

# Expedición Espeleológica a Matienzo 2014



Gueva Rincueva – Galería del Yeso

## Cave exploration during 2014

This report covers the Expedition's speleological work in a revised permit area in 2014 that covers the municipal authorities of Solorzano, Entrambasaguas and Ruesga north of Cruz Uzano. The location of this permit area is shown in figure 1.

This new permit area was allocated to accommodate other clubs active in Cantabria. It is almost the same in extent to our allocated area of the past 20+ years, but is restricted to the three local administration authorities. It cuts out our previous areas in part of Voto and Riotuerto.

The 2014 permit area extended further north than previously, and we took the decision to allocate some time to checking the known caves and their GPS location in this area. We resurveyed a number of these caves where the previous surveys were either incomplete or not available in modern format.



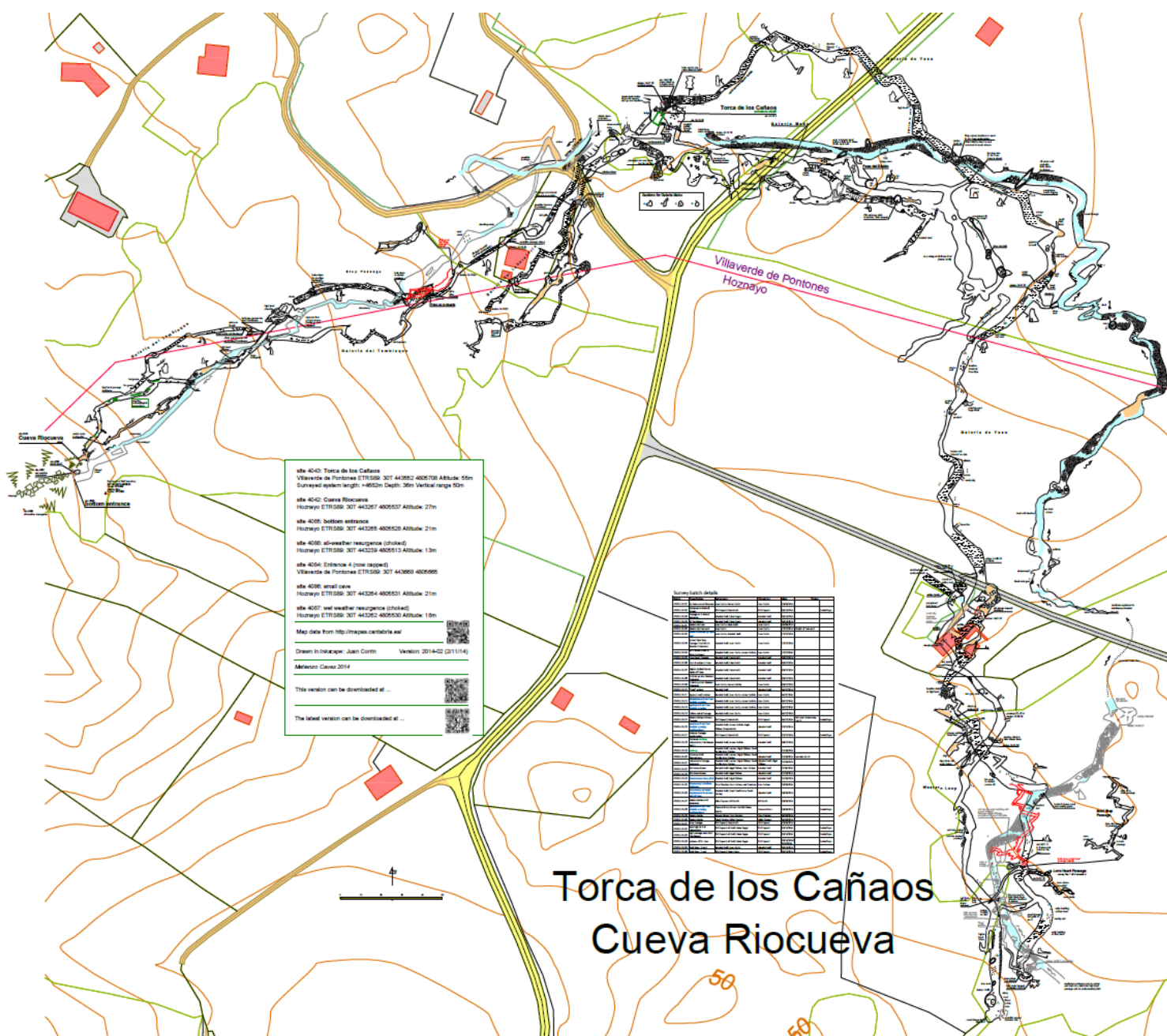
Fig 1 - Expedición Británica área de permiso para el 2014

About 60 cavers took part in the 2014 Matienzo expedition, mainly over the Easter and summer period. Over 11km of cave was surveyed during 2014 of which some 7km were new discoveries and in total some 150 new caves and sites were located and many explored – details on these can be found on our website <http://matienzocaves.org.uk>. Over 6km of passage in existing caves in the new areas were surveyed. Ongoing work from previous years in the major cave systems produced about 6km of new cave passage with open leads left for work in 2015.

We continued to complete our work in a few of the caves we have been working on in Voto and Riotuerto (the parts of two administration areas that were removed from our permit), under an agreement with the Cantabrian Caving Federation and the two local clubs who now have these areas.

Significant time and resources was spent excavating at BigMat Calf Hole (site 3916) as a major collapse occurred during the very wet winter. This work successfully linked this site to Torca la Vaca, giving the safer and better access we required. In October the entrance area was restored and a stock proof door installed. Only a few trips in 2014 using this new entrance were made, however almost 2km of new cave was found and surveyed. Work will continue in 2015.

Significant time was spent with a re-survey and exploration of Cueva Riocueva in the far north of our new area. This cave had been surveyed by the Spanish in the 1980/90s at 3.1km. We have surveyed 4.7km so far, with some stream passage below Torca Cañaos and new passage in the far upstream is still to be surveyed.



The expedition gave a paper to the SEDEC conference at Ramales del la Vitoria in September. The paper concentrated on the caves and potential in the South Vega/Vallina area. One objective was to get cooperation with other groups for some important work to map the hydrology of the Alto



Asón area using dye (optical brightener) testing. This was agreed and the first part will be a major element of work for Easter 2015 when Cueva Vallina will be targeted. This site is important as it now appears its water may link directly to the South Vega system and it is also possible that the higher passages may be associated with systems to the west. A "Google Group" has been set up to coordinate this work and it is likely that funding will be possible from the Federation Speleologique Europeenne as we have five countries involved in the work (Spain, UK, France, Belgium and Denmark).

