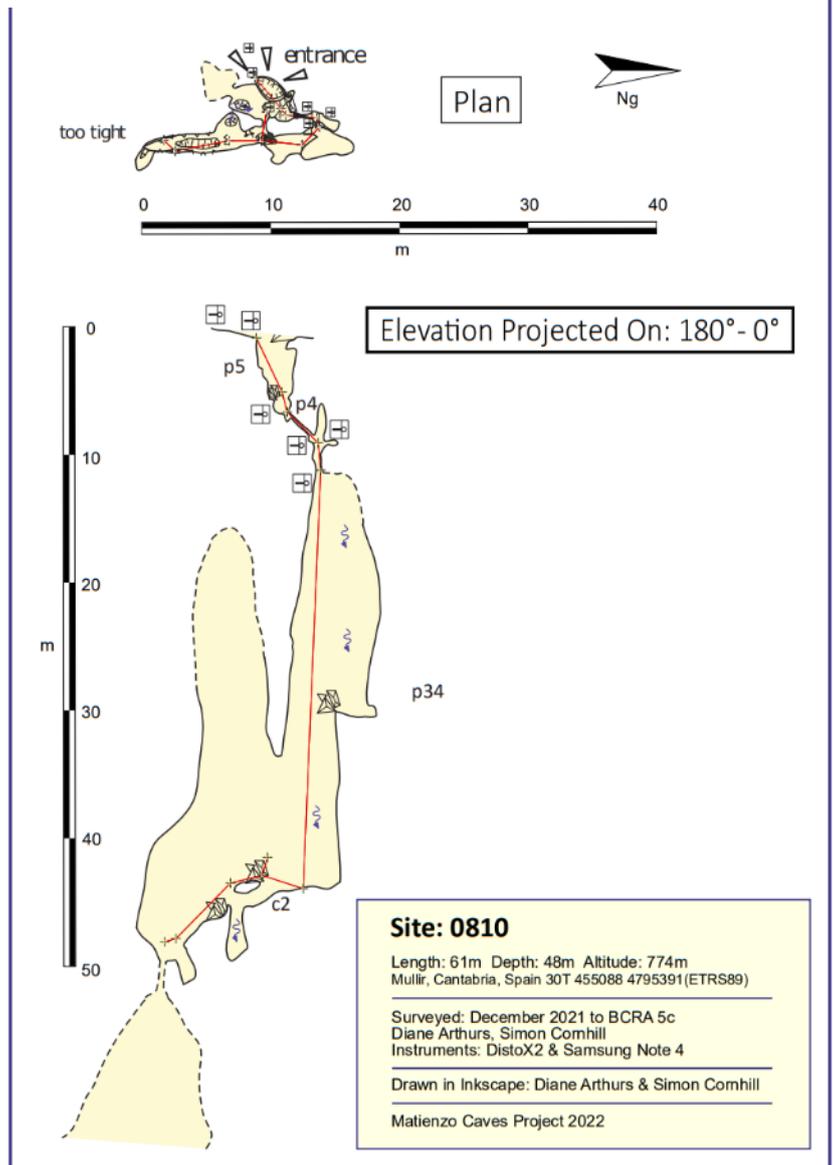


Muela and Mullir including El Sedo, La Colina, Cubilla and Ozana

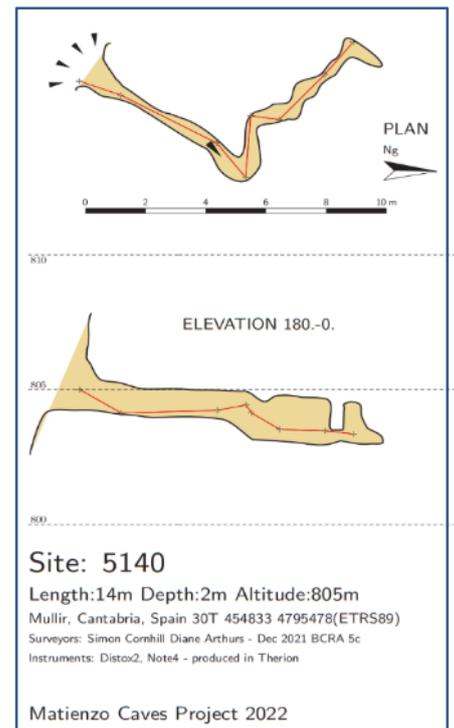
A number of sites were worked at or discovered around Mullir.



site 810



Site [0810](#) has a feasible depth potential of 600m+. Capping work started, first to enlarge the top of the second pitch (p40) then, at the top of a third pitch (50m down), where it is believed a narrow slot will allow access after the next session. This hole looks like most the pitch tops will requiring some enlarging.



The highest known hole on Mullir (at 816m altitude) is [site 2798](#), it was found that the drop from the entrance soon choked. Two new short caves ([5140](#) and [5141](#)) were explored and surveyed.

Investigating the overgrown walk up onto the tops from Cruz Usaño, [site 0904](#) was found 90m away



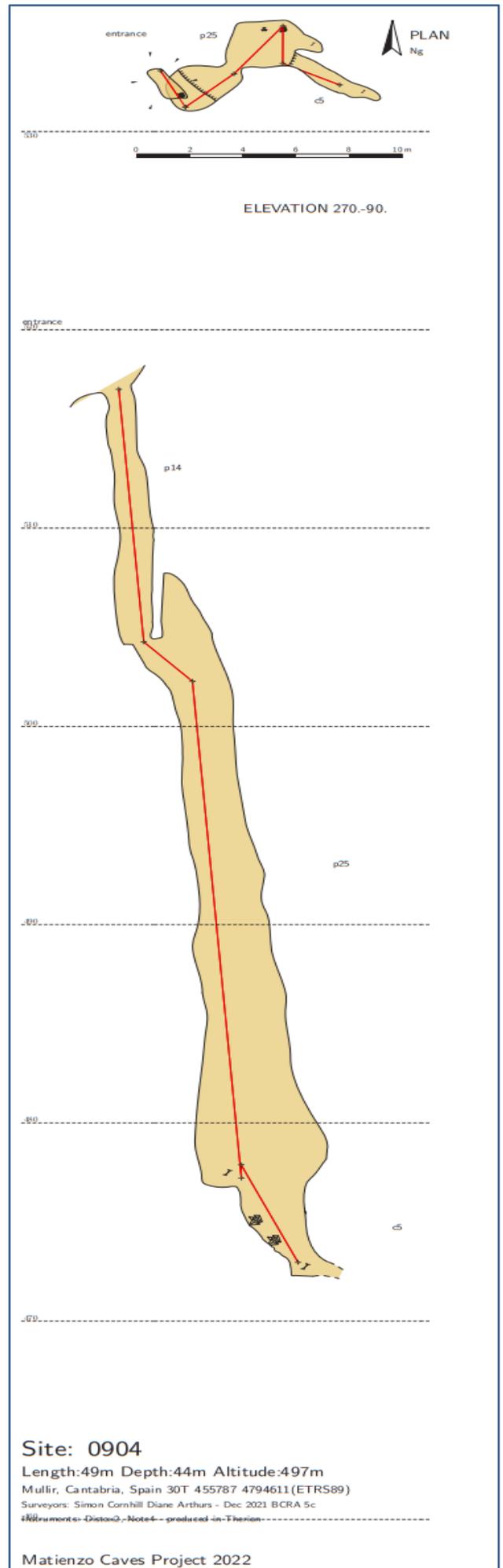
from its supposed position. A "fine 43m shaft" drops in a heavily calcited shaft to a choked floor with bones and an old dog collar.



