Matienzo Caves Expedition 2025



Cueva las Cosas with sunbeam – photo by Sam Davies

Introduction

This report details the speleological activities undertaken by the expedition team within permit area 14, as depicted in Figure 1, covering the period from December 2024 to November 2025. The permit area encompasses Ribamontan al Monte (south of the A-8 autopista), Solorzano, Entrambasaguas (east of the CA-651), Ruesga (north of Cruz Uzano), and Cueva Vallina, which was hydrologically linked to the South Vega system in Matienzo in 2016. The expedition operates under a formal collaboration with the Club de Espeleología la Cambera for joint work in Ribamontan al Monte.

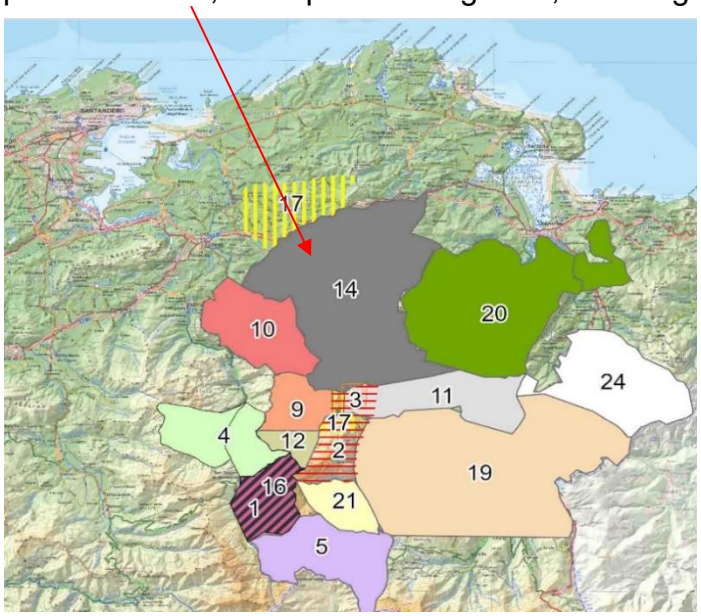


Figure 1. 2025 exploration area of the Expedition (zone 14)

Approximately sixty cavers participated in the expedition in Matienzo throughout the year, with attendance spread across

Christmas, New Year, Easter, summer, and autumn. The team welcomed younger cavers from Sheffield and Bristol Universities, emphasising training and involvement of new members. In accordance with permit requirements, cavers contacted the relevant authorities by phoning 112 to inform them of their plans prior to entering caves and again

Matienzo Caves - Newly surveyed caves and passages 2025						
Cave	Name	Area	Grid Ref, Datum ETRS89	Previous length (m)	New length (m)	Extra length (m)
0105	Cueva de Riaño	Riaño	30T 451780 4800279	76908[1]	78853[1]	183
1800	Fridge Door Cave	Riaño	30T 451162 4800782			214
0107	Cueva Hoyuca	Riaño	30T 451816 4799805			1478
0081	Cueva de Carcavuezo	La Secada	30T 452787 4797778			135
0024	Cueva de la Puerta	El Sedo	30T 453540 4795363	11850[2]	12773[2]	663
0025	Sima-Cueva del Risco	El Sedo	30T 453199 4795845			260
0733	Cueva Vallina	Arredondo	30T 450017 4792405	38591[3]	40259[3]	268
5135	Cueva d la Rasa	Arredondo	30T 450327 4793059			1400*
0077	Cueva de Rascavieja	El Naso	30T 451722 4796229	614	1714	1100
0713	Fuente Aquanaz	San Antonio	30T 446482 4801430	5299	5587	288
0103	Cueva de la Espada	Riaño	30T 451082 4800727	2380	2559	179
0258	Torcón de la Calleja Rebollo	Seldesuto	30T 448780 4795064	8208	8369	161
0101	Cueva de la Canal	Fuente las Varas	30T 452776 4798915	276	317	41
2519	Cueva de Huerto Rey	Fresnedo	30T 453002 4801374	633	666	33
5458	Not 111	La Secada	30T 452138 4798469	0	20	20
0525	Cueva del Gato Montés	Cubija	30T 450468 4796271	0	19	19
0593	Shaft	El Naso	30T 450468 4797621	0	16	16
5469	Cave	North Vega	30T 449665 4795685	0	15	15
5478	Shaft	La Colina	30T 4534452 4796567	0	15	15
5479	Shaft	El Rincón	30T 451276 4805692	0	14	14
0229	Shaft	La Secada	30T 453251 4798446	0	13	13
5468	Cave	North Vega	30T 449613 4795750	0	12	12
0082	Sima de los Curros	La Secada	30T 453258 4798751	27	34	7
5459	Shaft	La Secada	30T 452093 4798462	0	6	6
1064	Cave	South Vega	30T 452958 4797831	0	5	5
0870	Shaft	La Secada	30T 453083 4798266	8	12	4
5460	Shaft	La Secada	30T 451410 4797518	0	3	3
(1) part of the Four Valleys System, (2) Sistema del Risco, (3) Vallina Sistema						
Total new cave surveyed to BCRA 5c						5152.00
*not included in our total as linked to Cueva Vallina by French and Spanish cavers						

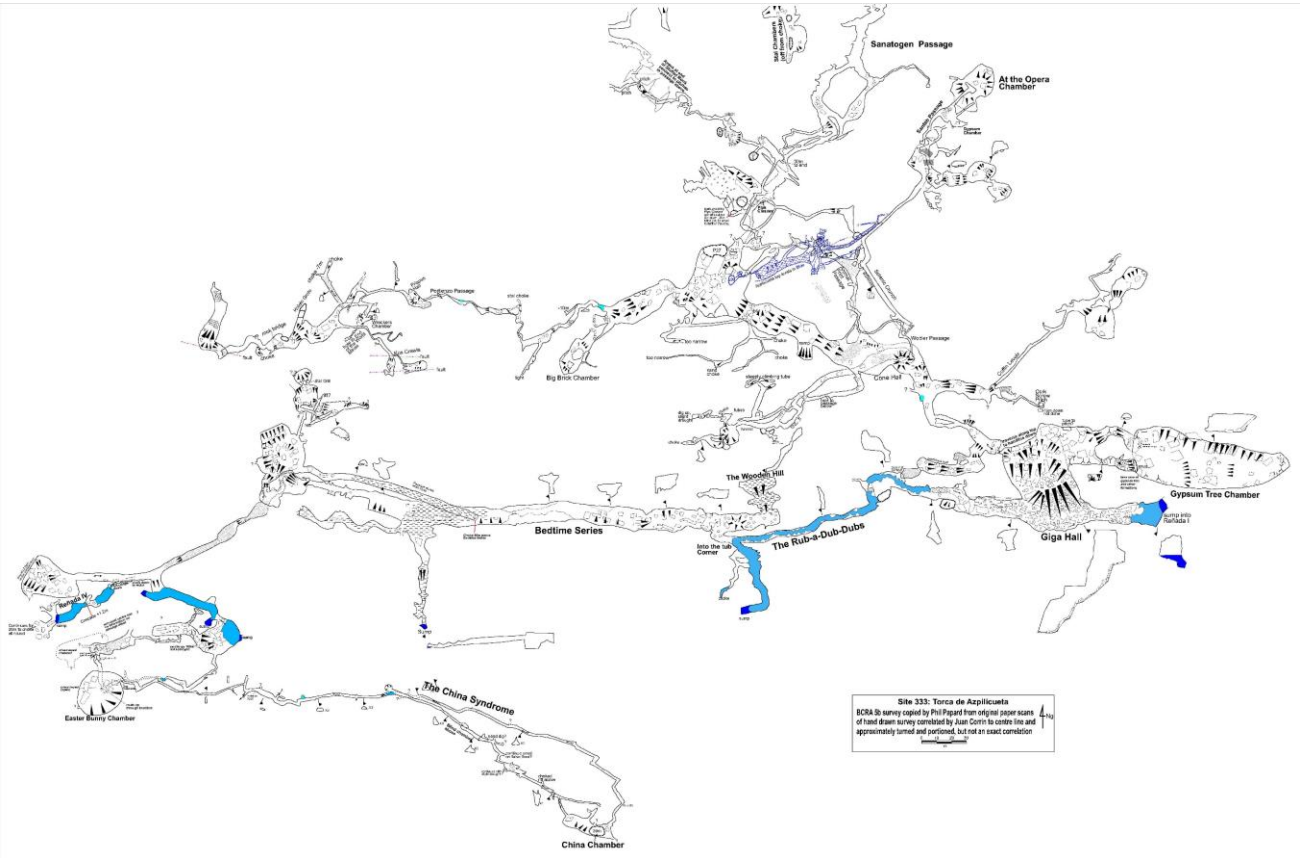
upon exit; this protocol was adhered to for all cave entries except when surface prospecting and recording locations and photographs.

In the summer, as part of the celebration of 65 years of speleological exploration in the area, an exhibition in the village's old schoolhouse featured photographs of the Matienzo caves taken by Sam Davis. At the exhibition's opening, the president of the Spanish Speleological Federation (F.C.E.), José Alberto García, kindly presented us with a copy of the latest, F.C.E Bulletin which includes an article on the Four Valleys cave system.

Significant discoveries included the identification of 'el Gordo', a vast chamber measuring 166 by 100 metres and up to 50 metres high, located north of Armageddon in Cueva Hoyuca. Other major finds were made in Cueva de Rascavieja (0077), where the team navigated a challenging boulder choke, uncovering over 400 metres of sizeable new passage leading to a drop subsequently pushed for nearly 0.7 kilometres. This extended the cave length from 614 metres to 1,714 metres, with further leads anticipated for exploration in 2026. In Cueva de la Puerta (0024), new passages were surveyed, and the cave was connected to Cueva del Risco (0025), adding almost 800 metres to the system. The Four Valley System was extended by 859 metres, reaching a total length of over 78.8 kilometres. A new top entrance was found for Cueva de la Espada (0103), with work now needed to link it to Fridge Door Cave (1800) and thus to the Four Valleys System.

More than 5 kilometres of new cave was surveyed, and fifty new sites were identified and recorded. More information is on our website https://matienzocaves.org.uk/page1.php.

During the summer, two divers (Jim Lister and Mark Smith) prepared for major projects including sump diving in Reñada II (notably the Rub-a-Dub-Dubs sump and others shown on the new survey) and climbing ventures in Fuente Aguanaz. Substantial logistical efforts were made to produce a new survey of the Renada II and Azpilicueta area and to transport equipment to the end of Renada I.



However, the diving rebreather, brought from Hong Kong and prepared per airline requirements, was detained in Milan on route to Madrid. After extensive paperwork, the rebreather was released, but the critical head unit was missing, rendering it inoperative.

The head unit was eventually delivered by road from Milan to Matienzo in autumn and will be used for continuing exploration in 2026.

The north-western area, including Hazas de Cesto and Ribamontán al Monte as far as the N642/A-8 motorway, remains under-explored due to dense vegetation, which slows progress considerably.

On 9 August 2025, the expedition hosted a successful fiesta for Matienzo village and the wider area, celebrating 65 years of cave exploration by Spanish and British teams. The festivities featured a photographic exhibition and contest, an evening barbeque with entertainment and dancing, a tortilla competition, and a duck race.





Top duck race, photography exhibition, below cavers and villages who attended



Research Work

After observing invertebrates, particularly several species of crustaceans, in cavities such as La Vallina (0733), El Risco (0025) and Cueva Reñada (0048), Hollie London has requested and received authorization from the General Directorate of Forests and Biodiversity to collect specimens in 2026 to facilitate their identification and classification.