**Main explorations and surveys carried out in 2014** – see table below. Minor sites and finds are not listed here but all details are available on our web site (<http://matienzocaves.org.uk>), including locations, any surveys and photographs.

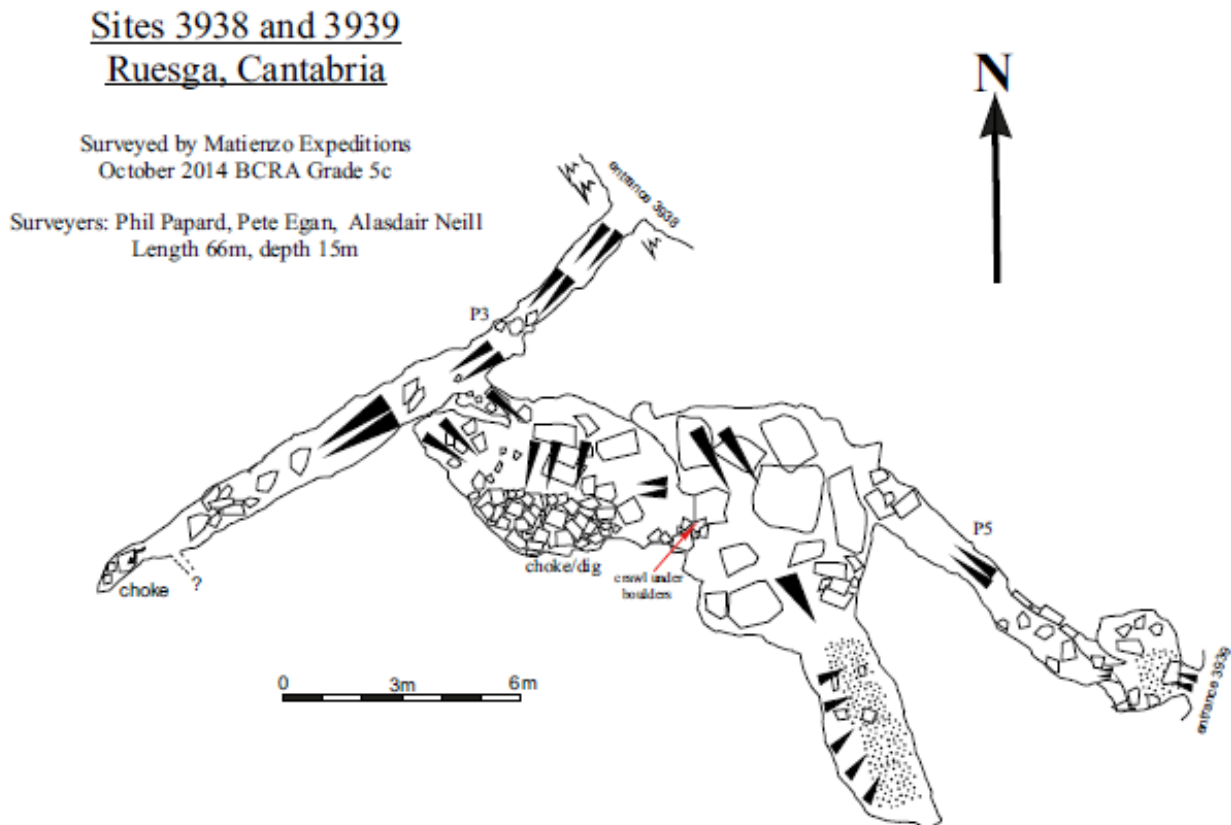
<b>Matienzo Caves 2014 – Surveyed new passages and known caves in new permit area</b>					
<b>Cave</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Previous Length (m)</b>	<b>New Length (m)</b>	<b>Extra Length Found (m)</b>
2889	Torca la Vaca	Hornedo	15875	17470	1502
81/107/114	Sistema de Cuatro Valles - Hoyoca, Carcavuezo and Llueva	Ruesga, Sorlórzano, Voto	56770	57941	1171
71	Mostajo	Cubija	21686	22353	667
25	Sima-Cueva del Risco	El Sedo	11467	11889	422
2917	Cueva de los Urros,	Entrambasaguas	1399	1562	163
4019	Cave	Sorlórzano	0	159	159
3380	Torca de Peña Encaramada	Entrambasaguas	3930	4086	156
1800	Fridge Door Cave	Riaño	0	136	136
4089		Riolastras	0	132	132
3923		Hornedo	0	131	131
0048	South Vega System, Renada Area	Ruesga	32951	33071	120
3995		Solorzano	0	106	106
3842	Cave	Sorlórzano	0	94	94
3215	Duck Pond Dig (Cold Store)	Entrambasaguas	28	122	94
4041	shaft	Navaheda	0	88	88
4075	Double Dog	Riocueva area	0	81	81
4074		Riocueva area	0	66	66
137	Cueva del Coveano	La Colina	0	66	66
3938/9	Cave	Alisas	0	66	66
3988	Cave	Sorlórzano	0	63	63
2381	Shaft	Entrambasaguas	10	60	50
4061	Snail Cave	Riolastras	0	47	47
4091		Riolastras	0	32	32
50	Torca del Seruccio	South Vega	316	339	23
3955	Cueva del Ermita	Solorzano	0	21	21
4060	Pylon Cave	Riolastras	0	21	21
3985	Flunky Flashing Light Cave	Sorlórzano	0	14	14
4016	Dig	Ruesga	0	4	4
<b>Total length of new passage surveyed</b>					<b>5695</b>
4043/4	Torca de Caños/Riocueva	Hoznayo			4682
3961	Cueva de Nicanor	Sorlórzano			285
3991	Cueva de Lolo (Secretario)	Sorlórzano			275
4007	Cueva del Abortal	Sorlórzano			83
3973	Cueva la Revoltona	Sorlórzano			76
<b>Total length of passage surveyed in known caves in new permit area (over 1.5km of which had not been surveyed previously)</b>					<b>5401</b>
<b>Total length of passage surveyed including survey of known caves in new area</b>					<b>11096</b>

## Southern Sector (La Colina, Ozana, South Vega and Vallina)

Time was spent outside the main expedition period to accurately locate sites that had been located in years previous to GPS availability – this work is ongoing and all updated locations are on our website.

**Alisas Area** - This is a key location which is in an area thought to be a catchment for both **Cueva Vallina (733)** and **Cubio de la Reñada (48)**, but is proving difficult to find access to the deeper systems that lie below.

**Caves 3938** and **3939** were explored late in 2013 (after that years report) and in 2014 they were surveyed, and the bottom of 3938 pushed – but only to a choke with limited prospects.



