

An updated approach to documenting sites and activities

There is nothing particularly new below. We are asking that Matienzo cavers take on the responsibility for properly documenting the new caves and passages they are exploring / photographing / surveying. In particular, **drawing up the final version of the survey and writing formal cave passage descriptions.** For smaller finds all this can often be done while in Matienzo where help/advice on the drawing packages (Inkscape/CorelDraw) is available. However, for longer and complicated finds the data can be processed and description entered while in Matienzo, but the final drawing up will normally need to be completed after the trip and sent to Juan for adding to the website.

1) Grid reference

- a) Using GPS unit or Orux Maps etc
- b) Written into logbook – note that the height will be added from that shown when plotted on the AutoCAD map – as the GPS heights are not very accurate.

2) Entrance description

- a) Photographs – distant and close-up
 - i) Uploaded onto Matienzo Office server
- b) Entrance description written into logbook

3) Cave survey

- a) Using tape, compass, clino or DistoX
- b) Data entered into computer to produce a Survex/3d file
- c) Survey detail
 - i) hand drawn over a centre line printout or
 - ii) drawn underground as part of the DistoX/PDA .top file
- d) Final version
 - i) Drawn in layers on computer using Inkscape, Corel Draw or Therion, etc
- e) The published survey is a pdf

4) Cave description

- a) Underground photographs
 - i) Uploaded onto the Matienzo Office server.
- b) A written description is important and where we have also been lacking in the past.
 - i) Nearly all the cave descriptions on the web site have been gleaned from logbook accounts of exploration and published online by JC. There is, very often, little detail online – because the logbook account details the trip and events and often does not give logical details of the passages/cave. This is expected for the logbook account, so it is now suggested a separate concise description is produced – see c) and d) below.
- c) **SUGGESTION: As well as being drawn up in the survey, each batch of data should have a written passage description.**
 - i) **This can either be written into the logbook as a separate part of the activity account or**
 - ii) **Better: typed into Word and saved as, eg 2889-16-04-description (Vaca, 2016, batch 4 description)**
 - iii) **This means that a decent passage description is tied to each batch of survey data.**
 - iv) **It is then relatively easy to link the written accounts together for a full cave description. This also makes it easy to compare the .3d line survey with the passage description.**
 - v) **This should occur with new caves and also re-surveys, eg Reñada and Hoyuca.**
- d) **Method:**
 - i) **After each survey trip, when usually at least 2 people have been involved, one person can be dealing with the survey while the other types up a description of the surveyed passage(s). (There are currently 3 laptops)**
 - ii) **The descriptions would be saved in a “Descriptions” folder within the expedition folder.**

iii) To put the full cave description online, JC can copy and paste the relevant text from the batch(es) description(s). The author of each batch description would also be acknowledged online.

5) Logbook

- a) This is a record of activities and should include people involved, what happened and other data as outlined above.

6) RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) Old hands and newbies (with assistance) should be responsible for their own work:
- i) Grid reference
 - ii) entrance description with photos
 - iii) cave survey – up to and including (at least) step 3(c); preferably 3(d)
 - iv) Photographs. **Formal cave passage (batch) description – to appear online**
 - v) Logbook account
- b) Ideally, Juan / Phil and others should not have to take on other peoples' survey data to draw up a final survey 3(d). Training is offered. Also remember we cannot give a good description of a cave we have not been in!

Examples:

- 1) At Easter Alex Ritchie typed into Word (in the Matienzo Office) a description of Cueva del Ciervo (site 4117) which had recently been discovered. This text can be used as 95% of the online description and is much better than trying to produce a description that is interlaced with accounts of the trips from a number of logbook entries of the exploration trips.
- 2) Torca de los Caños is a multiple trip and multiple surveys system. The online description (<http://www.matienzocaves.org.uk/descrip/4043.htm>), together with the survey, is an attempt to bring some order to a system description by using the survey batch numbers.
- 3) The current description for Reñada (<http://www.matienzocaves.org.uk/descrip/0048.htm>) is a mess where passage description is mixed up with exploration history – and large sections of description have never been written.

What can be in a passage / batch description?

Aim for a few informative sentences – a concise description.

Batch code: eg 2889-16-02

Passage dimensions and descriptors: flat-out crawl; hands & knees crawl; walking size; 5m tall, 0.5m wide meandering rift; *large, approximately oval shaped chamber (10m x 7m), floored with large sandstone boulders and about 10m high with a hole high on the northern wall*; phreatic; vadose; sandstone; sandy mud; muddy sand; etc

Notable features / peculiar difficulties: junctions with other passages; well decorated with stalactites, columns, gypsum, straws, etc; deep wall scallops; boulder floor; sandy floor; cobbled streamway; deep holes in the floor; 20m high aven; layered mud banks; traverse; faults; cracked mud floor; draughts; wall fossils; awkward 3m climb up the right-hand wall; etc

Lengths/depths/heights: For example: *Walking downstream along a narrow, 4m high, cobble-floored stream that meanders heading generally east for 50m before reaching a 10m deep pit.*

Equipment required: Rope(s); ladders; rigging

Route finding: eg *Climb up on a mud bank to the left as the stream disappears into a low crawl.*

Biology: Spiders, bats etc

Archaeology: Bones, pottery

Potential: Unexplored or not-surveyed holes going off this batch/passage; relationship to other caves/passages.

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