

ASSOCIATION FOR  
MEXICAN CAVE STUDIES

*NEWSLETTER*

NEWS AND NOTES

ACCIDENT REPORT

TRIP REPORTS

Cueva de Constantín and Gruta de García, N.L.

Micos, S.L.P., and Cartabranchal, Tamps.

Valles, S.L.P.

Puerto de la Zorra, Hgo., and Cueva de Rancho Nuevo, Chiapas

Sierra de El Abra, S.L.P., and Jalpan, Qro.

ARTICLES

Corrections and Additions to the Map of "La Región de la Sierra de El Abra"

Alphabetical Listing of Caves of the Sierra de El Abra

Geographical Checklist of the Caves of the Sierra de El Abra

Project at La Cienega, Municipio de Pinal de Amoles, Qro.

"Leave Only Footprints"

Just south of Cueva de Tantobal at the bottom of a sink, a small gully sinks in breakdown and a little work would open up a cave. Across the highway from this sink is Cueva del Raíz (87), a sloping sink to a horizontal passage with a large root following it.

**Salsipuedes Area:** The isolated limestone hill west of Rancho Nacimiento.

Cueva del Nacimiento del Río Coy (25) is located about 50 ft above the nacimiento. An entrance 5 by 4 ft quickly enlarges to a large passage leading down to a room with a skylight. From this room a passage climbs over a pile of breakdown to a lake of swiftly flowing water.

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## PROJECT AT LA CIENEGA, MUNICIPIO DE PINAL DE AMOLES, QUERETARO

by John W. Greer

In April 1972 Craig Bittinger, Clark Lillie, and I conducted an initial reconnaissance in the La Cienega area south of El Sótano (AMCS News, v. III, no. 5, p. 100). The area is due west of Ayutla, north of Ahuacatlán, south of the river, and bordered on the southwest by the high sierras. The initial survey located a very high density of pits, many of which were quite deep, and what appeared to be a couple of possibly long cave systems. Plans were made for a return to the area the end of May when school let out, as part of the AMCS summer activities from their field headquarters in Cd. Valles.

As time for the project neared, preliminary arrangements were made by Frank Binney, Barbara Vinson, and Walt Rosenthal. This consisted of acquiring the necessary letters of introduction and permission from the governmental officers in Pinal de Amoles and Ahuacatlán, and making arrangements with the local juez in La Cienega. They also did further limited reconnaissance in what here is called Area B, the high Cerro Mula ridge west of La Cienega.

On May 28 a large group of AMCS cavers invaded La Cienega by mule train from Ahuacatlán and made headquarters at the school. Field work was carried out for the next 2 weeks, with what seemed a constant influx and exodus of cavers. The following local groups were represented: University Speleological Society of Austin, Texas; Southwest Texas Grotto of San Marcos; Dallas - Ft. Worth Grotto, Texas; Texas A & I Grotto of Kingsville, Texas; Pan American Speleological Society of Edinburg, Texas; Southern California Grotto of Pasadena; Dogwood City Grotto, Georgia; Huntsville Grotto, Alabama; and McMaster University Caving and Climbing Club of Hamilton, Ontario.

From La Cienega, one-day reconnaissance teams continued to locate speleo features, primarily vertical pits. A numbering system was begun with an AMCS series of cave numbers for Mexico. Numbers on small aluminum discs were nailed to rocks or trees at most of the pits which were entered. In most cases, sketch maps (including plans and or profiles) were made when a pit was entered and notes were taken of observed features. In addition to the speleo survey, individuals also conducted research on geographical, geological, and archeological projects.

For convenience, the La Cienega region is divided here into three areas: *Area A*, La Cienega proper and the areas up the valley above town; *Area B*, the high hillside area of Cerro Mula across the canyon west of La Cienega; and *Area C*, the drainage of Cañade de las Tinajitas, a large, deep canyon containing Sótano de Buque southwest of La Cienega.

Following is a general summary of the findings in each area. Future reports will detail such subjects as pit exploration by the project, Sótano de Buque, geological notes, and archeological reconnaissance.

**Area A (\*entered)**

AMCS No.	Length	Depth	Description and Remarks
*1	?	155	Pit (Sótano Tapado)
*2	15	98	Pit
*3	120	485	Pit (Sótano de Paila); entrance drop 470 ft.
*19	?	60	Pit
*20	?	50	Pit
*21	?	223	Pit
*22	?	90	Pit
*23	225	0	Horizontal cave (Las Tranto)
50	?	50	Pit
--	?	100	Pit
--	?	70+	Pit (Sótano de Lagunita)
--	?	200+	Pit (Sótano del Raizal), tapado
--	?	125	Pit (Sótano de Ladera de Jose Espinosa)

**Area B (\*entered)**

AMCS No.	Length	Depth	Description and Remarks
*4	12	200	Pit (Sótano de Puerto Coyote)
*5	20	120	Pit (Sótano de Pino)
*6	?	339	Pit (Sótano de El Pino)
*7	50	35	Pit
*8	20	120	Pit
*9	175	116+	Cave with vertical drops (Joya del Ranchito de la Mesa)
*10	?	80	Pit
*11	15	120	Pit
*12	40	50	Pit
*13	10	132	Pit
*14	50	55	Pit
*15	55	490	Pit (Sótano de Callejon), entrance drop 435 ft)
*16	?	240	Pit (Sótano de Bernal)
--	??	175+	Pit

Note: Many other pits are located all over this hill. Many were visited on the initial and second reconnaissance trips, but they were not adequately recorded to be included here.

**Area C. Speleo Summary (\*entered)**

AMCS No.	Length	Depth	Description and Remarks
*17	115	123	Cave with pit (Cueva Encantada)
*18		1549	Long vertically oriented floodwater cave (Sótano de Buque). Believed to be the fourth deepest cave in Mexico.
*29	312+	20	Cave
*30	32	34	Pit
31	20+	20+	Pit
32	?	30	Pit
*33	250	177	Horizontal cave, dipping.
34	?	175+	Pit
*35	18	12	Pit
*36	150	74	Pit with some passage
*37	40	131	Pit (Sótano de Tinaja Verde)
*38	160	336	Large pit (Sótano de Mexo), entrance drop 275 ft.
*51	54	42	Pit
52	?	200+	Pit
53	?	15+	Pit
--	?	30+	Pit
--	?	60	Pit
*--	40	?	Horizontal cave, dipping
--	?	80+	Pit (Sótano de Roble)
--	?	150+	Pit (Sótano Carbonera)
--	?	175+	Pit (Chiniyal n. 1)
--	?	100	Pit (Chiniyal n. 2)
--	?	60	Pit

**Area C. Archeological Summary**

1. Seven stone ruins, either individual houses or more complex groups.
2. One probable stone tomb or walled entrance to a small horizontal cave.
3. Several portions of old stone walls.
4. Four nonvertical caves with pottery (two others were reported, one also with human skeletons). Most apparently were used as water sources.
5. Several rockshelters with pottery.
6. One cave with a deep internal pit with pottery in the pit.
7. A pit with lower passage containing several whole ceramic vessels -- six jars and one bowl.
8. Deep freefall pit with charcoal and possible old torches in the bottom. An old stone house is adjacent to this pit.
9. Bedrock tinajas and old fields with surrounding pottery shards and obsidian flakes.
10. Mercury mine with ore suitable for red paint.