Of the sites identified, **637** was descended with limited gear which was found to be inadequate for a drop of over 30m, this will be tackled in 2015. A new site **4072**, Cave of the Dog, needs the top of a 10m pitch opening up, and sites **4064** and **cave (4082)** have very good draughts but both will need more digging in 2015.

**Cubio de la Reñada (48)** 120m of new large cross section sump and passage upstream from



Cubio de la Reñada – Anastomoses Hall

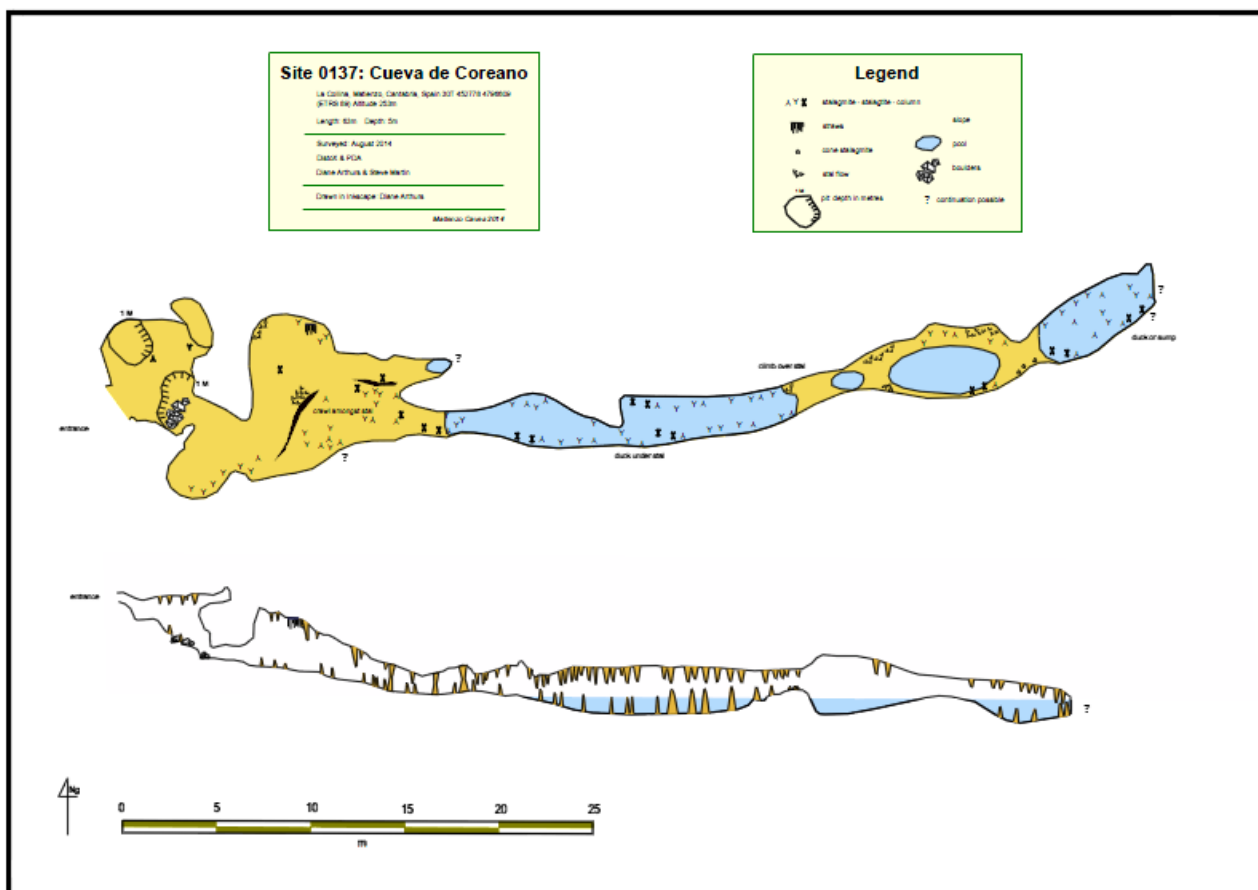
Squirrel's Passage ended in to a number of rifts and air bells that appeared to be a collecting area for streams coming from the big passages above in the main cave route. A start was made to produce a digital comprehensive survey of the South Vega system, with the Reñada entrance series resurveyed in detail. At the same time digital photographs were taken in some of the main passages.

**Cueva del Risco**, as part of an etymological collection project in Matienzo Caves, a small team helped on some follow up work to collect more specimens of a possible new Spider species. During the trip 422m of well decorated high level passage was found and surveyed.



**Cueva de Coreano (137)** in La Colina was pushed and surveyed to 65m through well decorated passage, with stalagmites under the water level.

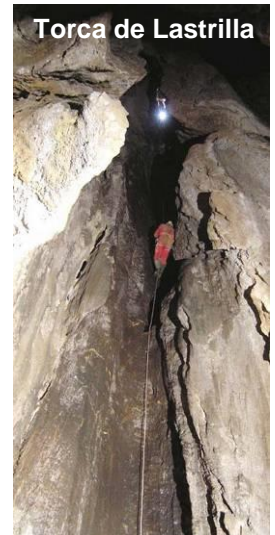
A further flooded section needs looking at with diving gear.





**North Vega, El Naso area west to Las Calzadillas**

**Torca de Lastrilla 427**, was pushed down the tight pitch in the chamber opened up in 2012; this was 9.8m slot with outward draught, needing more work in 2015 to progress. This is an important site as it could link to both Picon and the North Vega system at Regaton.



**Torca del Mostajo 71** work continued from the 2013 discoveries with about 750m of new passage surveyed and a possible better way into the 2013 series found from the main high level passage, work will continue in 2015. Work had started to bring to together the existing surveys of the various linked systems and to resurvey where needed.



**The Northeast Sector and The Four Valleys System**

**Cueva Llueva (114)** – 500m of large high level passage was found via a bolted climb to the south of the Big Bang Burger Bar. These passages are situated some 70-80m above the main river passage and lake and still have open leads left for future expeditions to explore.

**Cueva de Carcavuezo (81)** – work continued for the update and resurvey work of the Four Valleys System, with about 300m of new passage found.