In Sima-Cueva del Risco system ([0025](#)) at the Risco end a link was found by climbing up and traversing a rift in the roof of *Galeria Arco* into *Dambuster Series*, a safer route into this part of the system.

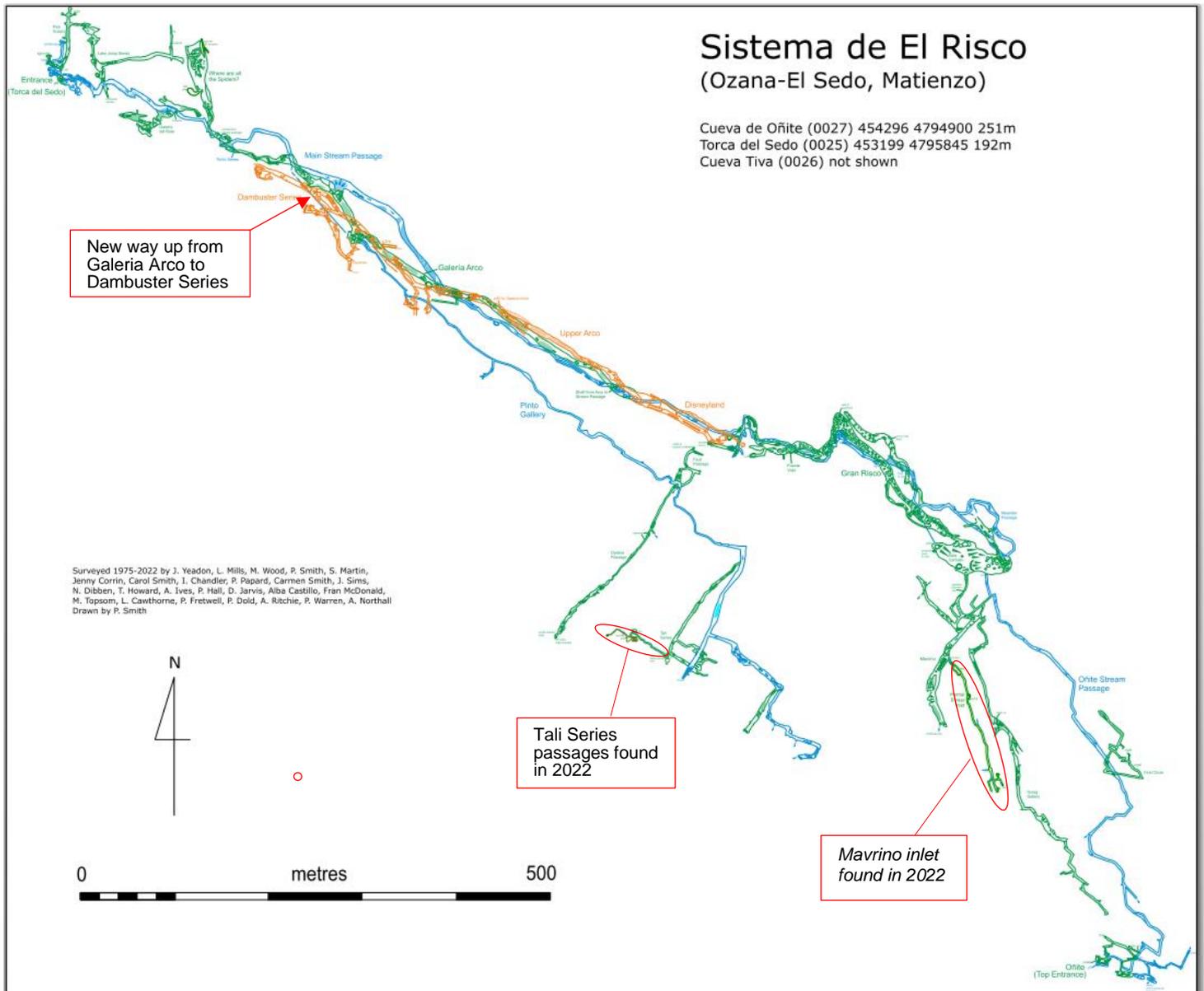


At the other end of the system (Cueva Oñite, [0027](#)) an inlet off the southeast side of was pushed for over 200m over two trips along a tall rift stream passage and



along a traverse to a mud/rock choke with tree routes that must be near the surface.

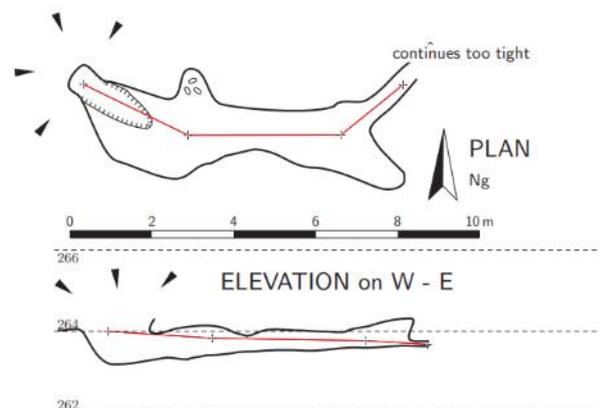
This work added 209m of cave to the system. At the end of *Tali Series*, a pitch was dropped into a calcited rift that went for some 50m to an ongoing lead, needing further work.



Two new shafts were found: shaft [5168](#) at 5m deep with cow bones seen at bottom and with no draught and shaft [5169](#), 5m deep in fractured karren area. A new cave ([5164](#)) was located and found to be 8.5m to a fist sized hole with no draught.



To the north of the walk above the Risco waterfall area, a cave (Ant Hole, [5197](#)) was found and opened up to a 6m drop needing a ladder. This is still to be investigated, but it's a poor prospect as there



Site: 5164

Length:10m Depth:1m Altitude:262m
 La Colina, Cantabria, Spain 30T 452772 4796407(ETRS89)
 Surveyors: Diane Arthurs, Simon Cornhill - April 2022 BCRA 5c
 Instruments: Distox2, Note4 - produced in Therion

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is little to no draught.