Southern Sector

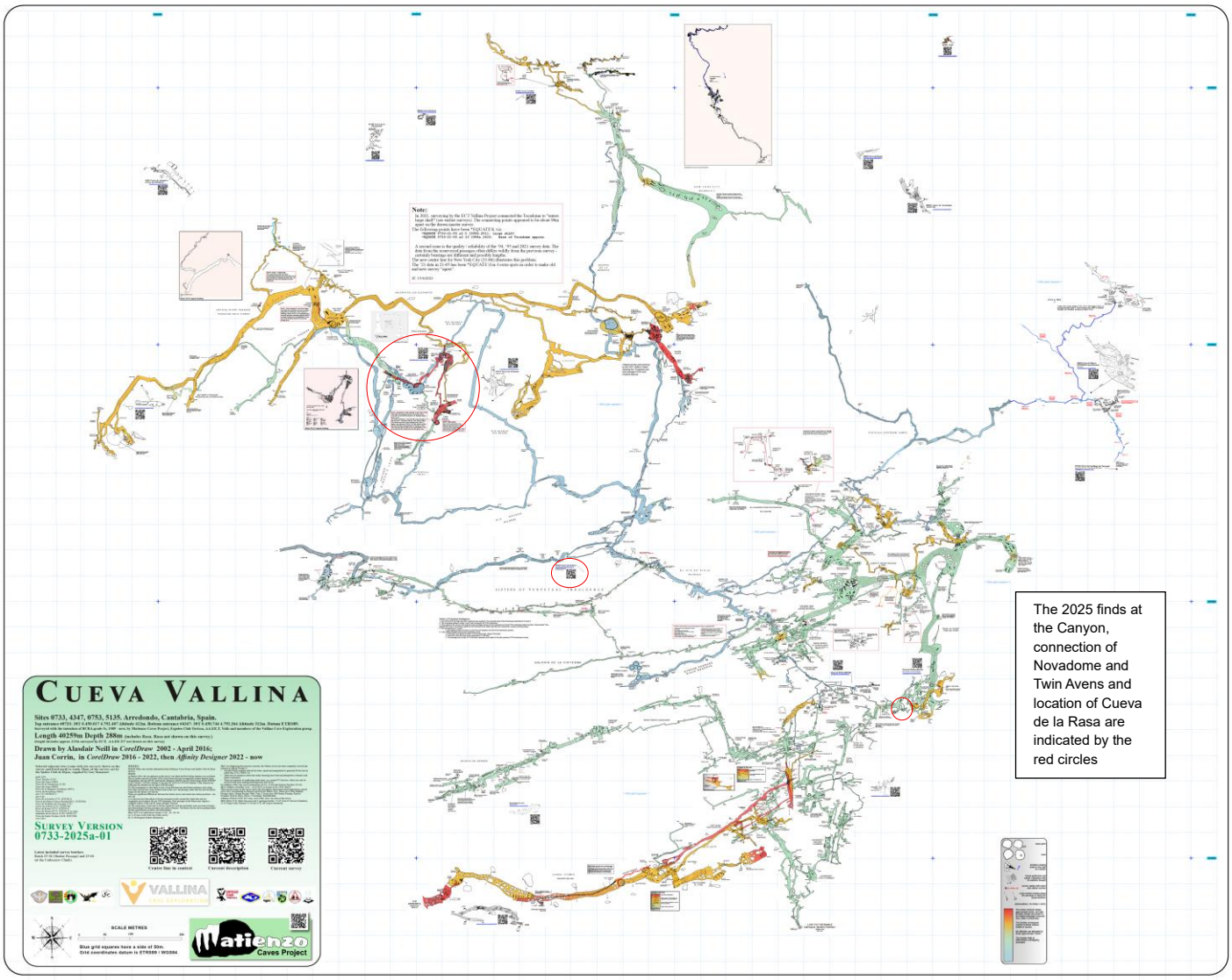
Cueva Vallina (0733) has been significantly extended following the connection with Cueva de la Rasa (5135), explored by French and Spanish cavers. This new top entrance is a substantial open hole adjacent to the track, descending approximately 270 metres through tunnels and pitches to join a stream in Vallina 2. With other explorations, the system's length has increased to 40,259 metres. Additional progress was made in the canyon sump area, with upstream and downstream leads pushed and surveyed, including alcove climbs and gravel crawls, resulting in new passage discoveries requiring further surveying and exploration. Notably, a bolt climb is needed to investigate a large aven.


Unicorn Chamber past sumps in Rio Rioja

The diving team (Mark Smith and Jim Lister) conducted dives in the upstream Rio Rioja under challenging high-water conditions. Beyond the sump, two large chambers and a side passage were surveyed for 146 metres, but time constraints left 120 metres of passage past sump 9 unsurveyed and open for future exploration.

At Vallina's top entrance, the high-level passages around Jenny and Sophie pitches were investigated. Bolting was undertaken, but the route closed in. A crawl below Emily pitch followed a water trickle into a long, tight, and unstable passage, ending at a large pitch of about 30 metres. The water pools at the bottom and drains into a too-tight crawl, possibly connecting to lower passages in the Dragon area. Further surveying and pushing are needed.


Cueva Vallina, bolting across Sophie pitch



Jochen's Aven concluded at a blank grotto, but three promising leads at the top of Zarco's Aven may be pursued in 2026. Invertebrate investigations in the Rio Rioja stream found active ecosystems, including shrimps as a food source for Cantabroniscus Primitivus. A resurvey of 'Who Knows' is in progress, with more than 40 metres of new passage surveyed at Corkscrew Climb and potential for further protection and extension.

South Vega

Torca de la Manga (5052) was explored over three trips, with boulders and spoil removed to access the pitch head. The 24-metre pitch's base was blocked, but a side rift was pushed, with photographs and video taken; a survey remains pending.

Elsewhere in South Vega, nine known sites were checked for location and potential. **Shaft 4681** appears promising but requires a spade to access a tight, undescended 4-metre pitch. At **site 3308**, a blockage was cleared to a squeeze into a chamber with possible onward

routes pending further clearance. Two new sites were identified: a **depression (5467)** with slight draught and a **cave (5469)** opening into a moderate chamber.

Site 0468 was inspected and photographed, with its position refined.

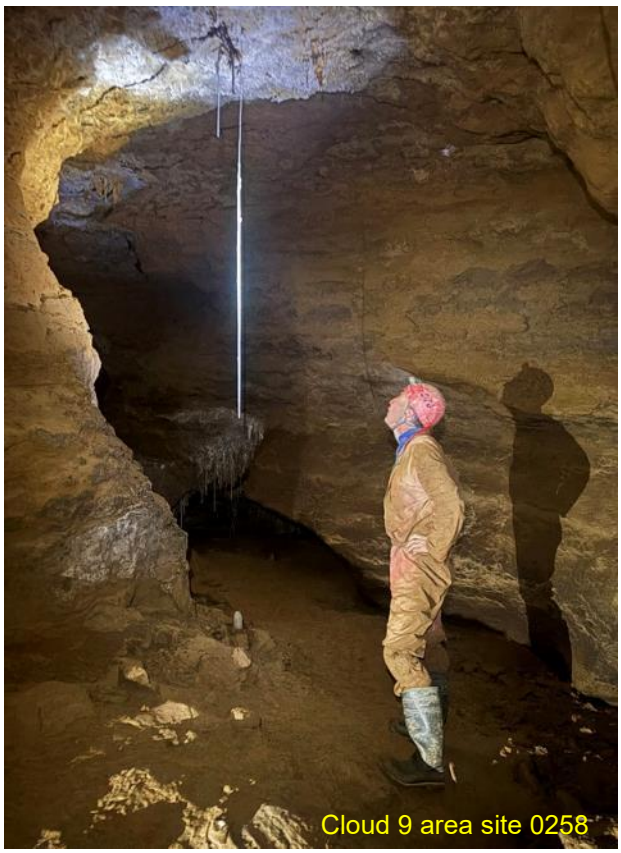
Several trips into **Cueva-Cubio de la Reñada** (0048) reached the main sump in preparation for Reñada II diving. Equipment had then to be retrieved due to the rebreather issues, but these trips familiarised participants with the system and facilitated scientific crustacean and bug research.


Cueva de los Helechales

Cueva de los Helechales (0408) bramble-covered entrance was cleared. The 2001 series down to Hoedown pitch was rebolted, with further work needed to rebolt the final pitches.

Seldesuto

Three trips into **Torcón de la Calleja Rebollo** (0258) targeted a passage found in 2012 ('Girly Day Out'). Corroded bolts at the top of the 8-metre pitch between Sandy Junction and Saville Row were replaced before surveying and exploring the route, which followed footprints along a fault and breakdown to a muddy crawl leading into a chamber and a corkscrew climb into known main route to Cloud 9. Over 160 metres of new passage were added.


Cloud 9 area site 0258

In **cave 2740**, spoil was removed to widen the crawl and rebolt the pitch. The shaft floor was checked but showed no significant draught, though holes continue below. **Cave 2753** was explored past the constriction, reaching standing passage and chambers, with further spoil removal allowing access to a chamber with a drafting continuation requiring more work.

Alisas and La Rasa

Shaft 5313 consists of twin shafts: one is a 5-metre pitch ending on a short slope that may be diggable, while the other is a depression with no way on. **Torca del Cable** (1108) was bolted and confirmed at 29 metres deep using a Disto. At the bottom, a smaller hole leads to another shaft ending in a rock choke. **Shaft 4502** was bolted and found to end after 25 metres, with notable formations but no leads. **Shaft 1098** appears to be 10–15 metres deep but does not continue; the boulder pile at the entrance mostly collapsed when accessed, and the remainder was stabilised. A large loose rock halfway down makes descending unsafe without further stabilisation.



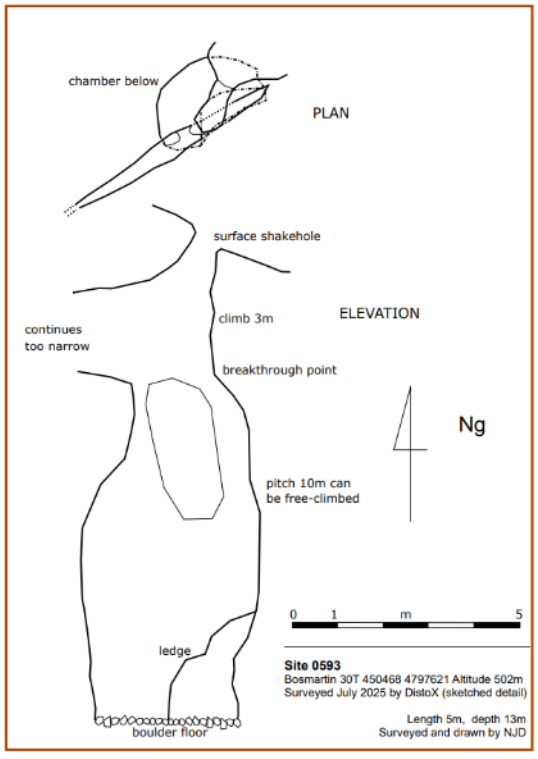


North Vega Including Cubija Valley and El Naso

Three known and three new sites were visited. **Cueva de Acebo** (0433) is a pleasant cave but is too tight to continue; **cave 2601** showed a good outward draught in cool conditions and may be worth further work in 2026. Three new sites (**5468, 5481, 5484**) were identified for probable future work.