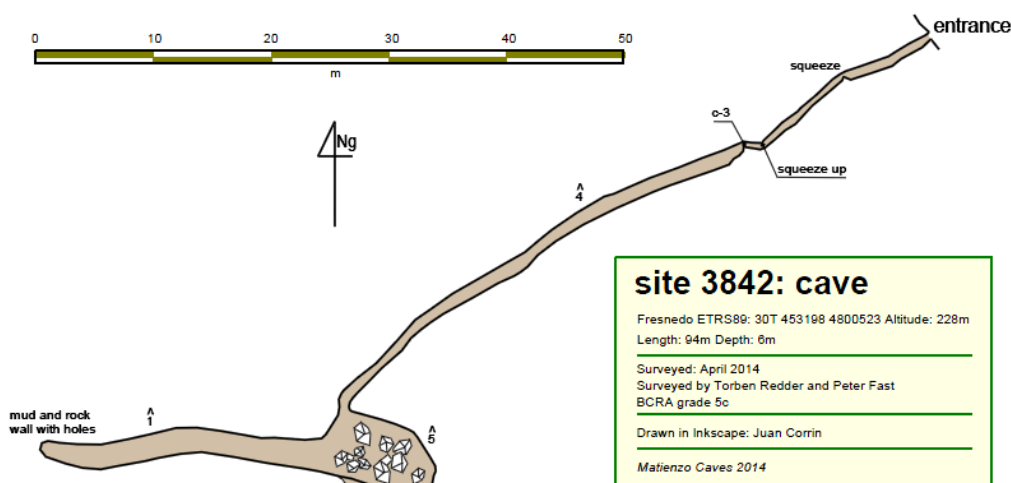
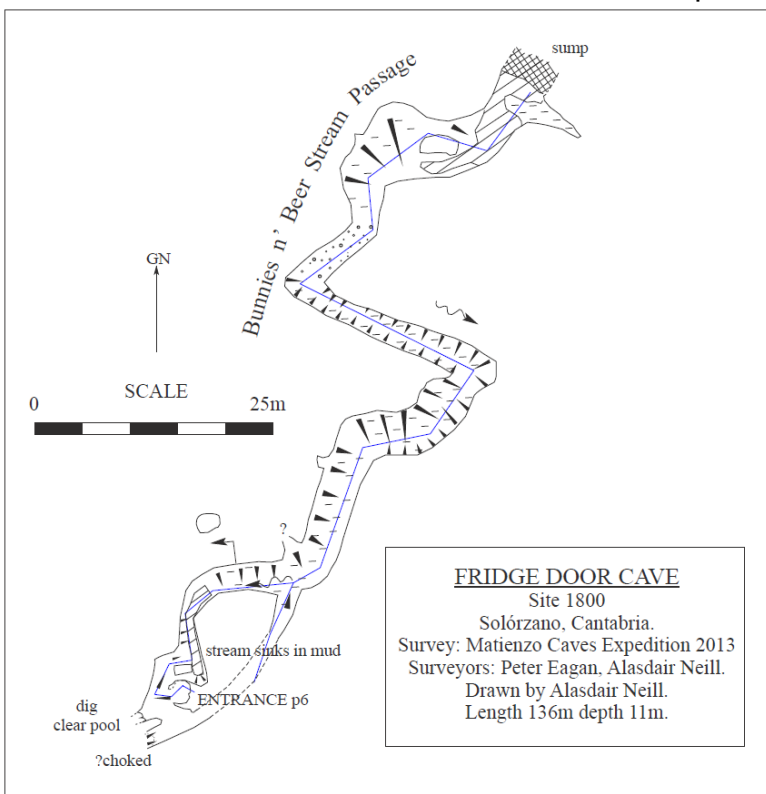
**Cueva Hoyuca (107)** - The entrance tight sections in the **Giant Panda Entrance (2691)** was opened up to make access easier. Taking advantage of this entrance a 3 hour trip to a 50m aven near Sloppy Inlet was climbed to find an airy traverse and passage to a 28m pitch down into a series of passages and chambers going down stream. This series was left with still open passages for 2015. In total some 800m of new passage was added to the cave in 2014.

**Cueva Llanío (3234)**, a number of possible leads were looked at in the lower levels but most closed down or needed more digging aids. A radon meter left in the cave from 15<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> April showed reading of 3612 Bq/m<sup>3</sup> – this is some 20 times more than the suggested limit for houses, but given the amount of time spent in the cave it presents only a low risk.

**Fridge Door Cave (1800)** was pushed in October 2013 to 136m and could be a link between **Cueva Llanío (3234)** and **Cueva de la Espada (0105)**. In October 2014 in dry conditions the water at the end was lowered but not enough to make progress, the site will now need diving.

Work in the area to the west of Fresnedo going towards Garzon located a number of sites and caves. These were explored. This included surveying and checking out **Cueva la Revoltona (3973)**, work was done opening up a pitch in this cave, more work is needed.

In the Fresnedo area two dives were made at **3910** and **Fuente de la Virgin (582)** but both closed down with little progress. **3842** was opened up and surveyed and for 94m where it closed down.



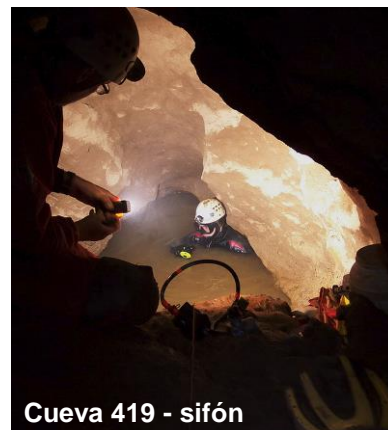
**Solórzano and Riolastras Area**

There are a number of known caves in this area, mainly surveyed in the 1970s and 80s by Spanish clubs using maps based on Madrid as the origin, making identification of the locations