The North-East Sector and The Four Valleys System

La Secada In Torca la Decepción ([0252/4732](#)) the initial disappointment last year. This followed



Site 0252 – entrance to wet crawl

Site 0252 – exit to wet crawl

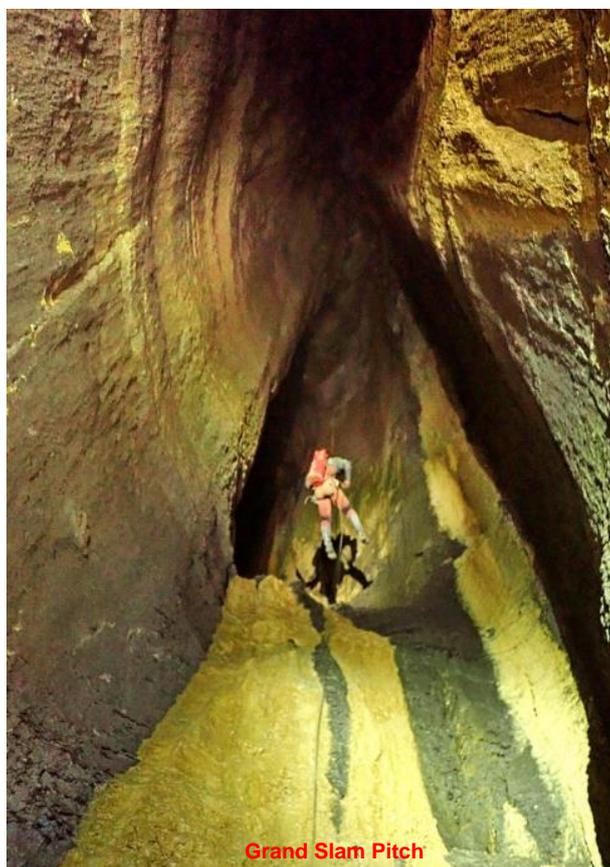
five years of very hard work digging and capping to the head of an exciting, draughting 40m broken pitch that led to some inlet passages and ended at a calcited rift and squalid, wet, tight crawl. Like the Yorkshire cave of the same name exploration by Bob Leakey in 1944 - who stripped off naked to push a tight wet crawl, pushing the spoil with his feet - in Matienzo, our team member, who likes squalid wet crawls, managed to dig his way through this crawl this summer in a similar fashion, but not naked!

The opening up of this wet crawl led to a stream passage (Stepping Stone Passage) that ended at a 35m deep rift, a 26m pitch at the far end of the rift (Grand Slam Pitch) opened up and extensive system of open passages below. During the summer of 2022 this allowed exploration of 2km of open passage. The northern arm led to

the Armageddon boulder choke in Cueva Hoyuca. A



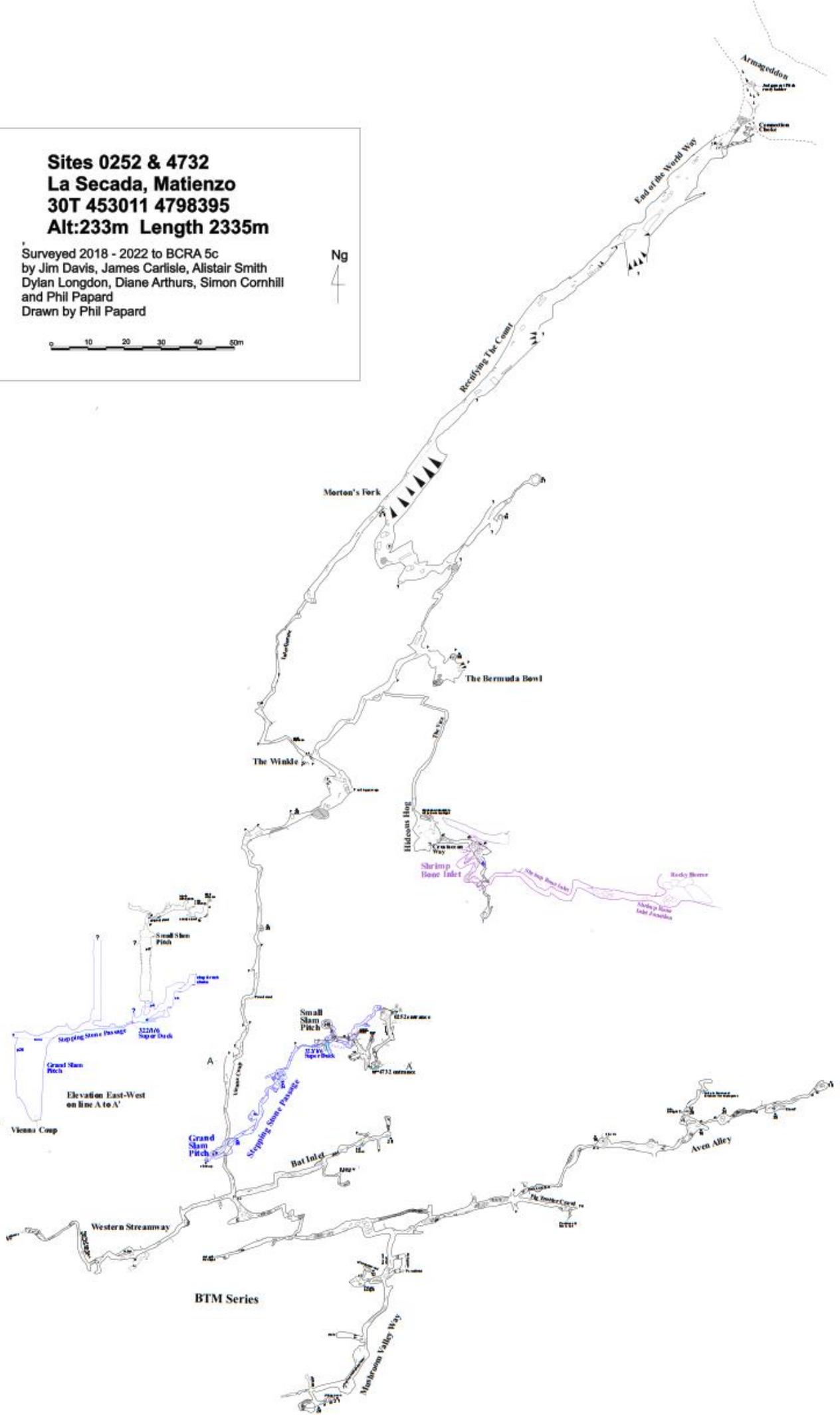
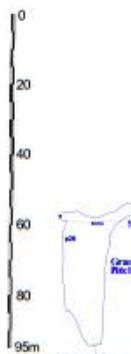
boulder blocked the connection through the choke to Armageddon as it was not possible, without risk, to remove the overhead boulder from the Torca Decepción side. The team threw a rope over the boulder as a marker. A trip via The Giant Panda entrance (2591) to Cueva Hoyuca (0107) reached the Armageddon choke, the rope marker was found and the boulder removed and the through trip completed.