Shaft 5402 is about 7 metres deep to a 3-metre diameter sloping floor with a too-small continuation; further work is needed. **Site 5403** was explored down a 5-metre pitch to a large ledge and a further 10-metre drop into a large chamber with formations but no passage outlets; other possibilities may exist in the floor. The site is 20 metres deep with a length of 25 metres, awaiting survey and further checks for leads and draughts on hot days. **Shaft 0593** involved a 3-metre climb to a boulder blockage with a strong draught, and after moving rocks and spoil, a spacious 7-metre shaft was revealed, pending safe access.



At El Naso's south end, a major breakthrough occurred at **Cueva de Rascavieja** (0077). After years of attempts, the team navigated draughting boulder chokes to reach a boulder chamber. Loose boulders were moved to enabled access to a series of 8-metre-high rifts

Site 0077 - Cueva de Rascavieja

2025 resurvey with Easter & summer extensions

Length: 1714m Vertical range: +18m; -93m (including survey splays)

El Naso, Matienzo, Cantabria, Spain 30T 451722 4796229 (ETRS89)

Surveyed: April to BCRA 5c
Becka Lawson, George North, Matt Wire, Ian Lawton, Pete Hall, Alex Ritchie. Instrument: SAP 6

Passage between 'Choke 1' and 'Choke 2' based on December 2017 survey (Si Cornhill, Di Arthurs, Neil McCallum)

'Choke 1' survey based on April 1985 data (Pete O'Neill et al.)

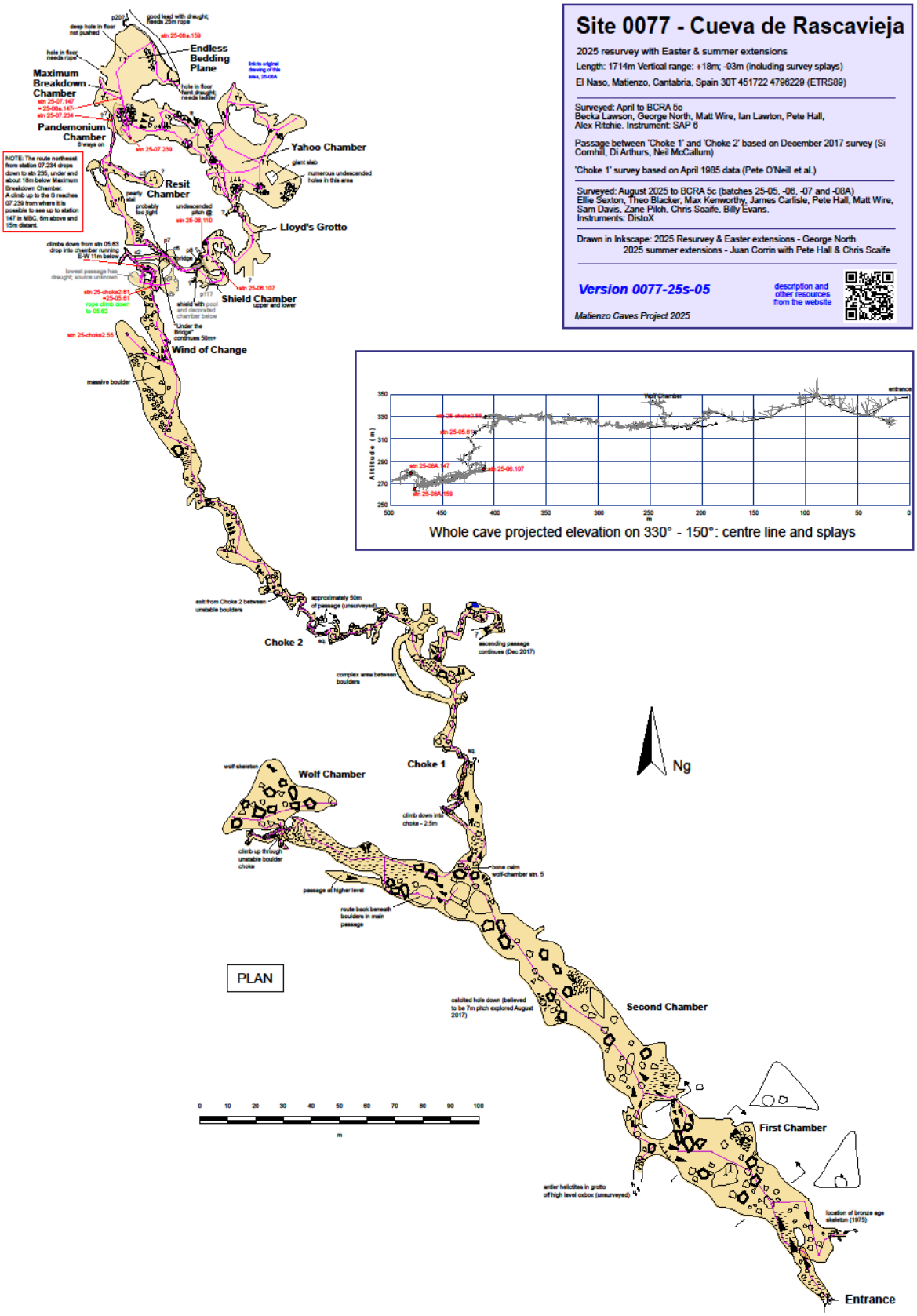
Surveyed: August 2025 to BCRA 5c (batches 25-05, -06, -07 and -08A)
Ellie Sexton, Theo Blacker, Max Kenworthy, James Carlisle, Pete Hall, Matt Wire, Sam Davis, Zane Pilch, Chris Scaife, Billy Evans.
Instruments: DistoX

Drawn in Inkscape: 2025 Resurvey & Easter extensions - George North
2025 summer extensions - Juan Corrin with Pete Hall & Chris Scaife

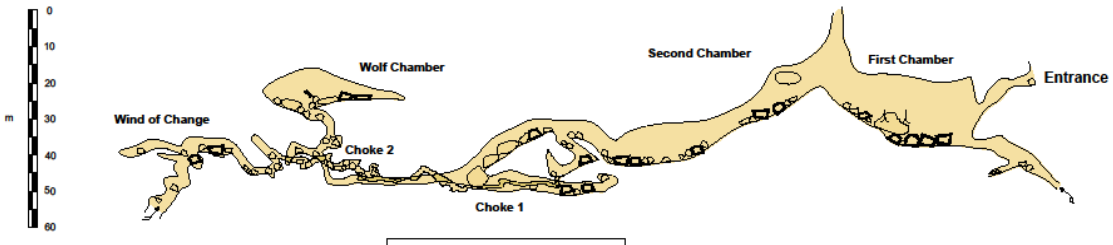
Version 0077-25s-05

description and other resources from the website

Matienzo Caves Project 2025



Whole cave projected elevation on 330° - 150°: centre line and splays



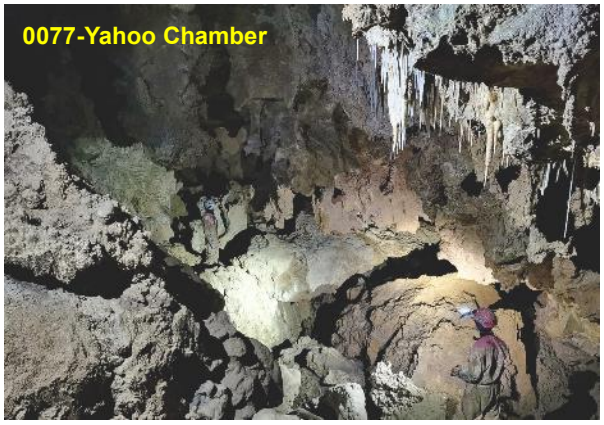
ELEVATION PROJECTED ON 270° - 90°

and ongoing passage that ended at a drop requiring gear. Subsequent trips revealed an 8-metre-wide passage continuing below the drop, with care required due to unstable boulders. The old cave was resurveyed, with small leads pushed. In total, over 400 metres of new passage were surveyed, heading northwest under El Naso ridge towards Torca del Mostajo (0071), still 600 metres distant. Summer exploration reached a further drop, which was descended to a boulder floor with complex maze-like passages beneath and ongoing leads spiralling downwards 40–50 metres below the drop head.


0077-Passage past choke 2


0077-main passage before 1st drop

One team member sustained rib injuries in the boulder area but exited safely while others surveyed. Next, the team split into two groups: one surveyed short side passages, while the other traversed Carousel Chamber, bypassing the lost draught. New chambers and crawls were explored, including Maximum Breakdown Chamber with pristine calcite and several leads. A walking-height passage with side passages and holes in the floor was followed, leading to another chamber. Confusing navigation connected team members in different parts of the cave, with many leads still to be assessed.


0077-Yahoo Chamber

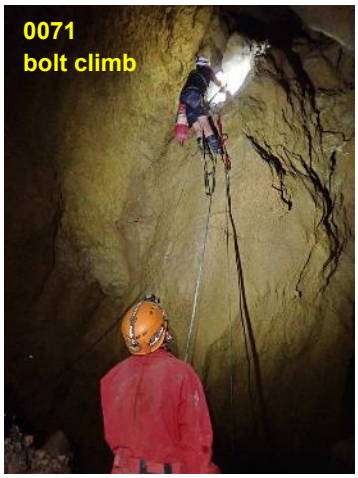

0077- Carousel Chamber

The other survey team descended Bridge Chamber and continued along Resit Passage. A draughting rift led to Pandemonium, a chamber with eight leads. One lead, draughting northwest towards Mostajo, ended in another chamber with downward leads mostly closed off. Further trips pushed the Endless Bedding Plane, ending at a rib of flaky rock with a tall, draughting rift towards Mostajo, which will require gear to pursue. Dangerous boulders were removed for safety. In total, 1.1 kilometres of new passage were surveyed, heading towards Cueva Mostajo.

A solo trip investigated a hole in the entrance slope, revealing a small chamber, grotto, further crawl, and antler formations. The chamber closed down but featured impressive formations.

At **Torca del Mostajo** (0071), a possible bolt route to a ceiling passage was spotted. The climb required additional bolts due to using extra on poor rock, where one pulled out resulting in a small fall on the security loop and minor bruising, but the climber continued the climb to a small aven and clean-washed passage ending in a boulder choke. No significant draught or echo was noted.

