

IKC UPDATE

A man with a beard, wearing a red helmet with a headlamp, a purple jacket, and red pants, stands in a narrow, rocky cave passage. The cave walls are made of layered, light-colored rock with some water dripping from the ceiling. The man is looking towards the camera.

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PO Box 2401, Indianapolis, IN 46206-2401

<http://www.caves.org/conservancy/ikc>

Affiliated with the National Speleological Society



The Indiana Karst Conservancy is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation and preservation of caves and karst features in Indiana and other areas of the world. The Conservancy encourages research and promotes education related to karst and its proper, environmentally compatible use.

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*grottos with liaison agreements

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Cover: Ty Spatta, IKC's newest member, in Shiloh Cave, Lawrence County.
Digital image by Dave Everton (2005).



QUARTERLY MEETING REMINDER

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17th, NOON

SOUTHPORT, INDIANA

Home of Nick & Carita Noe, 1291 Priority Place

The quarterly meetings are for the elected Board to conduct business and for our members and other interested persons to have an open forum to talk about cave and karst conservation and related topics. Past, present, and future IKC projects are discussed to solicit comments and input from our members and the caving community as a whole. The meetings are informal, and everyone is encouraged to attend and participate. The IKC Board *wants* your input.

Preliminary Agenda Items: Brief recaps of last quarter's activities; Treasurer's report; Education/Outreach report; Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve topics (fund-raising status, surface restoration efforts and strategies); Sullivan Cave Preserve topics; and more!

Meeting directions: The Noe's condo complex is 1/2 block east and 1/2 block south of the intersection of Shelby Street and Stop 10 on the southside of Indianapolis. Call or e-mail Nick (see contact info on page 2) if you need more specific directions.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

- 04 DEC = IKC QUARTERLY MEETING (see above)
- ?? FEB = IKC WINTER DIRECTOR'S MEETING (date and location TBD)
- 18 FEB = IKC/HNF COMMITTEE MEETING, 10 AM, Bedford
- ?? MAR = IKC ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING (date and location TBD)

Sean Lewis (conquering the pile of tires) and Dave Everton assess their day's work of removing more than 100 tires during a sinkhole clean up in Lawrence County. See the full article starting on page 8.



For more information on the Indiana Karst Conservancy, visit our web site at <http://www.caves.org/conservancy/ikc> or write to our PO box. Membership to the IKC is open to anyone interested in cave and karst conservation. Annual dues are \$15. Please see inside back cover for the membership application form or to make a much appreciated donation.

The *IKC Update*, distributed for free, is published quarterly for members and other interested parties. The purpose of this newsletter is to keep the membership and caving community informed of IKC activities and other news related to cave/karst conservation. Submission of original or reprinted articles for publication is encouraged.

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RAMBLINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT...

It is horrifying that we have to fight our own government to save the environment.

-- Ansel Adams



Some of you may have heard that Representative Richard Pombo (R-CA), Chairman of the House Resources Committee (the most influential committee on public lands issues) recently drafted a bill that

would have closed and sold off fifteen of our national parks and offered the naming rights for remaining park facilities and trails for sale to the highest bidder. Think Budweiser Geyser Visitor Center for instance. According to the National Wildlife Federation, Pombo was promoting this bill as what amounted to blackmail to attempt to force the opening of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas development (which according to an analysis by the Department of Energy would lead to a savings of about one cent per gallon at the pump when the refuge production came on line in ten to twenty years). NWF also noted that Rep Pombo had received in excess of \$85,000 in contributions from the oil and gas industry for his 2004 election campaign. Oh, and if that isn't enough, Pombo is also trying to rewrite the Mining Law of 1872 to allow a truly major divestiture of our public lands. According to the LA Times, his proposal would allow the sale of "potentially millions of federal acres, including national park and forest holdings." It would end an eleven-year moratorium on mining patents allowing mining companies to buy federal land with valuable mineral deposits for bargain-basement prices. Essentially, Pombo's proposal would drop the requirement that the claim must include a recoverable mineral discovery, which would be a windfall for just about any land developer who wanted to buy "mineable" federal land on the cheap, regardless of its eventual use.

Others may remember Pombo as the co-author (with Dennis Cardoza D-CA - how

nice, a bipartisan effort) of HR 3824, the Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act of 2005 aka the "Extinction Bill" -- a rewrite of the Endangered Species Act -- that was passed by the House in October. The Extinction Bill will, if a comparable bill is introduced and passed by the Senate and signed into law by the President, abolish critical habitat protections for threatened and endangered species, bankrupt the Fish and Wildlife Service by requiring them to pay developers not to wipe out endangered species, and strip many protective provisions from the Act.