Grand Slam Pitch

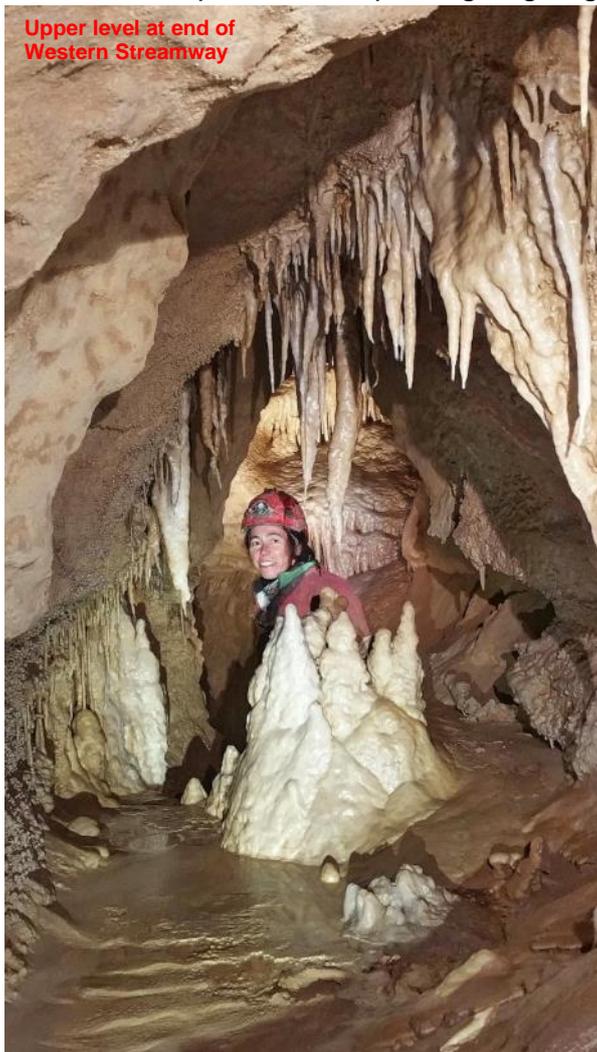
Sites 0252 & 4732
La Secada, Matienzo
30T 453011 4798395
Alt:233m Length 2335m

Surveyed 2018 - 2022 to BCRA 5c
 by Jim Davis, James Carlisle, Alistair Smith
 Dylan Longdon, Diane Arthurs, Simon Cornhill
 and Phil Papard
 Drawn by Phil Papard

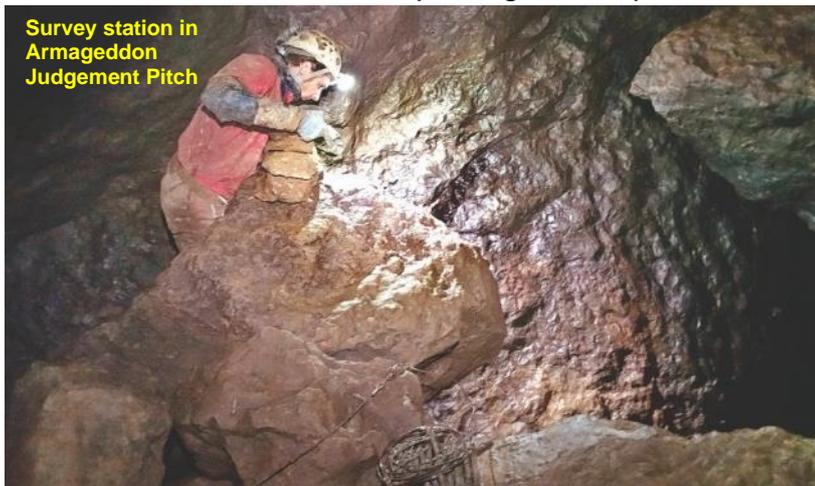


BTM Series

On following trips, a link to Shrimp Bone Inlet and hence to Rocky Horror was found as well as a complex series of passages to the south under the main valley in the wood above the Mushroom Field. Also explored were passages going east and west. There are still passages to explore in the



Upper level at end of Western Streamway



Survey station in Armageddon Judgement Pitch



Rocky Horror looking to Shrimp

in normal and wet weather, it's likely to be impassable, especially on the return. There are several options to do this. Hopefully, with further exploration, we may even find the hoped for higher level passages that may go further to the west and link to other caves.

In Cueva de Carcavuezo ([0081](#)) work started surveying the Sewers of Doom a very complex maze area stretching below the Coke Run. The survey started well with over half a km surveyed. About half of this had been previously surveyed but not in a digital format - it only appeared on one paper survey. More work is needed to complete this survey project in 2023.

The somewhat squalid Cueva de Bollón ([0098](#)) was pushed and surveyed adding 107m to this cave first pushed (but clearly not fully) in 1974. It shows what persistence can achieve in well-known caves.

A few days digging occurred at Bingo (0880). This large section of fossil passage sits well above and to the east of the extensions in Torca la Decepcion and is just as likely not to be part of this series but to link into the system further east, if digging is successful.



Site 98 surveying new finds

Also a number of sites were dug in the area including sites [5045](#) and [1292](#) that have a slight draught as well as the strongly draughting digs of Socks ([1017](#)) and Cueva Superfosfato ([0200](#))



Fresnedo

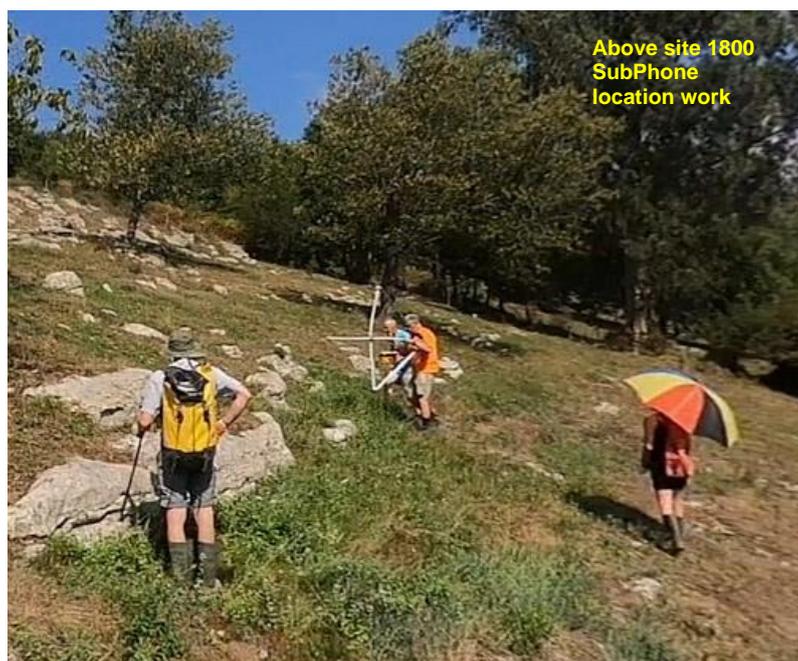
Two trips were made to the *Knotted Rope Series* in Cueva Fresnedo 2 ([0841](#)). The old access rope was replaced, but the proposed climb to a high level passage proved to be an alcove. One pitch was dropped but choked. This area of the cave needs (re)surveying as, at present, there is only a centre line.