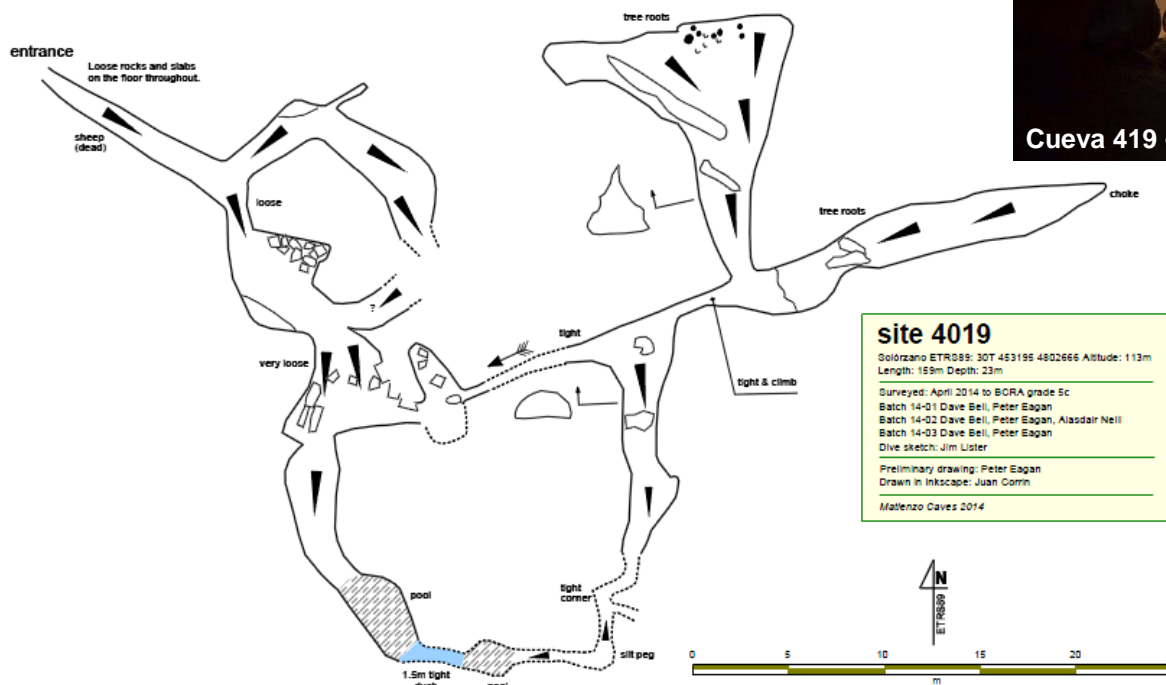


difficult. Time was spent identifying and surveying some of these caves, and in so doing a number of new sites were found and explored.

**4019** that was first explored to a sump which was dived to a continuation, a dig bypassed the sump and will allow exploration to continue in the future.



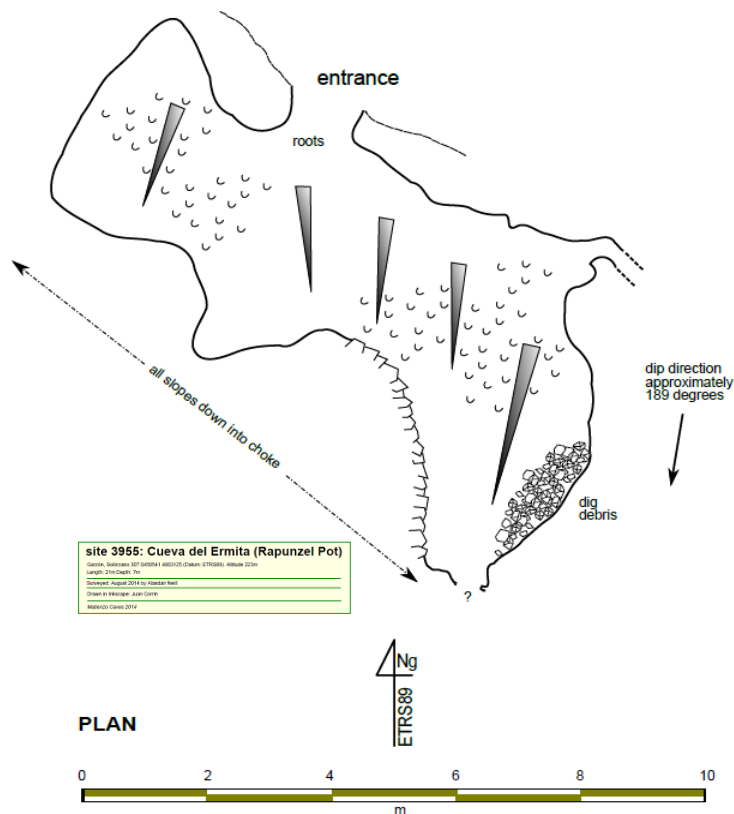
**Cueva 419 - sifón**



**Cueva del Ermita (3955)** a steeply rooted festooned rift was found and surveyed. A part of a possible human skull was recovered and taken to the Cantabrian Museum in Santander. Given the archaeological significance of this cave further work was put on hold.



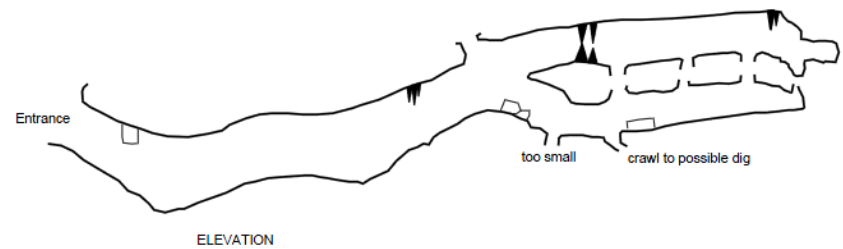
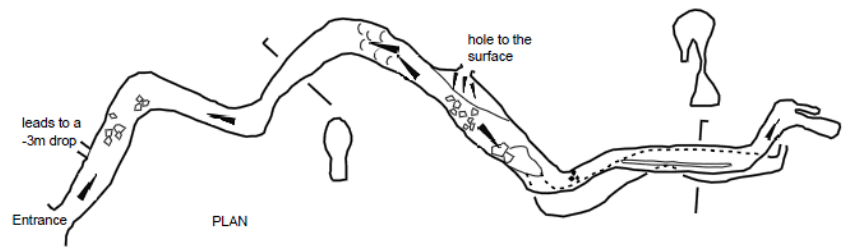
**Cueva del Ermita**



**PLAN**



**Cueva de Lolo (3991)** behind the medical centre in Solórzano was surveyed at 270m long and seems to be a flood overflow ending at a hydraulic gravel rise down to a small sump. This looks like it should be short and must take a lot of flow in flood to push up the gravel – a diving prospect for the future.