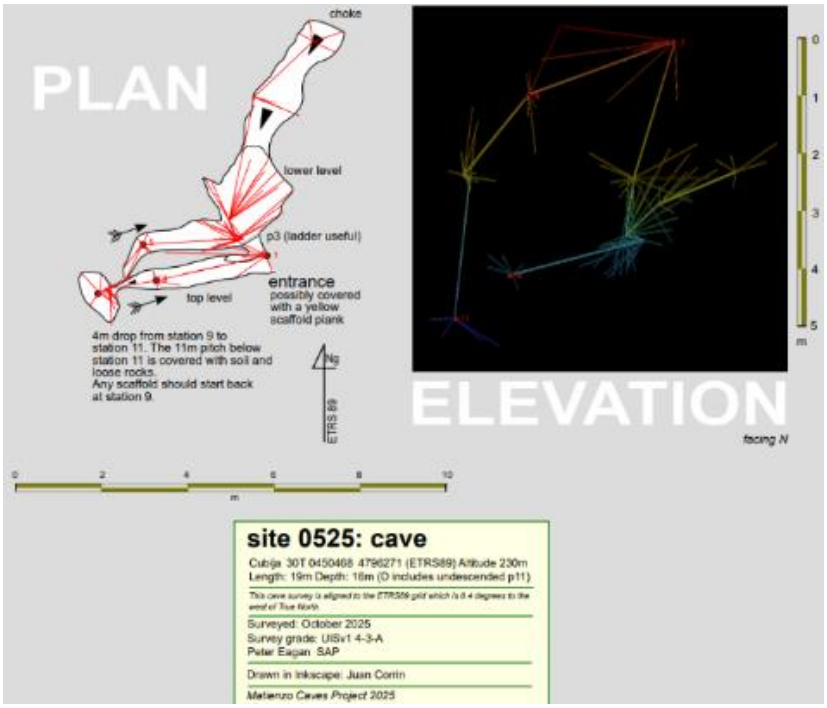


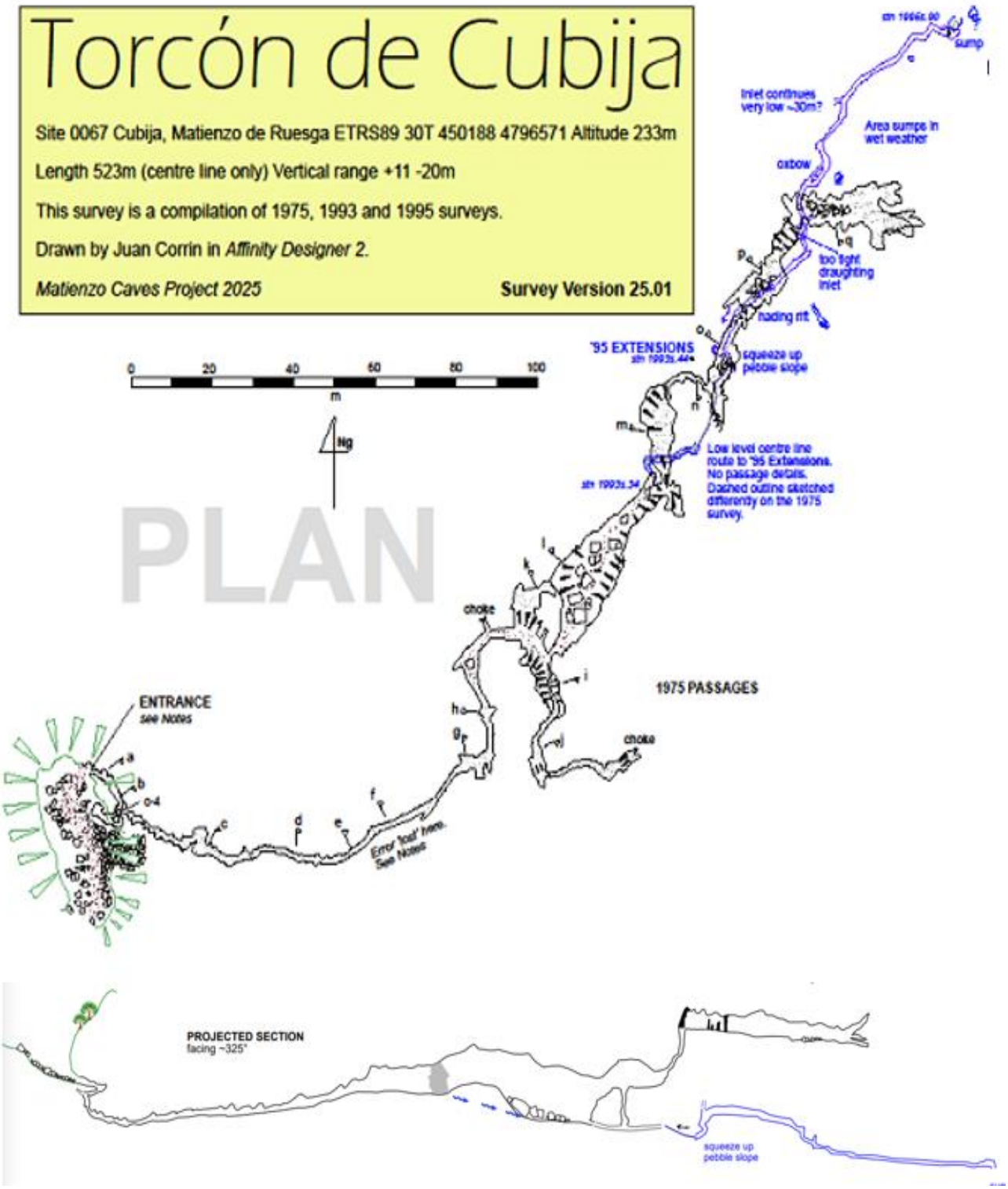


Torcón de Cubija (0067) was found to be filled with dumped fridges and debris, requiring clearing to access the cave. No new passages were found, but possible leads remain. Several side passages were explored, with one extending near the surface. Tight squeezes, short climbs, and dry crawling passages may warrant further pushing.

Cave 0525 was visited over five trips and showed strong draughts. The base of the entrance pitch leads to a passage blocked by metalwork and cable, possibly an old entrance. Another passage trends into the hillside but closes down. A strongly draughting rift at the pitch head was worked for 4 metres to a drop into an undescended 11-metre pitch needing further rock clearance to uncover the blocked pitch. This requires more work and shoring for safety, with good prospects for 2026. A wild cat sighting prompted renaming to "Cueva del Gato Montés".







At **dig 0813**, a strong draught was noted entering through a narrow gap, with further work anticipated in 2026. Other sites were checked for future work, including **cave 4130**, where a tight section with a loose boulder blocks access. **Shaft 5402** is a small shaft leading to a crouching-sized chamber, and **shaft 0593** was widened to allow access to a 4x6 metre chamber, with further prospects dependent on draught conditions.

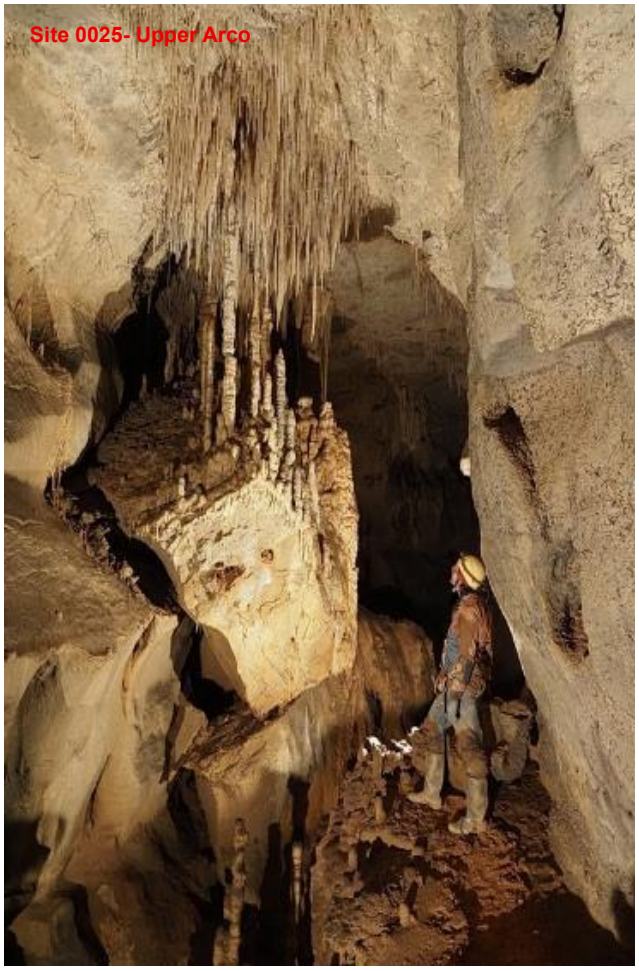
Cueva Oscura (5495), found by Carlos Lamoile Martinez, is in an area of difficult sandstone outcrops, gorse, and long grass. The entrance is a horizontal slot, with decorated passages and a short drop to water, but no draught in its 20-metre length.


Site 5495 looking to entrance

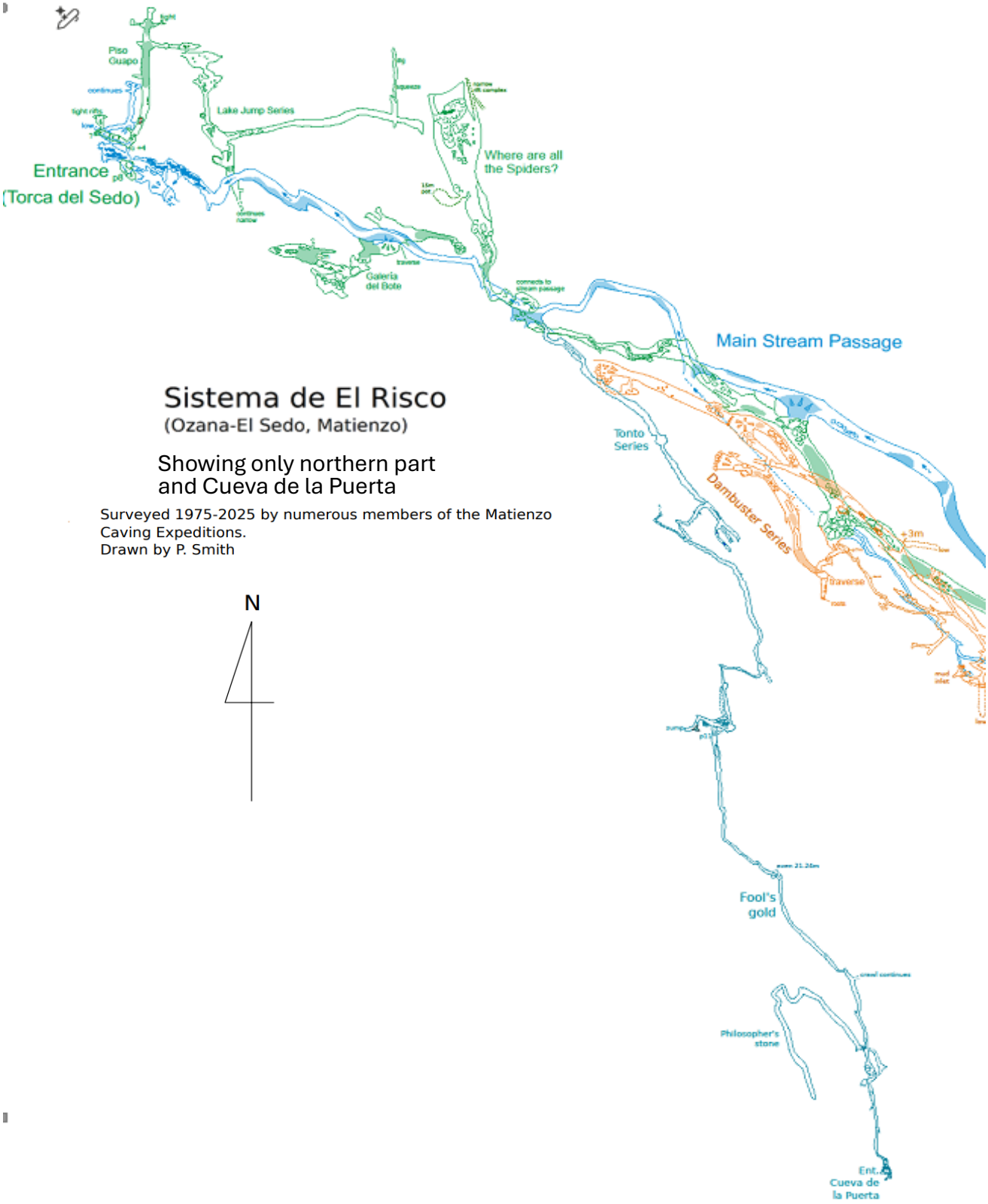
El Sedo, La Colina, Cubillas y Ozana

A key expedition find was the extension and connection of **Cueva de la Puerta** (0024) to **Sima-Cueva del Risco** (0025) at the Tonto Series, adding nearly 800 metres to the system. New passages were explored in Cueva de la Puerta, traversing through high, narrow rifts and streamways, with some boot prints observed. Lower and muddy sections were surveyed back to previous surveys. Review of the 1975 journal confirmed entry into the Tonto Series in Cueva del Risco. Subsequent trips surveyed both bottom and top passages.