The dig [2522](#) that should link into Cueva del Torno ([2366](#)) was looked at on a hot day to assess the digging prospect. It was confirmed the main draught comes out of the bottom of the entrance dig and not from the sandy crawl area found two years ago, which draughts a lot less. This draughting dig will be a project for 2023.

Riaño

Fridge Door Cave ([1800](#)) was dived and pushed by Jim Lister with Mark Smith in the summer (he could not fly at Easter from Hong Kong, due to the strict lockdown Covid laws). At Easter, the water levels were high and flooded at the tight section at the bottom of the entrance. Jim had planned for this, and the tight bypass section was dug out to allow him fit through in a wet suit and start the dive and push the continuation in sump 2. This was passed and higher level passages found, which were pushed and surveyed.

These passages were then further pushed and surveyed by Jim and Mark in the summer. It seems certain these passages are all part of the same system as Cueva-Cubío del Llanío (3234) and it was decided the best option would be to try to dig from the Llanío end and, connected push all the leads left open from



that end. Some digging in Llanio took place at a draughting side passage at the start of High Pulse but it closed down after a few metres.

One area (Stairway to Heaven) was found in the higher levels of Fridge Door Cave that seemed close to the surface as there were some tree roots and snail shells. This site was then located using Ron Taylor's SubPhones, both to identify

the possible digging prospects and to adjust the survey as it was known the survey in sumps 1 and 2 were likely to be in error due to the nearly zero visibility in the sumps. Using the SubPhones

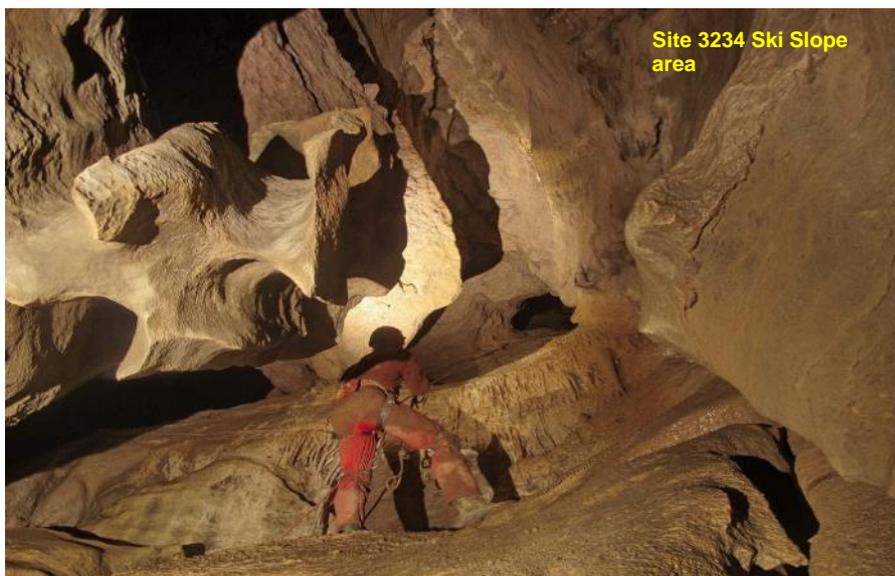


developed by Ron Taylor the location proved successful with the site was found to be only 3 - 4m deep in the steeply dipping field, there was nothing on the surface to suggest an entrance at this point but, given this field was pastureland, any holes would have been filled in many years ago. A little excavation took place below the SubPhone point where it seemed that the cave would have come to the surface. This small dig showed it was possible but, for a full dig, we will first need to get agreement from the farmer to proceed.

The SubPhone location point was some 40m away from the original survey point. Due we think to the survey errors in the sumps. This located point was then used to correct the survey. This put the far south-eastern branch only a few metres away and at the same level as the far west end of High Pulse in Cueva-Cubío del Llanío ([3234](#)).

It had been thought the dig at the end of High Pulse was too difficult: it being a downhill, awkward excavation and a long distance from Fridge Door Cave. Now that it's only a few meters to be dug, it is a very good prospect for a connection and work will now shift to the more promising dig at the end of High Pulse to get the connection. To make access easier and possible for larger people, the squeeze in No Breast Feed Crawl will be modified. If this link can be made it is even more useful to dig out the connection between Fridge Door Cave and Cueva de la Espada ([0103](#)).

In Cueva-Cubío del Llanío ([3234](#)) using SubPhone Entrance ([4536](#)), two trips checked out possible leads in the area south of the Ski Slope - none went any distance, one requires digging and one local connection was made.