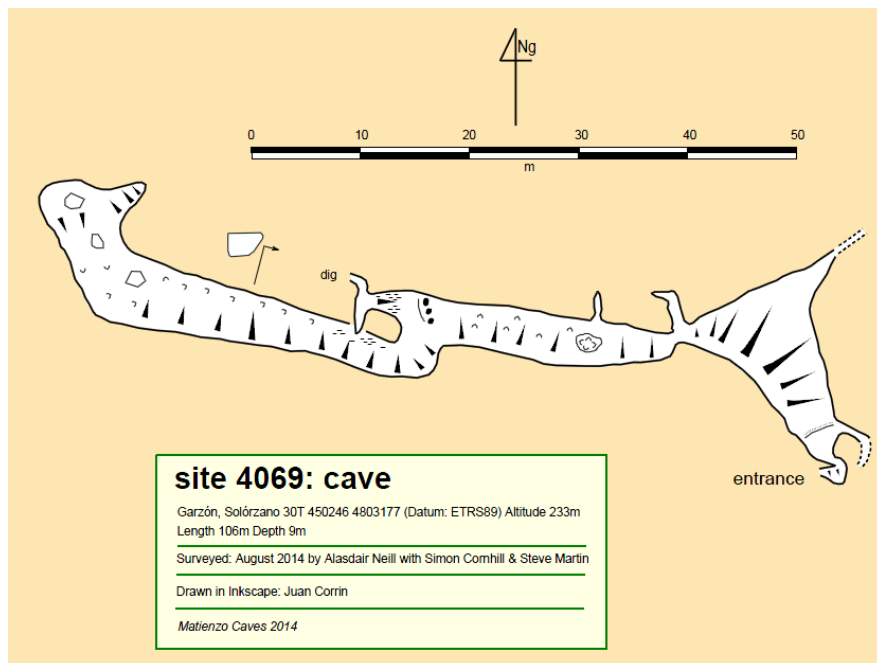


**Cueva de Nicanor (3961)** was explored and surveyed. A few metres were dug but no significant progress made. A number of new caves in this area were found and surveyed in the area including **3988**, a new 63m cave ending in a calcite choke.

Cueva 3988 Solórzano 452954 4803398 118m Length 63m

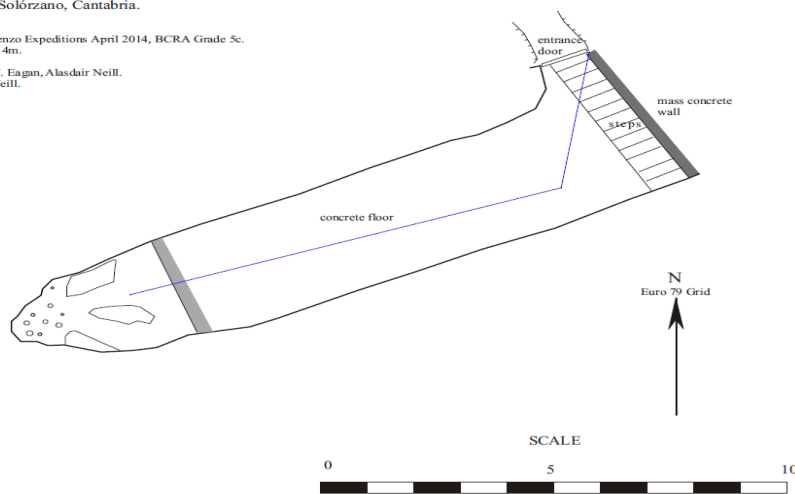
**Top Dog, 4069** found and surveyed to 106m, this is an old remnant cave not far below the current surface that may extend to the west beyond the entrance collapse, but is likely to be truncated by erosion of the hill.

A number of other minor caves were identified including **Cueva del Corte (3985)** (Funky Flashing Light Cave) that has been partly converted into a store behind a house with fitted flashing lights! (still to be fully explored) and 3988 a small Cave in Eucalyptus wood

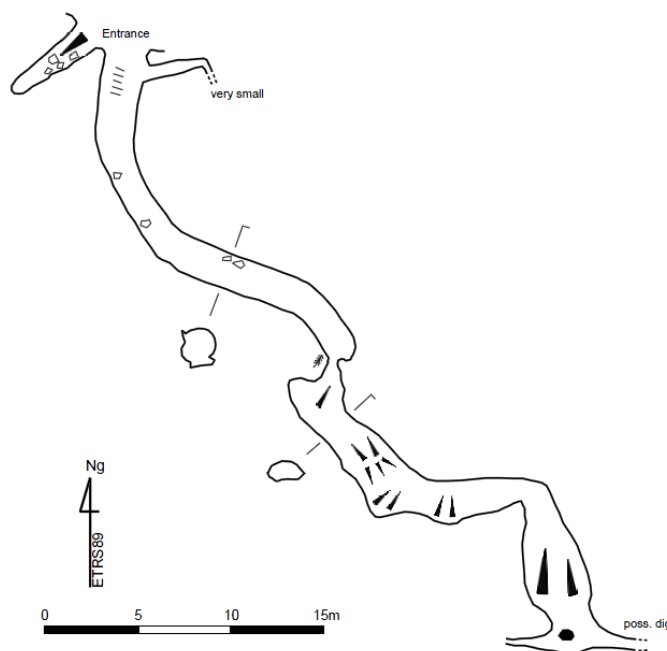


**FUNKY FLASHING LIGHT CAVE**  
**Site 3985**  
 Solórzano, Cantabria.

Surveyed by Matienzo Expeditions April 2014, BCRA Grade 5c.  
 Length 14m depth 4m.  
 Surveyors: Peter T. Eagan, Alasdair Neill.  
 Drawn: Alasdair Neill.



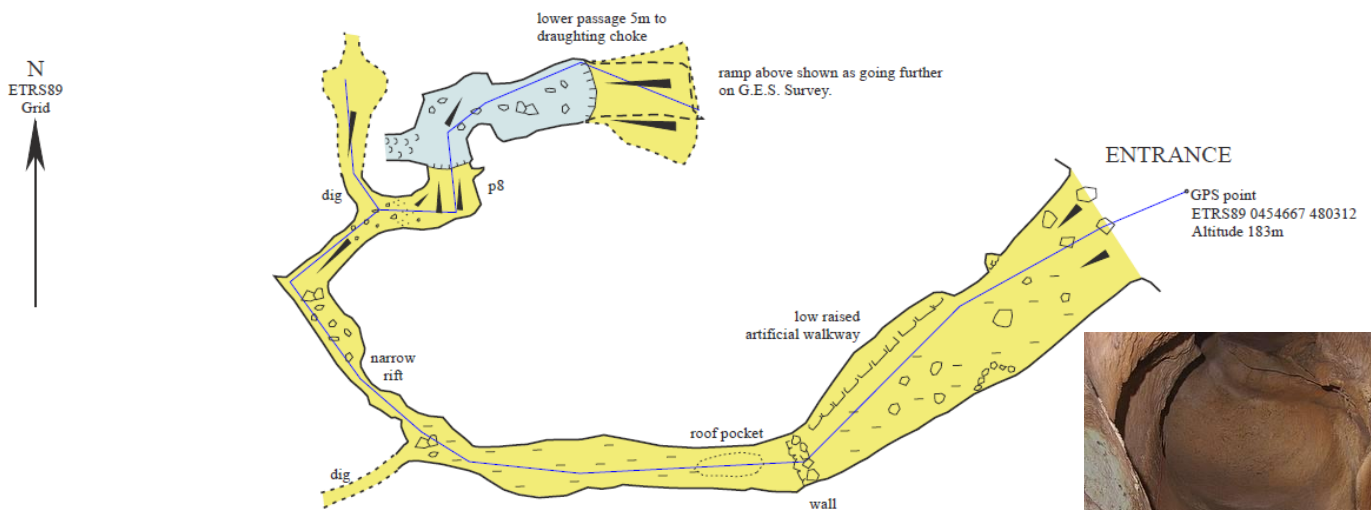
**4065 Cueva de los Zorros I** is a 67 long cave with a possible dig at the end.