Site 0025 – team resting


Site 0025- Upper Arco

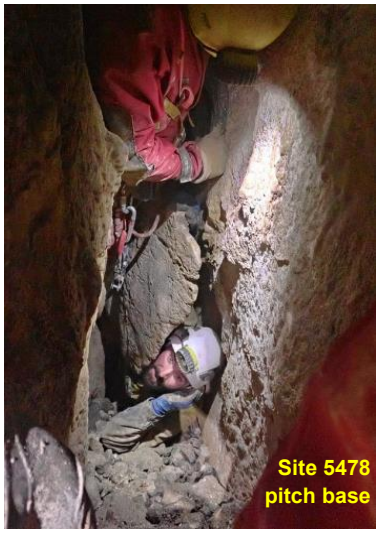
In the summer, four trips in Sima-Cueva del Risco (0025) focused on bug identification, checking leads in Upper Arco, bolting traverses, and surveying new pitches. The traverse ended in a small chamber with ancient flowstone and curtains, with mud infill suggesting surface connection. Side passages were surveyed, with significant extensions bringing Sistema del Risco to 12.8 kilometres.



In Ozana, several sites including 5464 and Cueva del Concebo (0012) were checked, but new sites were blocked or lacked draughts.

La Colina

Four new sites were identified, with **5478** showing promise as a 3-metre tube leading to a 12-metre rift pitch and continuing rift with strong draught, potentially accessible by slim cavers. During ascent, a large rock broke blocking the way out but it was safely removed. The other three sites (**5475, 5476, 5477**) closed or were choked near the entrance. Four known undescended sites were checked but all were found to be choked at various depths: **1102** (8m), **3553** (5m), **5399** (3m), and **5400** (1m).



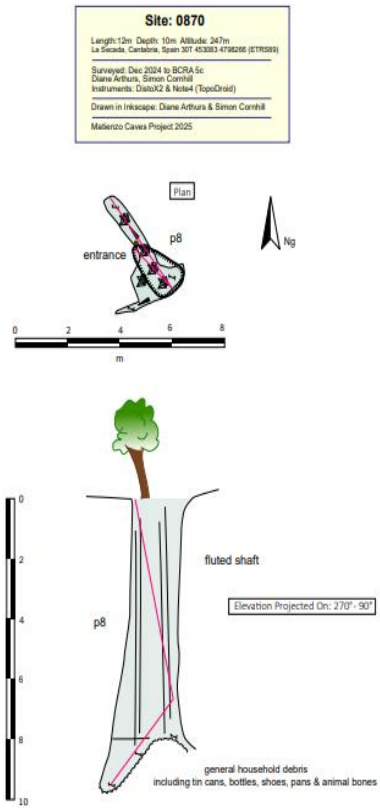
Muela

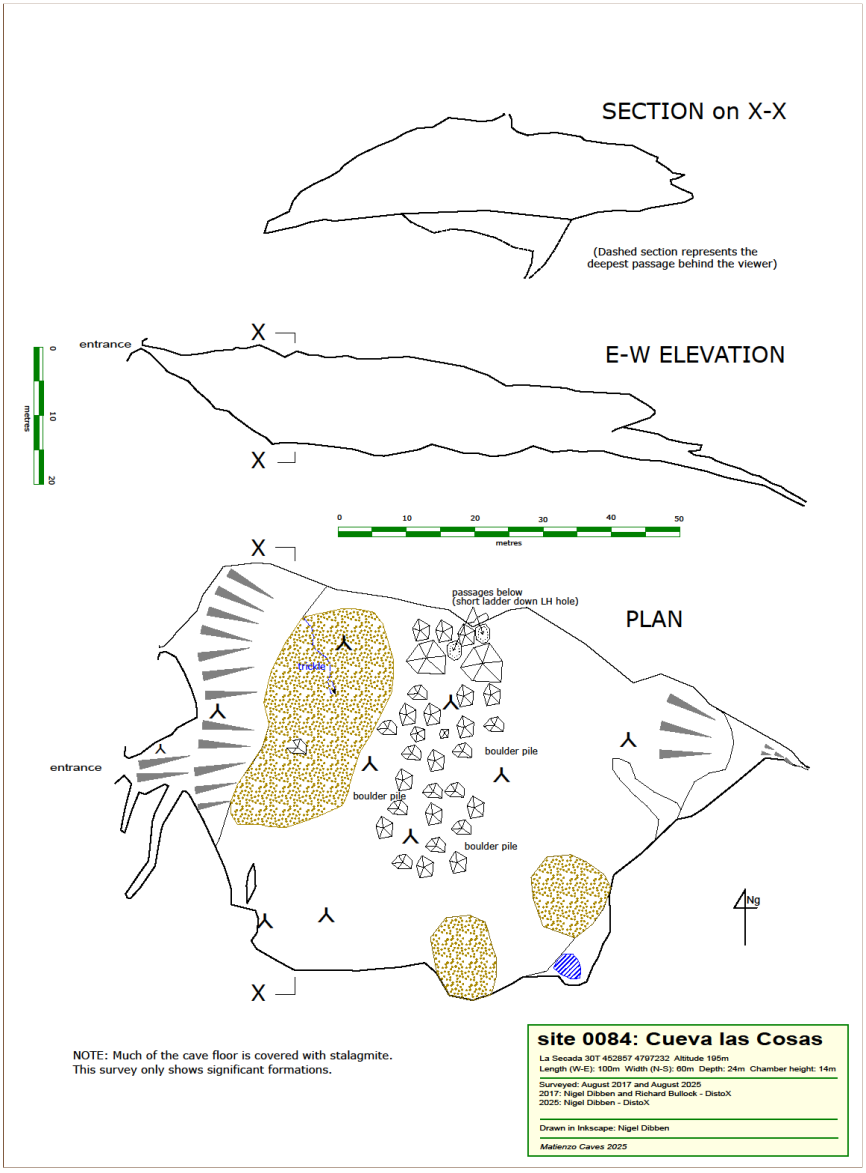
Three new sites were found: **shaft 5471** (undescended, in a large shakehole), **shaft 5472** (5m pitch followed by a 9m blind pot with animal bones), and **site 2338** (6m blind hole with limited prospects).

The North-East Sector and The Four Valleys System

La Secada

Cueva las Cosas, which is well known to the local people who frequented it as children, underwent a new survey. Site 0870 was also surveyed.





In **Torca la Decepción** (4732), a missing hanger at the main Y-hang was replaced, and new stainless-steel bolts and hangers were installed at the pitches. The Rocky Horror north side end was checked, with 35 metres followed to a blockage. This passage runs parallel and higher than the link to Cueva Llueva. In Armageddon, a climb (Ace alli) led to the vast chamber 'el Gordo', surveyed as 166m long, up to 100m wide, with a 23° slope and roof heights of 50m.

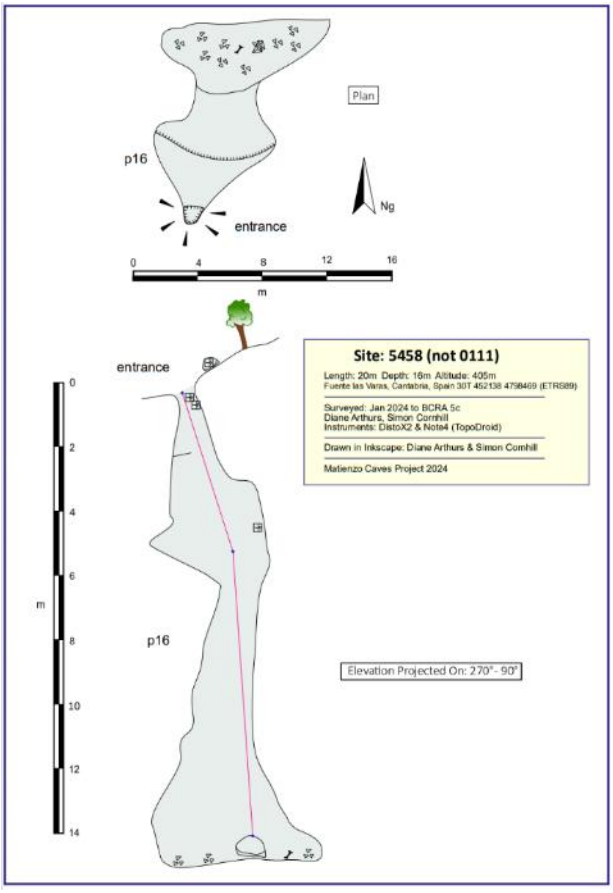

El Gordo

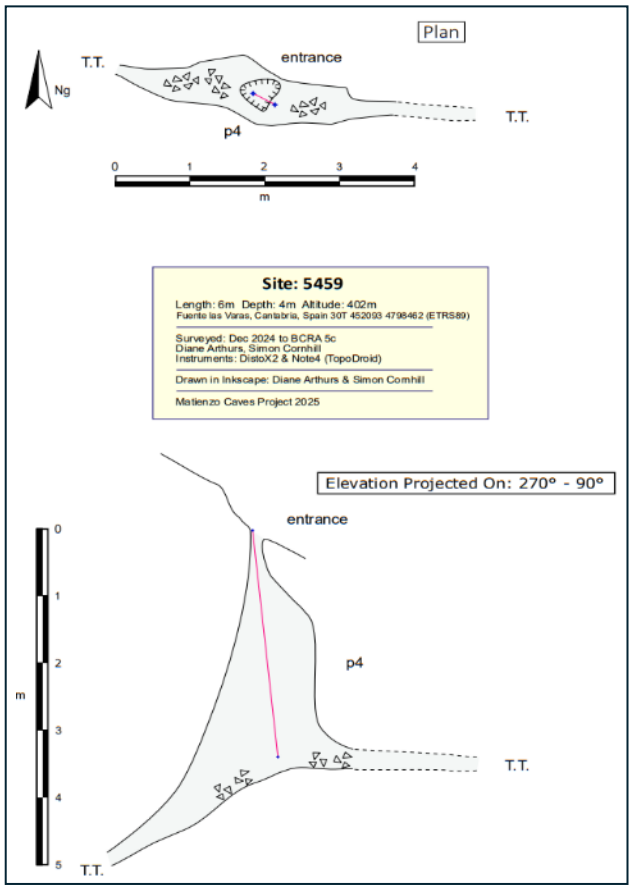

Person at top of El Gordo


Aven in Mongoo

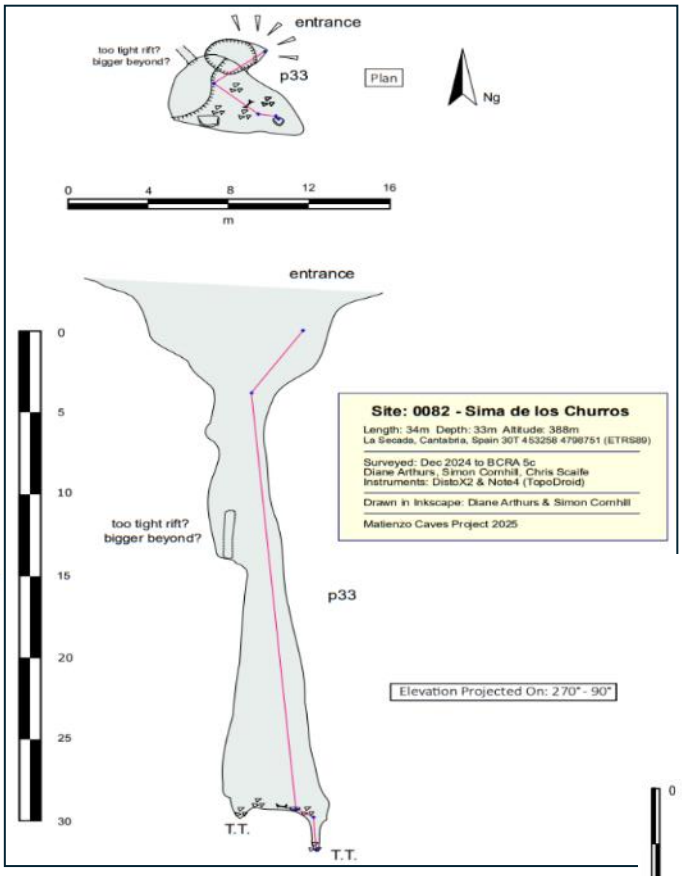
Passages on the north and west sides were found to choke. In the Trident series, resurveying continued with leads to be pushed, including a 16m drop in Sandstone Passage. Double Decker's pitch and a climb requires further investigation.