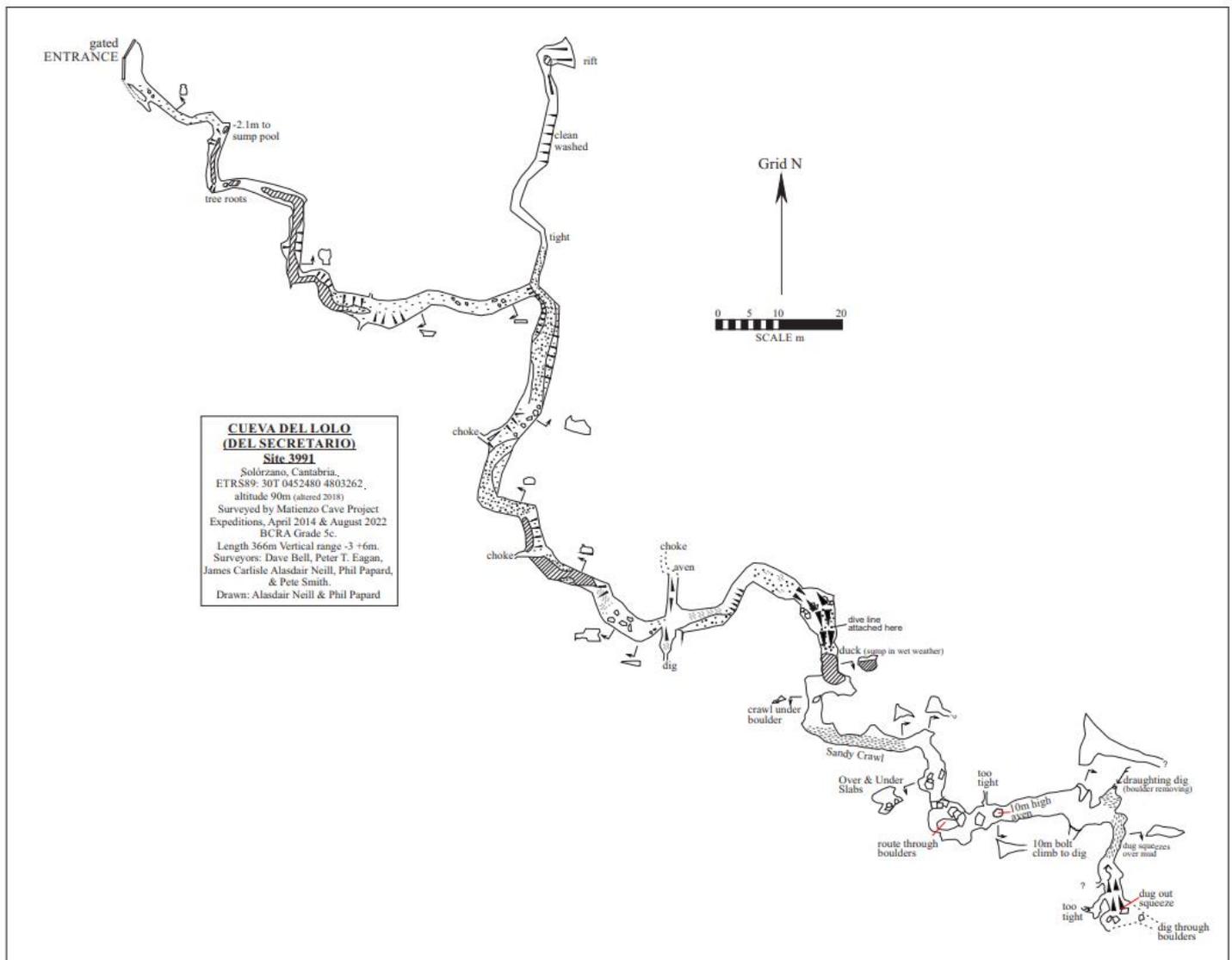
On another trip an aven was climbed 20m to a draughting choke above the Ski Slope and then some progress was made in "We Were Not the First" above Torno Inlet - easy digging and more work is needed in this area.

Some other areas were also checked out mainly at the end and below Terminal Decline but there was no or little draught, and no good digging site was found.

There are still some possible roof passages in the area of Pulse Racer to be looked at

At **Navajeda** A possibly promising dig ([5172](#)) in a large depression at the side of road was found but not yet dug.

Solórzano Cueva de Lolo ([3991](#)) is situated through a door in the cliff (now not locked) behind the medical centre in the village. A trip to push past the end sump/duck was made and the cave extended by 91m. With the dry weather, the duck consisted of two 0.5m airspace duck sections to get to the chamber found by Colin Hayward some years previously by diving. The site beyond was pushed through a mud coated passage with a clean aven some 6-8m high that needs capping and bolting to reach a passage seen at the top. Further chambers and digs were explored, and the site surveyed. Some of the leads will probably be under water in wet weather.



On the east side of the main road at Quebraduras, five new sites were identified in an area of forest where access is difficult due to the undergrowth. Site [5173](#) is a depression with two small caves of 2m and 3.5m sloping down to a flat floor and probably closing down - but it would be useful to check the draught in hot weather. Shaft [5174](#) could be worth a dig at the base of its open 5m deep rift, but



the bottom was filled with decaying dead animals!

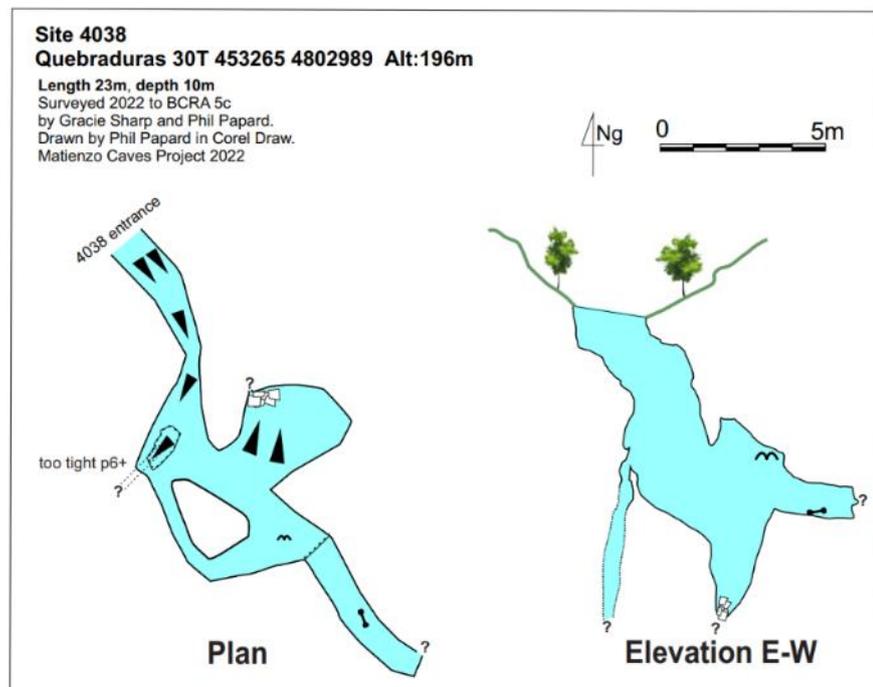
Shaft [5175](#) was the deepest of the five being about 12m deep with pitches of 3m, 2m and 5m to a cross passage that chokes both ways.

Shaft [5176](#) was 9m deep with a jammed block at 3m, but looking down the remaining 6m the chocked floor could be seen. Finally, shaft [5177](#) is a 4m drop to where the way on is either down over debris that needs removing or through a slot that



needs opening to a continuation that draughts out. The floor could not be easily seen but was measured at 5m.

In addition, two known caves were visited, site [4038](#) was surveyed to 23m in length with one resident bat, but few digging prospects, and Car Parts Cave ([4039](#)) that has had a dismantled car dumped in the 7m deep shaft. It looks like there may be some small continuation, but the car parts would need to be removed first. A check for a draught in hot weather would be useful - it is not worth digging if there is no draught.