**Cueva de los Zorros I**  
 Solórzano 30T 452672 4803339 (datum: ETRS89) Altitude 89m Length 67m  
 Surveyed and drawn by Peter Smith  
 Surveyed June 2014 (disto, compass and clinometer)



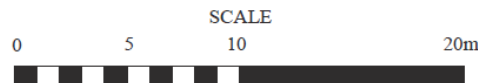
**Cueva del Abortal (4007)** in the Riolastras area was surveyed, with just 8m of new passage dug into.



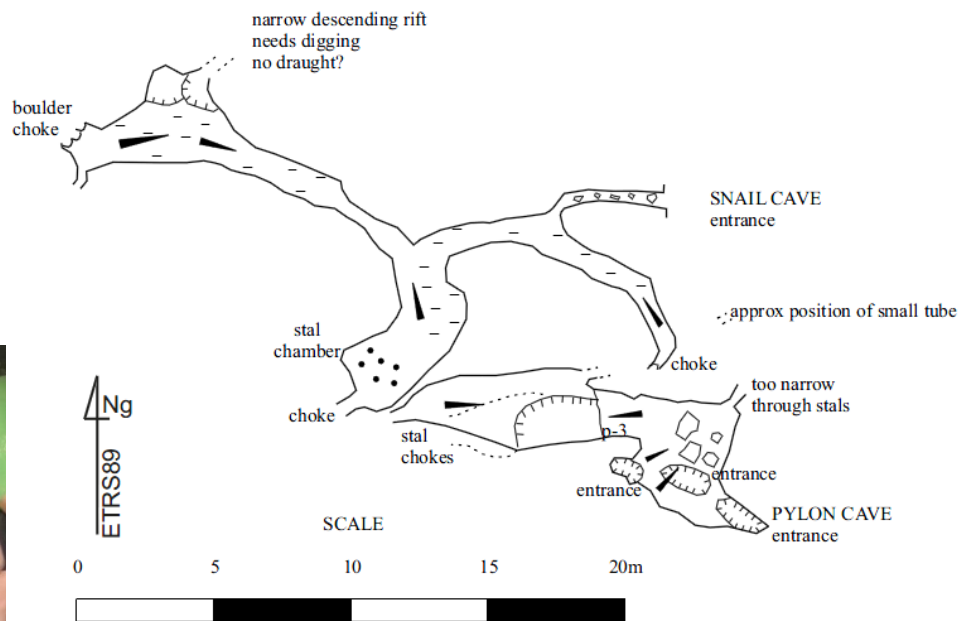
**CUEVA DEL ABORTAL**  
**Site 4007**  
 Riolastras, Cantabria.

Surveyed by Matienzo Caves Expedition, April 2014, BCRA Grade 5c.  
 Length 83m Depth 14m.

Surveyors: Dave Bell, Peter T. Eagan, Alasdair Neill, Phil Papard, Pete Smith, Terry Whitaker  
 Drawn: Alasdair Neill.



**Pylon Cave 4060** in Riolastras was found and surveyed to a drop needing more work, similarly nearby **Snail Cave (4061)** was pushed to a pit that needs a further work.



**SNAIL CAVE site 4061**  
**PYLON CAVE site 4060**

Riolastras, Solórzano, Cantabria

site 4060 @ 30T 0455205 4803072 (datum: ETRS89) Altitude 129m

site 4061 @ 30T 0455203 4803082 (datum: ETRS89) Altitude 128m

Survey: Matienzo Expedition 2014, BCRA Grade 5c.

surveyors: James Carlisle, Alasdair Neill.

drawn: Alasdair Neill.