The Mongooses Don't Jump area consists of high avens around Shrimp Bone Inlet, located about 200m below the Matienzo to Fuente las Varas Road. Four trips found all avens blocked by boulders or cobbles, with thick, fragile sandstone capping the area. Downward pitches also choked.



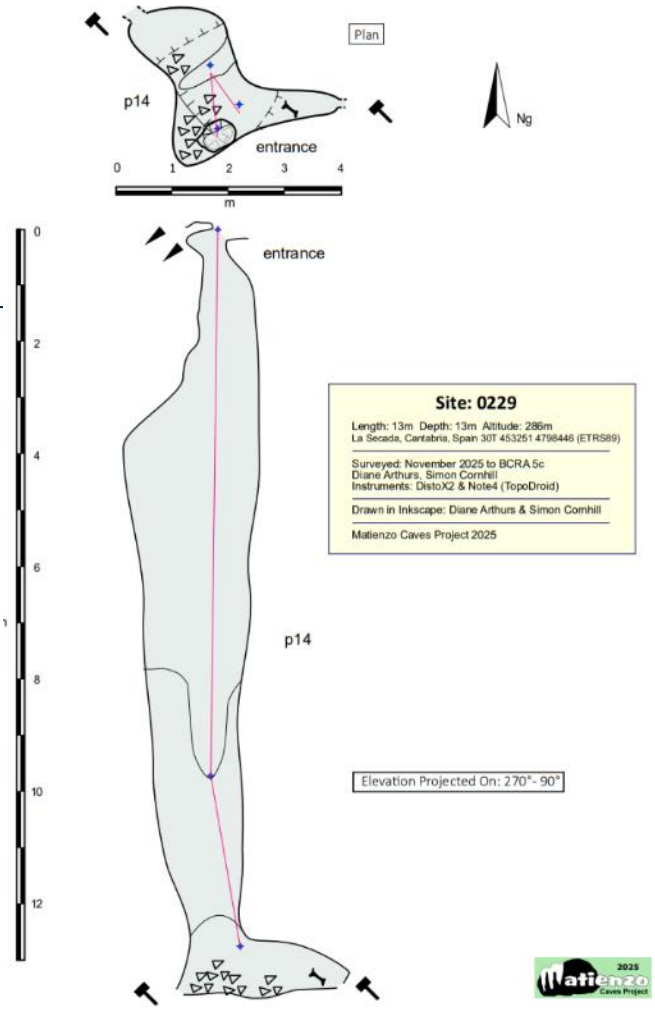


Surface searches during wet weather identified a stream and three associated sites (5455, 5456, 5457) as possible water sources. Three new sites were found; 5458 is a 16m descent to a choked floor, 5459 is a 4m shaft and site 1555, above a small quarry, showed a warm draught.
Nearly 1.5km of new survey work was completed, alongside 1km of resurveying, bringing the Four Valleys System up to nearly 79km in length.



Further east, efforts to locate new top entrances to the Four Valleys System included visiting the 33m-deep Sima de los Churros (0082), which was found choked at the bottom but with a possible lead for future investigation.

At Fuente las Varas, a trip to the end of **Cueva de la Canal** (0101) reached a new chamber with two ways on. Left continued as a low stream; right was a canal into a bedding plane, leading to saturated mud, with little draught and minimal prospects. This branch, less than 150m from 'el Gordo' in Hoyuca, was named El Gordo Branch. The right-hand route (Rocky Horror Branch) extended into a canal with calcite features, but little draught.



The **Carcavuezo entrance** (0081) was cleared of debris, and the diving team checked the route to the Western Series and a sump potentially connecting to **Cueva de Bollón** (0098), a target for 2026. The route up from the streamway to the higher level requires traverse rope and bolt replacement. Surveying in the Maze and Sewers of Doom added 38.3 metres, with more to push and survey.

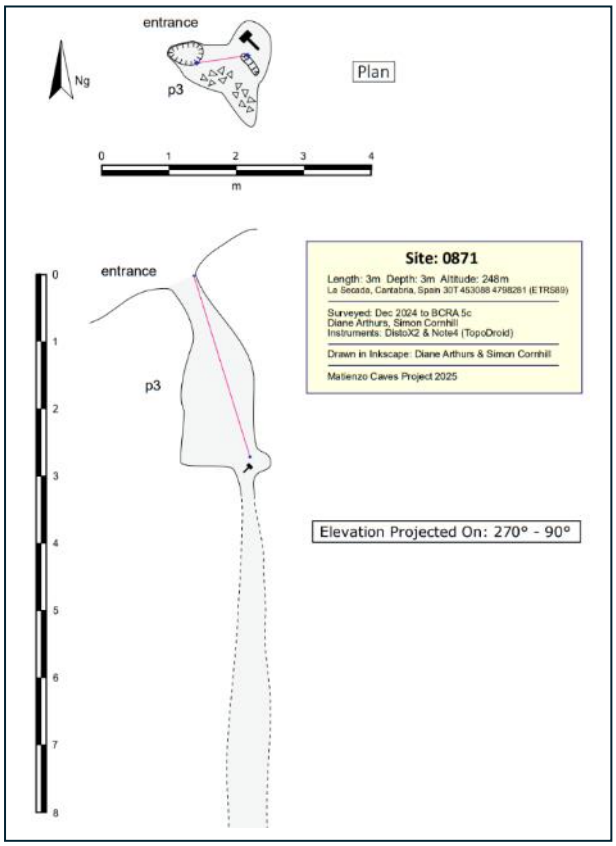
Further work at multiple sites improved safety and stock-proofing, including **Cueva Superfosfato** (0200), **Socks** (1017**), site 5470, site 4480**, and **site 0229** (surveyed to 13m). **Site 2101** required boulder relocation after a boulder moved. This was to allow team members to exit, this boulder now blocks the pitch.

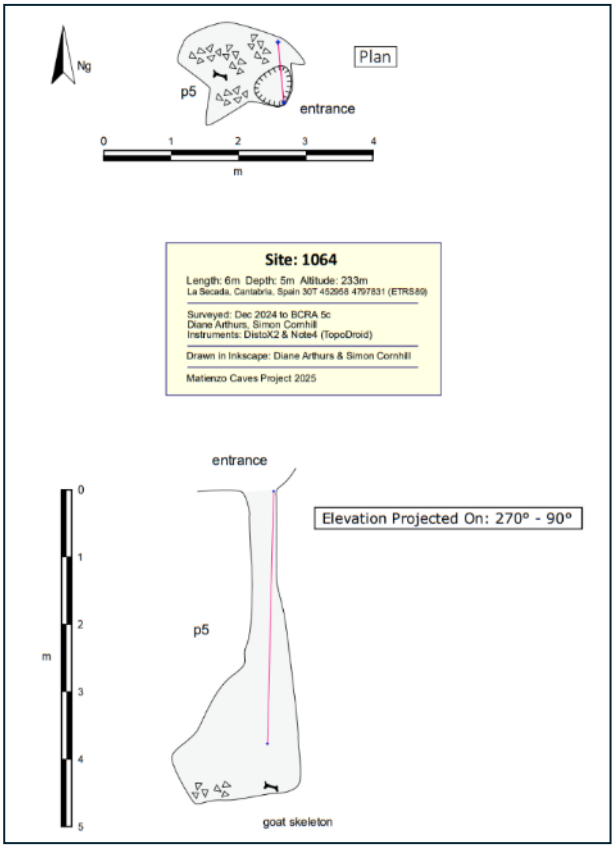


The two resurgences, **Fuente Ramera** (2800) and **2801**, near Casa Germán, were checked for shrimp populations, noting pigmentation and similarities to albino shrimp found in Riaño, though further investigative work is needed.



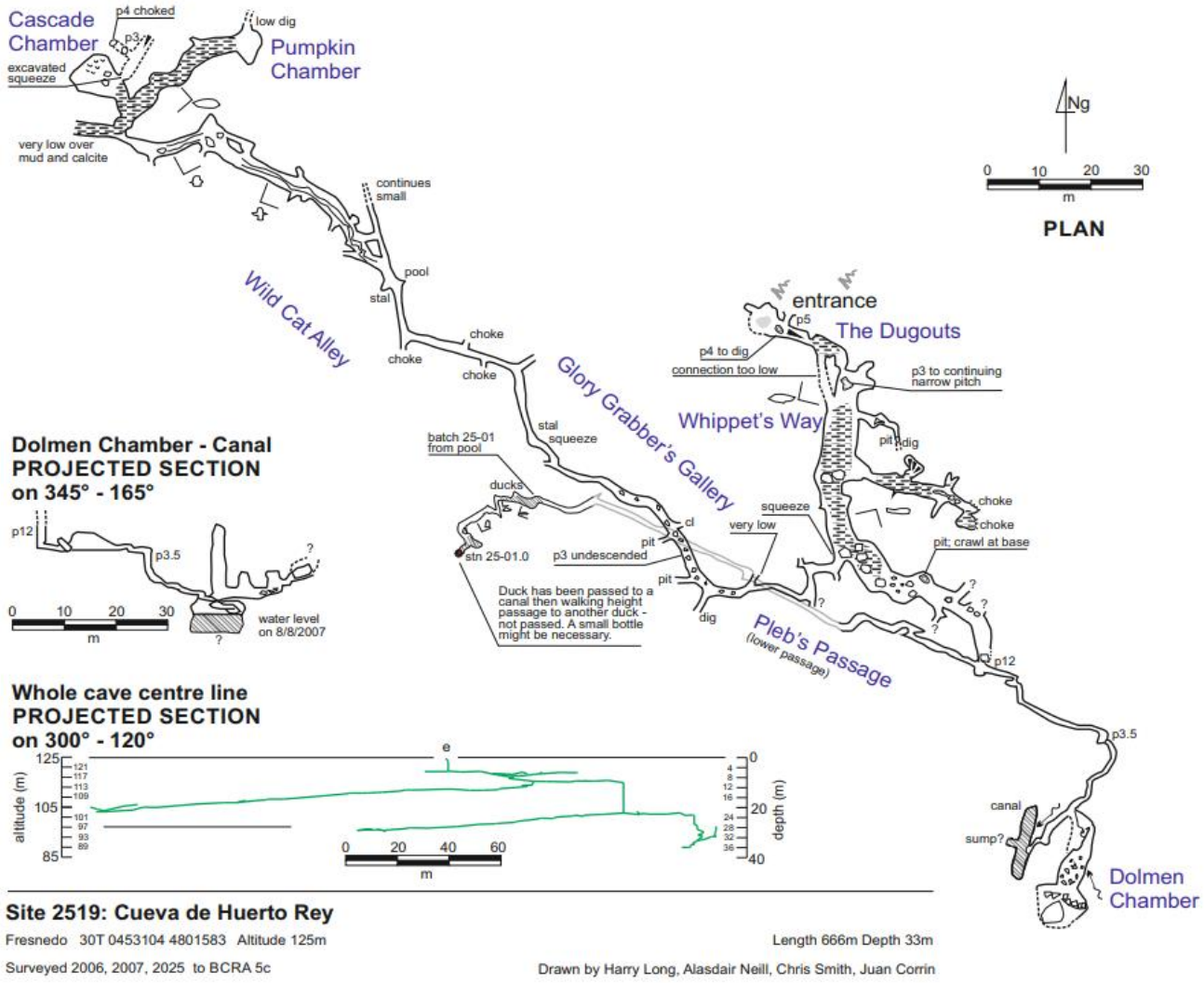
Existing small **shafts 0871, 1064** were checked but found with no significant leads, the shafts were then surveyed.