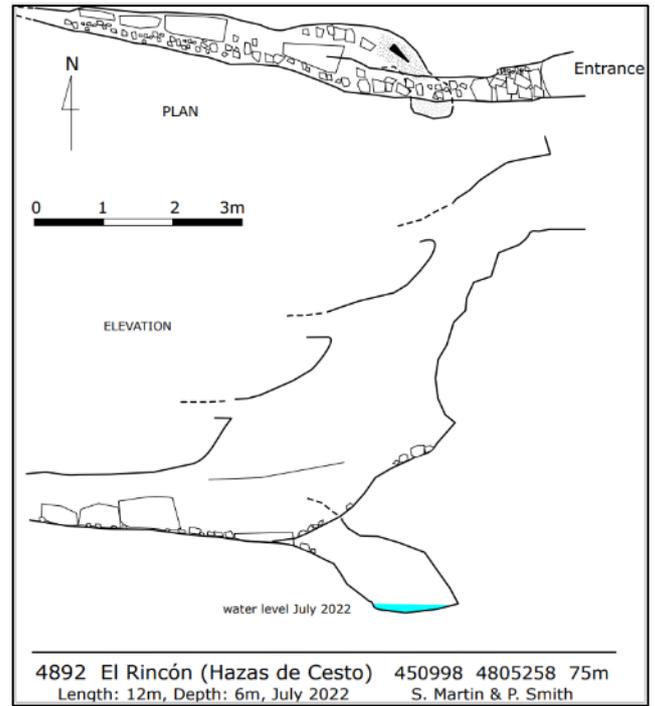
Hazas de Cesto Two sites were found at Easter and checked out in dryer weather in the summer. The resurgence ([5187](#)) was found to be situated on a fault and in the summer, it had dried up. A flake was removed to allow access to look into a tight slot that gets a little bigger beyond but needs a lot more work to continue. The nearby shaft ([5188](#)) was descended by the most



northerly of the three entrance holes on ladder. The bottom drops a little to a rift with sacks on the floor which seem to contain dead animals. There was no draught and no realistic digging prospect. The cave is deep with a rift on 338°.

El Rincón

The resurgence (4892) dug on a few trips and surveyed and assessed. Despite very dry weather in the summer allowing access to the lower, normally flooded rift, it was clear a lot more digging and capping work is needed. It was decided to transfer attention to the resurgence 4867 further round the base of the hill to the north. At this resurgence it was found that the dead animal preventing exploration a few years ago had gone and extensive capping over five trips opened up the draughting rift for some 13m. This was enough to allow a thin person to crawl into where it



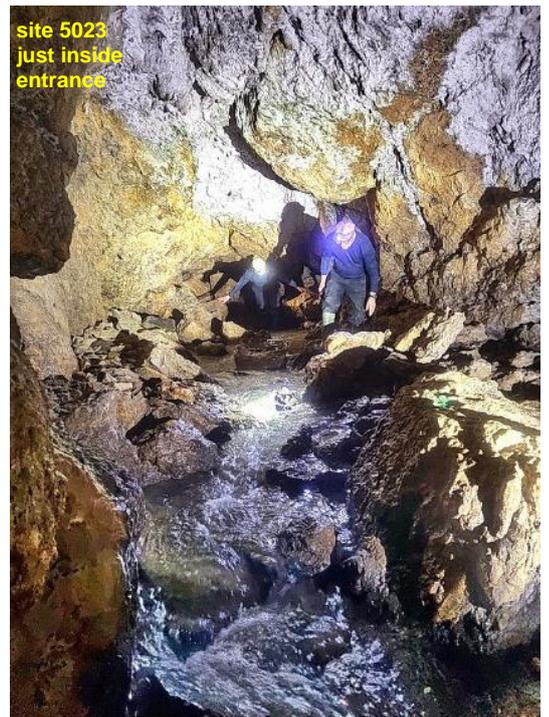
got bigger. Here a small chamber, aven and an ongoing small crawl were found with the crawl still to be pushed. One more day capping will allow less thin people to get to the extension and allow surveying and pushing to take place.

Ribamontáin al Monte area (area is shared with Club de Espeleología la Cambera, their finds in 2022 are not documented here, they will do this.)

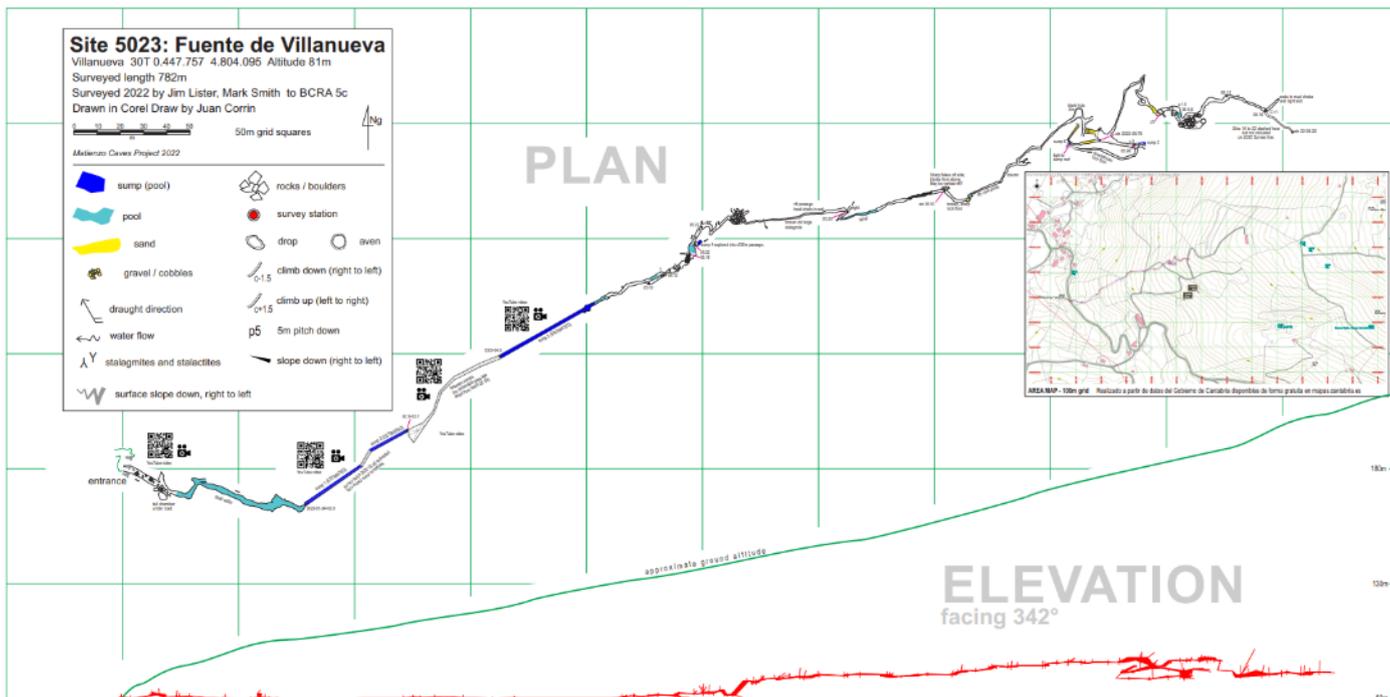
At Villanueva The major resurgence, Fuente de Villanueva (5023). At Easter Jim Lister dived the end pool to check if it would go with a single cylinder and reached a large underwater passage with a cobble floor. Being on a single set, he tied off his line and retreated, planning for a fully kitted up dive in

the future. Unfortunately, a few days later after heavy rain, the water had become cloudy and risen to cover the dive base to such a depth that further diving was not possible. In the summer, the site was dived by Jim Lister and Mark Smith with support from other expedition members. Over four trips, nearly 700m was surveyed in a complex cave with four sumps and higher level passages. The first 2 sumps were often very cloudy partly from local ingress of what appears to be cow slurry! Also, sump 3 was cloudy probably from the diving and work beyond and was slow to clear. However, it was noted that sump 4 was clear and this may prove to be the main way on. This is a key site and work will continue in 2023.