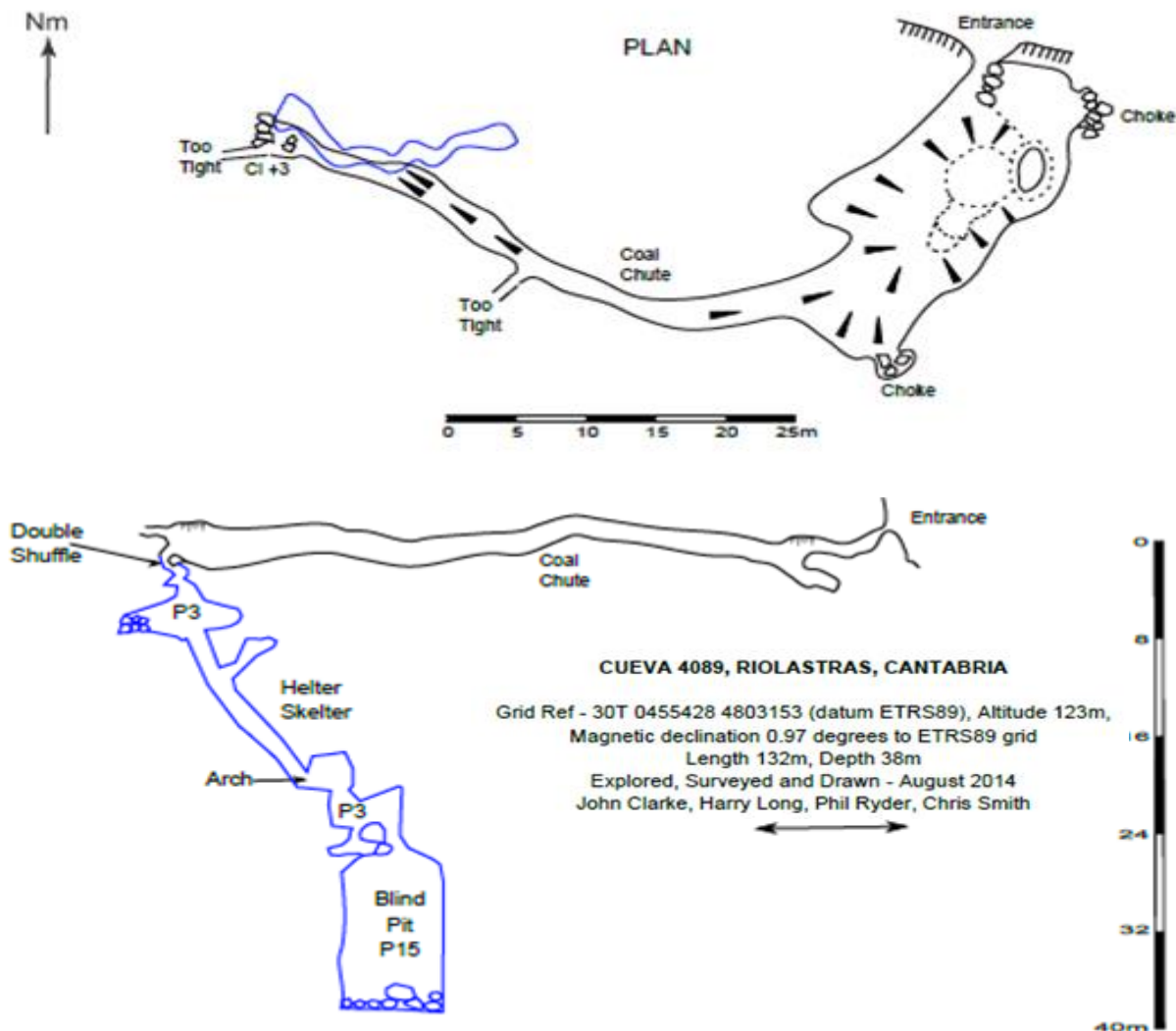
Length: Pylon Cave 21m

Snail Cave 47m.

**Site 4089** - 132m of new cave was surveyed and **cave 4091** was surveyed to 32m, where it splits and becomes too tight, but with the left passage draughting out.



Cueva 4089



### Northwest Sector

**El Cubillón,(2538)** in agreement with the G E Pistruellos group the tight section above the first pitch was opened up to allow easy access for diving gear and the sump was dived, but was found to be shallow over deep mud with no way on. An aven was bolted, but it broke up at the top into rifts with no clear way on.

**Duckpond Dig (3215)** digging allowed two chambers and a boulder choke with possible ways on to be entered and 94m of new passage surveyed. A way on through the boulders could not be found and the draught was lost. A look again in good draughting weather is now needed.

Cueva 2215 "Duckpond Dig"





**Washing Machine Hole (3420)** was looked at by two of the thinner members of the team in this flood prone cave. A way on was pushed to a pitch, but the way was tight and only one member could reach the pitch. A return to open up the tight section is needed in 2015.



In the Navajeda area a number of sites were looked at. At cave **3954** there is a good draught and with a possible link to **3969**. However it is mainly in sandstone, occupied by rats and when an attack was made on a boulder choke a crack was heard and part of the roof of the cave dropped a distance. This cave is extremely unstable and must be treated with great care.

Monte Vizmaya was looked at and some sites identified, but nothing of significant length found to date.

**Pozo de la Hoya (4017)** just north of the motorway at Hoznayo is an old abandoned remnant cave with three entrances. There is little scope for extension apart from one dig site in the upper section, but it shows there is good development in the area.

**Riocueva (4042)** the important archaeological site that was previously surveyed to 3.2km was resurveyed and explored mainly from the **Torca Caños (4043)** entrance. One trip was via the main Riocueva entrance in cooperation



with the archaeological team who were working in this part of the cave. To date some 4.7km of passage has been surveyed and a section at the furthest point upstream has been pushed through a flooded section to more high level passages that will need exploring and surveying in 2015. A number of small caves and sites were identified in the area above and to the south of the cave – to date none were found to be extensive and more work is needed.



**Torca de Peña Encaramada (3380)** Work to complete the 2013 survey resulted in 156m of new cave.

**Cueva de Los Campizos (YoYo Cave)** A tight section was opened up to a 17m pitch and further work gained access to a 80m pitch to a ledge of boulders and a further 53m pitch to a large chamber with at least two ways on (vadose trenches). More gear was then needed and will be a priority to push in 2015.

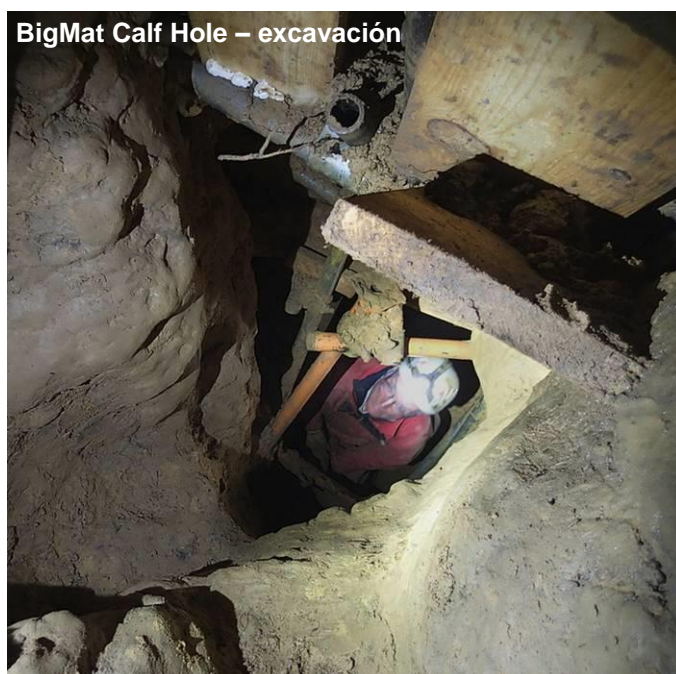
Two possible dry entrances (**3905** and **3916**) to **Torca la Vaca (2889)** were excavated, with considerable work at **BigMat Calf Hole (3916)** which had been located as an entrance using radio location equipment. After much material had been removed the connection was made. Work to install an entrance tube, backfilling, and fitting a final cap and lid were completed in October to restore the site.



BigMat Calf Hole – entrada



BigMat Calf Hole – excavación



BigMat Calf Hole – excavación

**Torca la Vaca (2889)** - using the better entrance at **BigMat Calf Hole** 1.5km of new passage was found and surveyed in three main areas:—

1. To the east of the new entrance;
2. Extension to the Frizzington Series to the south-east bisecting the Wasdale Screes passage and the main cave and almost reaching Cueva de los Urros (2917);
3. In the far reaches in the south of the system. This extension is two areas of large high level passage up to 20m wide totalling 620m in the area indicated on the survey below, but they are not shown on the survey as they were only found in mid-October and the survey has not yet been updated.



**site 2889: Torca La Vaca**  
Surveyed by the Malienzo Caves Expeditions 2008 - 2013

1:1000

1.

2.

3.