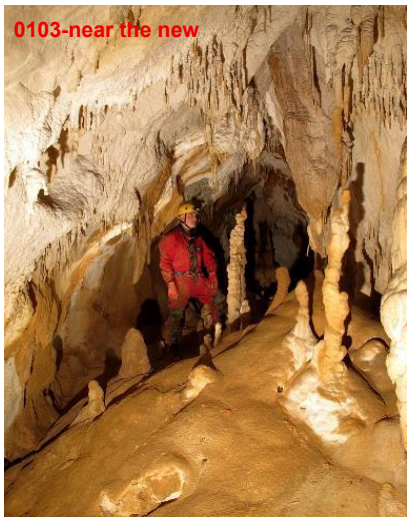


Fresnedo

At **Cueva de Huerto Rey** (2519), a team reached the terminal pool, with one member passing into an ongoing canal feeling for air space with his foot. Further corners and cross-rifts led to a second duck, which was impassable by the same method. A previously undescended pitch was laddered in Cascade Chamber, but all ways on were blocked by sticky mud.



Survey corrections revealed errors in entrance drawings and cave locations around **cave 2414**, situated above the end of **Torno (2366).** Further work could potentially connect this to Torno (2366), which currently ends in a boulder choke close to **Cueva de Riaño** (0105) and the Four Valleys System.



Riaño

In **Cueva de la Espada** (0103), several leads were visited, including a 14-metre aven above goat bones in the upper series. The shaft at the top is blocked by rocks and roots, with a significant draught suggesting

CUEVA DE RUCHANA (#0103)
(CUEVA DE LA ESPADA, CUEVA DE ENTRAMBASAGUAS)

Riaño, Solórzano, Cantabria
Survey by Matienzo Caves Project Expeditions, BCRA Grade 5c, 1975-2013
Drawn in CorelDraw: Alasdair Neill 2010-2013.
Additional upstream notes from April 2023: Juan Corrin after Peter Eagan
Drawn in CorelDraw: Juan Corrin 2023 - now

Surveyors include: Diane Arthurs, Dave Bell, Chris Binding, Simon Cornhill, Nigel Dibben, Peter Eagan, Tony Littler, Alan Martin, David Mills, Lank Mills, Alasdair Neill, Phil Papard, Torben Redder, Michael "Squirrel" Wood, Santi Urrutia, Dave Tuffery.

Length: #0103/#3222/#3232/#3442/#5474: **2559m** depth 39m, October 2025).

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Fridge Door Cave (#1800) is linked into the Four Valleys System .
Cave #3795: 58m.

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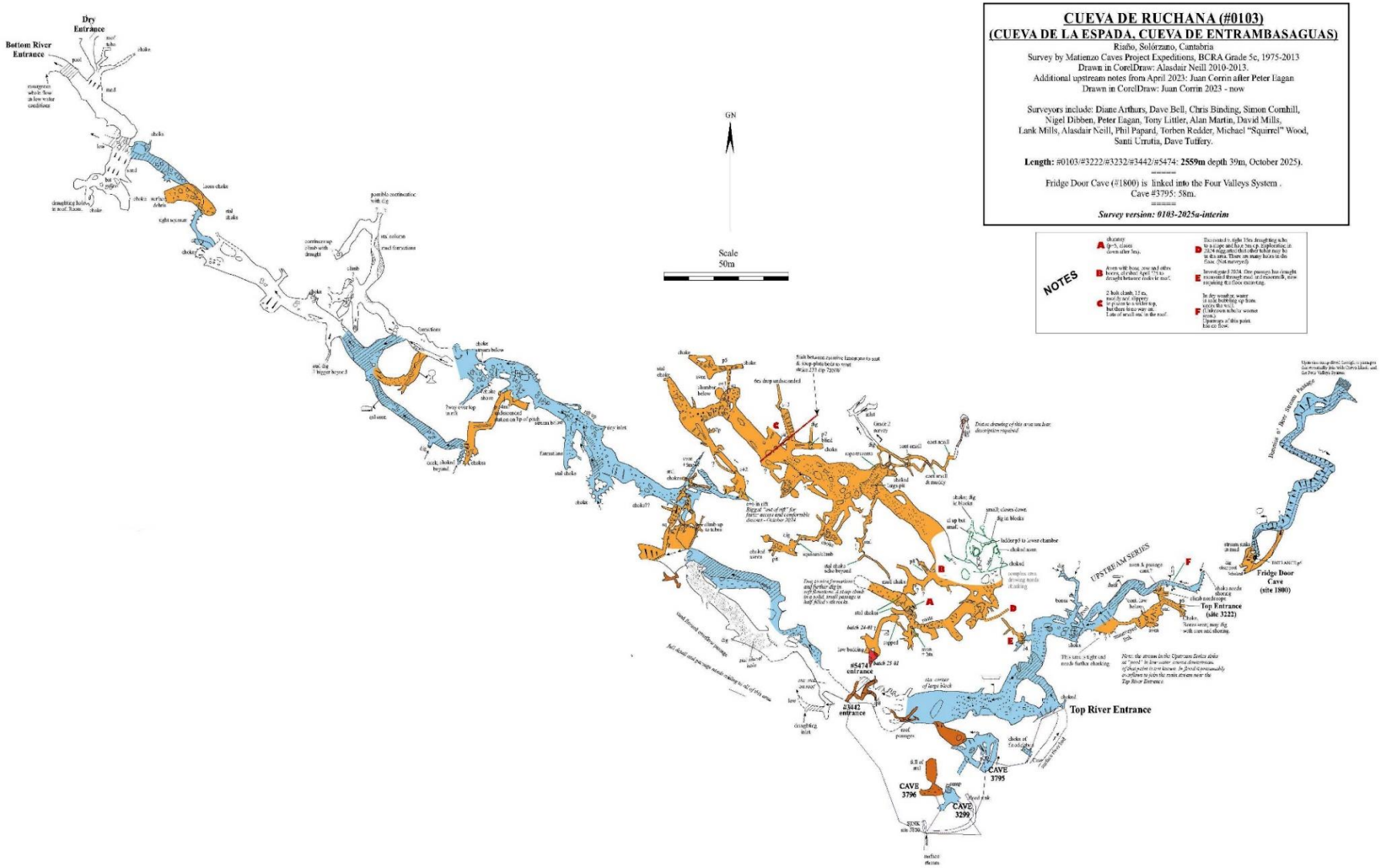
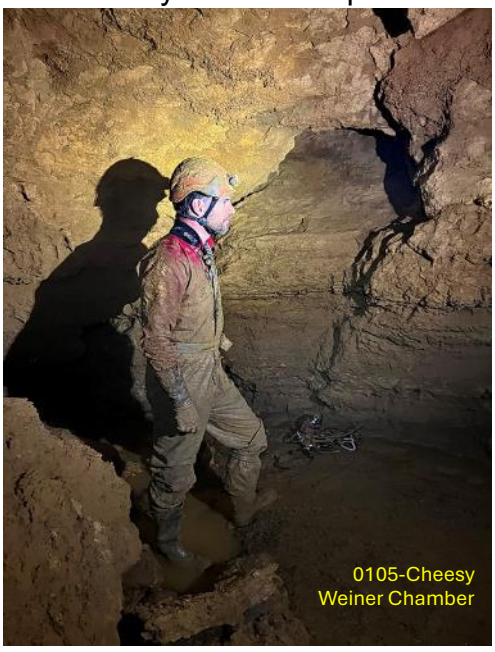
Survey version: 0103-2025a-interim



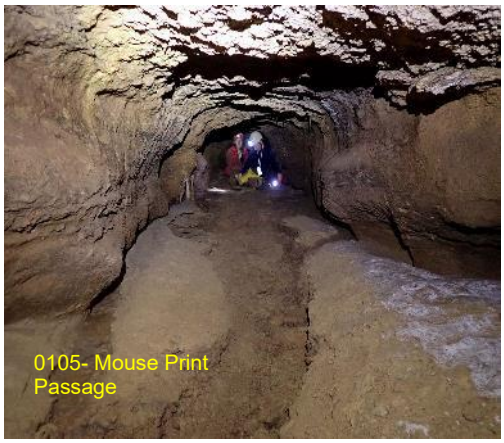
a surface connection. The best approach is likely from the surface if the location can be identified. A tight slot led to a chamber and a cone of rocks and bones, with daylight visible ahead. Additional work opened a new top entrance (5474), located in jungle terrain and difficult to find without GPS. Using this entrance, the complex area on the survey was checked, resulting in 120 metres of new passage surveyed and further leads for 2026.

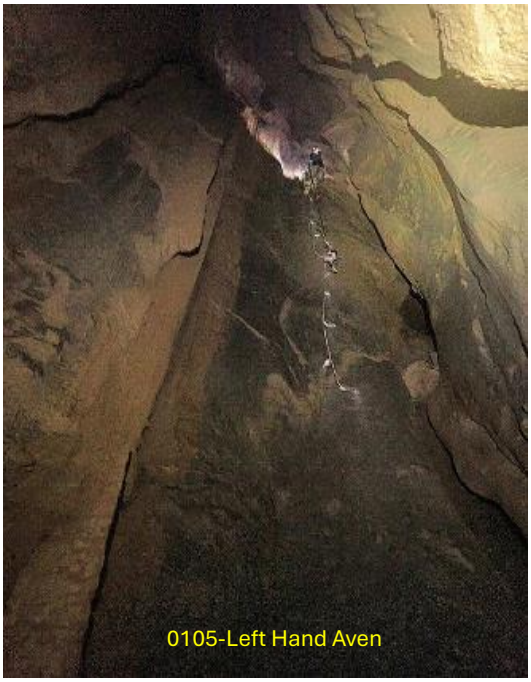
In **Cueva de Riaño** (0105), numerous leads were pushed and surveyed. At the top of the waterfall inlet in The Redeeming Feature chamber, an 8-metre climb led to a small stream passage and Cheesy Weiner Chamber. Further progress was blocked by unstable boulders and calcite. Upstream, a lead was surveyed to a breakdown chamber with roof spaces and roots. In the Fossil Series, mud chokes blocked all leads off Acid Bath junction. The southwest arm was surveyed for 30 metres to a boulder climb and a calcite blockage with a slight draught. A climb above *Up To Glory* was attempted but blocked by boulders. Side passages to drops joined known passages. At *Wedding Cake Passage*, a broken pitch was found, which may connect with the stream below.