A surface walk above Villanueva proved to be difficult due

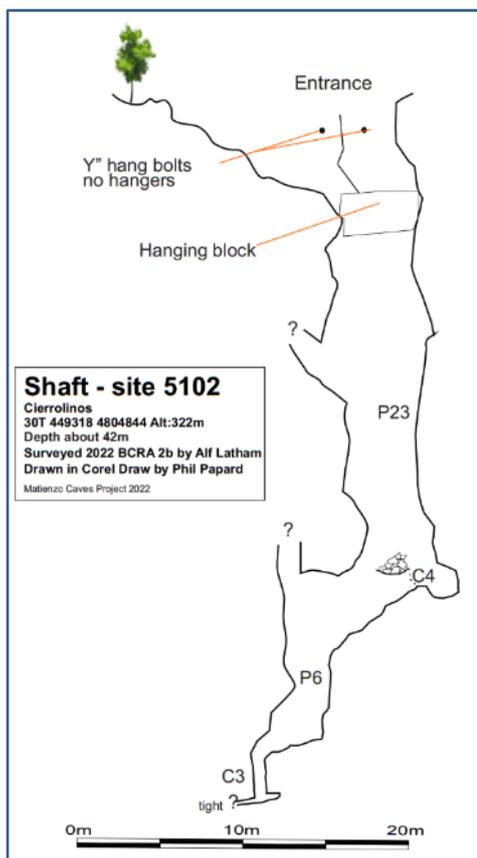


to the amount of undergrowth. This made identifying new sites/digs very difficult. Two possible sites were noted [5204](#) and [5205](#) and dug a little, but with no draught they are poor prospects.



At **Monte Llusa**, a surface walk, checking sites found from maps and LiDAR prints, was made from near the high parking spot on the east side of Monte Llusa working down to the east of Villanueva. The high growth of the jungle stopped access to some locations and most sites accessed proved unproductive. Only one site of any interest was recorded, a pit [5167](#) 5m deep on the uphill side but only 1m on the downhill side, with the bottom choked.

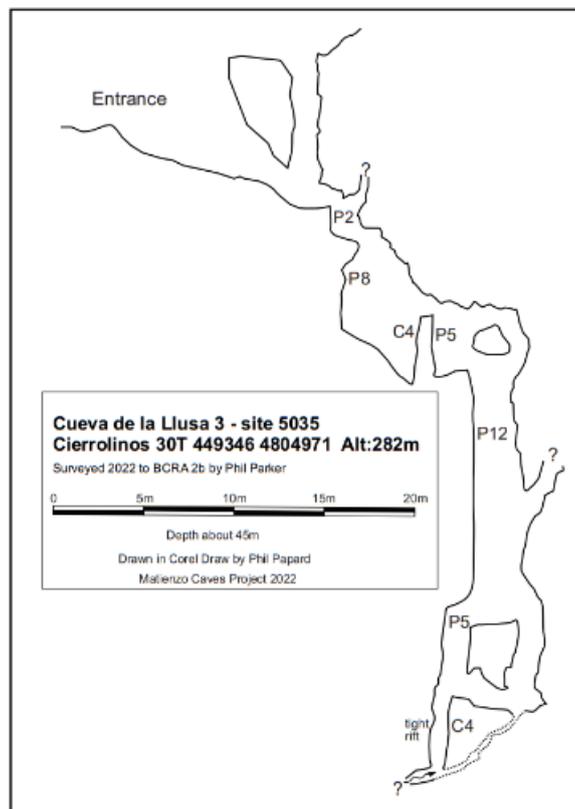
Nine sites were investigated around **Cierrolinos**, with



three going to over 40m deep. Cueva de la Llusa 3 ([5035](#)) was pushed over 5 trips that involved opening up the top of various pitches including those of 3m, 8m and 15m with complications of climbs to parallel shafts and tight rifts.

Shaft [5102](#) was dropped but the top is loose mud and rock needing great care. This shaft is about 42m deep to a choke.

Shaft [5031](#) was rigged and dropped with an extra "Y" hang at 8m near a hole in the wall that needs opening to reach a larger passage beyond. At the bottom of the pitch, at about



60m depth, the passage curves round to right to a rubble fill. There is a draughting crack on the left wall that can be opened up. The site is still to be surveyed.

Torca de al Basura ([5060](#)) was checked and two high level possibilities were found in this 10m deep site. These are the likely source of the good draught but were not pushed. A further five new sites were located, they did not go any distance, and all require digging to progress.

At **La Estrada (Anero)** the following work was carried out with the agreement Club de



Espeleología la Cambera. Just north of the motorway lies an old mill and water pumping station fed by a significant gated resurgence ([5184](#)). The water is likely to originate, at least in part, from the Cierrolinos/Monte Llusca area. Up a side stream towards the motorway, a cave was found above where the stream emerges in boulders. This



cave ([5185](#)) clearly floods, given the mud covering most of the cave. It was not surveyed but is about 25m long in total and leads to an upward dig with a possible small draught and, below, what looks to be a sump pool about 2m deep. Cave [5192](#) was found just north of the stream emerging from [5184](#). It has a strong outward draught coming over a deep pool with the cave seen continuing beyond.



The following work was carried out with the agreement of La Cambera and work in Moncobe with the club [G.E. Pistruellos](#).

Moncobe El Cubillón ([2538](#)) was the subject of a planned diving push by Jim Lister and Mark Smith over 8 days with expedition member support. The work concentrated on the Tilberthwaite Lake sump and the downstream area past the Bassenthwaite Water sump/duck. The first objective was at Tilberthwaite where, to their surprise, the water level was higher than last year. Given that this summer was the driest for 60 years, this suggested that the outlet was partly blocked and silted up - as the dive confirmed.

Attention then turned to the Bassenthwaite Water prospect. Beyond the sump, the gravel-floored, low passage near the southern extremity of the cave was excavated and capped over a couple of trips. This gave access to a 20m pitch which was descended to another sump. The route to the pitch top was surveyed to over 50m. (The upstream sump was dived to check it did go, which it did - but was not pursued as it was not the priority.)

The downstream sump was dived in zero viz and found to go down to -15m. A rift going up from this point was dived on another day and found it closed down just short of surface level. More work is needed to try and find the way on in this sump. Better visibility is really needed.

The updated survey is in preparation and will appear along with details of all the caves including surveys, photos and videos are available on the web at <http://matienzocaves.org.uk>.