0105-Cheesy Weiner Chamber


0105-Wedding Cake Passage

At *Mouse Print Passage*, a tight squeeze with a strong draught led to *Left Hand Aven* (21.5m high), climbed using thirteen bolts but requiring a return trip for further progress. Additional leads were checked, with most closing down. *Right Hand Aven* was also investigated, showing clean-washed walls and possible high-level passages. Further side passages were pushed to floor level with no draught.


0105- Mouse Print Passage


0105-Left Hand Aven

The *Torno Inlet* and crabwalk area were visited, with rope and hardware checked and replaced as needed. Numerous side routes exist in canyon areas, with muddy and draughty conditions. The entrance passages of Cueva Hoyuca (0107) saw nearly 100 metres of new survey work. The *Astradome* via Giant Panda entrance (2691) was checked for stability, with bolts and hangers replaced.





In **Fridge Door Cave** (1800), using **Boob Tube entrance** (5000), possible leads were investigated, with a drafting side passage (*Blood, Sweat and Tears*) pushed to a crawl that became too small. A second link into Cueva-Cubio del Llanío was established at the east end of the cave.



Cueva-Cubio del Llanio (3234), via SubPhone entrance (4536), was visited to install two new stainless-steel bolts at *The Shark*, replacing rusted hardware. The rope traverse remains in good condition.

North Sector

Hornedo

Three sites were explored. The draughting **shaft 3738** was pushed to a winding passage, with rocks trundling down a slope. **Cave 5353**, an awkward tight rift, was found to draught intermittently and further progress reached the top of an estimated 50-metre pitch requiring re-rigging.

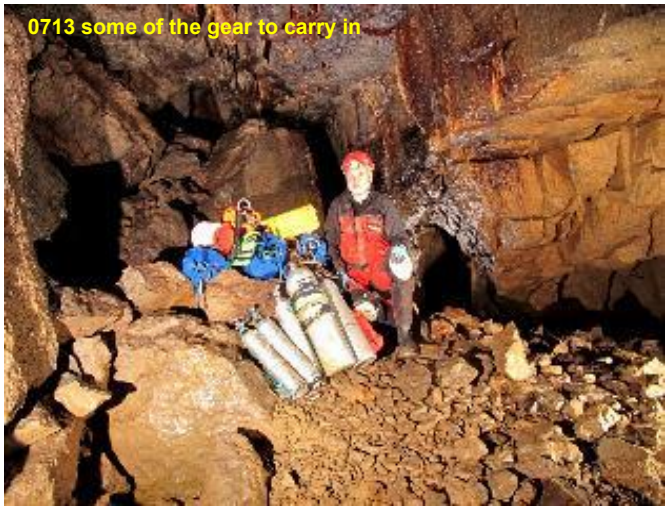
Twin Entrance Cave (3569) had a tight pitch dropped (8m) followed by a too tight 5m pitch, with indications of more space below; further work is needed.

With assistance from Pete Smith, a calf was successfully extracted from **site 5498** at La Gatuna.



San Antonio

Work in **Fuente Aguanaz** (0713) included Jim Lister solo diving beyond sump one in the main passage and through the first four sumps in Sarah Jean Inlet. These arduous trips involved moving cylinders, ladders, and scaffolding, and stabilising boulder chokes for safer access. Deep within the cave, an aven was climbed 11m to where it closed down; aven *GH Aven* was climbed via a ledge to a height of thirty-five metres to another ledge of perched boulders. The aven continues up with the top still not visible. Numerous side passages were surveyed (288m), with further exploration needed. Sump 5 proved to be incredibly challenging with deep silt and zero visibility, making guideline management crucial.

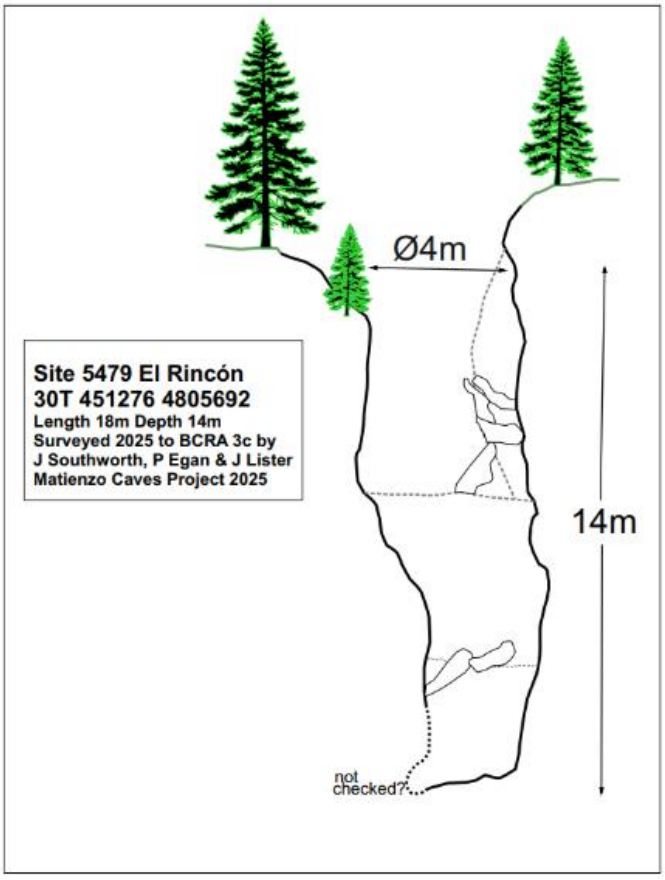

0713 some of the gear to carry in

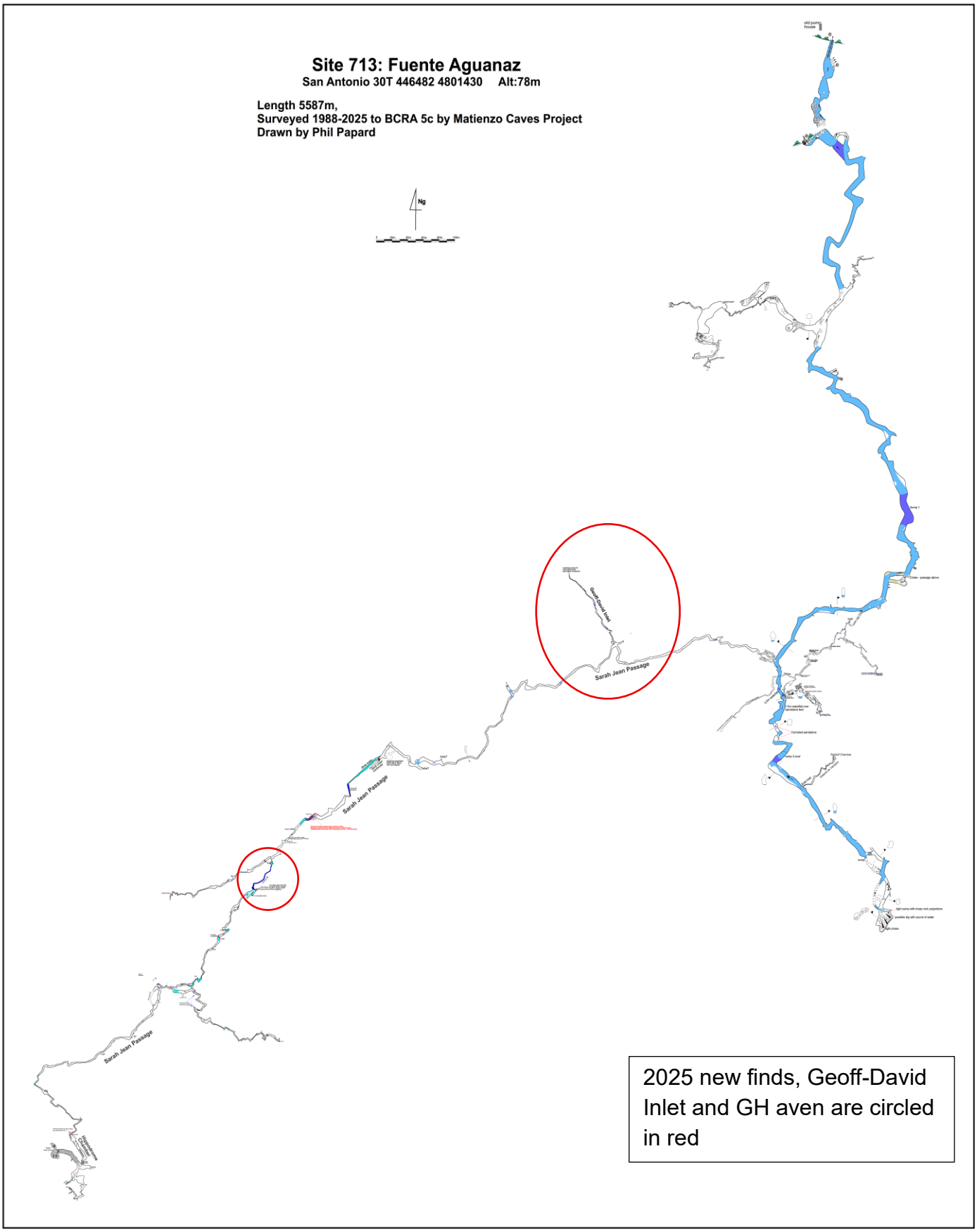

0713 stabilised boulder

Surface investigations above GH Aven found a new **dig (5487)** with a draught, possibly filled in years ago; stock-proofing will be needed as it is on grazing land. A nearby **depression (5488)** was checked but yielded no leads. A local farmer recounted a deep shaft in the wood, used as a tip and later backfilled.

El Rincón

A new **dig (5463)** near the El Rincón motorway road was excavated as a crawl to a large block; further digging revealed a 2-metre extension before it closed down. **Shaft 5479** was cleared of vegetation; two ladders reached within 2 metres of the bottom, which appears choked, but further investigation is needed. No draught was observed on a hot day.




Site 713: Fuente Aguanaz
San Antonio 30T 446482 4801430 Alt:78m
Length 5587m,
Surveyed 1988-2025 to BCRA 5c by Matienzo Caves Project
Drawn by Phil Papard
Ng
Geoff-David Inlet
Sarah Jean Passage
Sarah Jean Passage
Sarah Jean Passage
2025 new finds, Geoff-David Inlet and GH aven are circled in red

Villanueva, Ribamontán al Monte

This area is jointly explored with Club Montaña y Espeleología La Cambera. **Fuente de Villanueva** (5023) was visited twice: the first to check draught in low water (strong draught was found); the second, with a wetsuit-clad team, pushed the rift for 20 metres to a junction, followed by greasy drops into water. Both left and right routes united at a deep sump pool without airspace or draught. Further diving is planned for 2026.

Moncobe

Trips were conducted in agreement with club G.E. Pistruellos.

At **El Cubillón** (2538), diving targeted sump 2. Mark Smith dived the upstream inlet, finding it closed after an air bell at 9 metres. The downstream sump lies beyond a tight, active stream passage. Gravel was moved to improve access, which was dived in zero visibility due to chocolate-coloured water entering from above due to the knee-deep mud in the route in. At 15 metres depth, the passage narrowed to a slot and continued for 50 metres to a blank wall. Jim returned via vertical slots and side passages, but zero visibility and difficult retreat limited exploration (dive time: 35 minutes). The sump has possibilities but is extremely challenging; future efforts may focus on the heavily draughting upstream inlet.



The ongoing dig at site 4480 in Moncobe was extended by 2 metres, with smoke testing revealing connections with other holes.

Photographs in this report are by: Diane Arthurs, Jess Brock, Simon Cornhill, Juan Corrin, Sam Davis, Pete Eagan, Sam Lee, Jim Lister, Hollie London, Phil Papard, Phil Parker, Zane Pilch, Chris Scaife, Mark Smith and Mike Wise.