How does this relate to the IKC? Well, for one thing Robinson Ladder Cave is a Priority III hibernaculum for the Federally Endangered Indiana Bat -- it is a critical habitat for an endangered species. Coon and Grotto caves are also critical habitats for the bat as are several other caves we have identified for protection and possible acquisition -- whether by ourselves or in partnership with the Indiana DNR, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and The Nature Conservancy. If the Act is amended as proposed, there will likely be reduced funding available for and interest in such activities. I also note that sections of the proposed extension to I-69 have been rerouted so as to reduce its impact on critical bat habitat. I'm sure this is an inconvenience to the transportation planners and an added cost to the project -- think about it!

There will be some very real losses if this goes through. For example, in 2002, the US Fish and Wildlife Service awarded the Indiana DNR \$1.4 million for long-range planning and land acquisition to benefit federally endangered species. An additional grant of \$587,250 was awarded to begin planning a statewide habitat conservation plan for the Indiana bat, focusing on caves in the state forests and maternity sites on various state and federal properties. All of this sort of funding is doubtful under the proposed legislation.

And, if you are like me and most of the cavers I know; you are outdoors oriented and believe that one of the finest accomplishments of this country was the establishment of the National Park System. Like me, you may also believe that with proper manage-



ment, the National Parks and Monuments along with our National Forests, National Wildlife Refuges, and BLM lands are the best hope for the long-term health of native species and ecosystems and offer the best outdoors recreational opportunities by far! I hope we have the sense not to turn the good that has been done since Teddy Roosevelt over to bean counters and soulless politicians.

For now, there has been no version of the Extinction Bill introduced in the Senate. This could change in a minute of course. The National Parks sell-off was not introduced in the House but there is evidence that Pombo really meant it (per NWF he asked the Congressional Budget Office to evaluate the financials for such actions!) The re-write of the 1872 Mining Act was passed by the House as part of the Deficit Reduction Act (supported by my Congressman) and now will have to be reconciled with the Senate version, which was passed earlier and does not appear to contain language regarding the Mining Act. It's impossible to say what will come out of such a resolution!

Oh, and the administration has not been sitting on their hands either -- per the National Parks Conservation Association; Paul Hoffman, Deputy Assistant Secretary at the Interior Department (a politically appointed position -- he was formerly head of the Cody Wyoming Chamber of Commerce and has no National Parks experience but has referred to the re-introduction of wolves into Yellowstone as "the equivalent of detonating a nuclear bomb"), has proposed changes to the Management Policies that govern the opera-

tion of the National Parks. One of the key provisions of the proposed changes would be to cease managing the parks to avoid "unacceptable impacts" to the beauty, tranquility, or importance to the site and rather to manage the parks to avoid "irreversible impairment". The way NPCA interprets this, it means that building a water slide in Mammoth Cave would be acceptable because it could later be removed.

What can you do? Keep an eye on your Congressional Representative and Senators. My Representative voted for the Extinction Bill despite letters and phone calls. Did yours? You can find out on the Internet or through most of the big environmental organizations (most have automated action alert systems to e-mail you when some particularly bad thing is on the way). Write letters. They may ignore them but you can then remember that at election time -- be an informed voter. Finally (here it comes) help us pay off Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve! If the government neglects its duty to protect and preserve the important natural sites in our country, then we have to do it! The IKC by itself may be small but as a part of the growing number of cave conservancies with Land Trust activities we can make a difference and it's a difference that you can see and experience.

And remember, Dick Blenz is matching donations so your contribution can go twice as far!

Thanks and Good Caving,
Richard Vernier

NEWS BRIEFS...

- ❑ Several years ago, Dave McGowan, a video-photographer and IKC member, approached the IKC with the proposition of doing a short video on caves. The idea bounced around for a long time and unfortunately it just wasn't financially conceivable for the IKC to proceed. However, we introduced Dave to Cindy Basile of the Hoosier National Forest and a plan developed for the HNF to fund most of the project. Subsequently, the IKC has been able to provide some funds and lots of volunteers. Dave has been "filming" since last spring and he is now posting some of the edited clips on **www.cavebiota.com** to give a preview of what the eventual video will be like. He will continue to post new clips at a rate of one every week or two. The finished video will be approximately 30 minutes long and available on the web and distributed as DVDs. The intended audience will be schools and the general public, but cavers should enjoy it too. Check the site out and give Dave feedback at dmcgowan3@earthlink.com
- ❑ Many cavers are familiar with Becks Mill in Washington County (the cave upstream from the



IKC RECEIVES FOREST SERVICE VOLUNTEER AWARD

by Richard Vernier

I am pleased to announce that the IKC has won the 2005 Eastern Region Honor Award for *Volunteer of the Year* from the USDA Forest Service!

This prestigious award recognizes the countless hours put in by many volunteers in recent years, working together to promote appreciation for and conservation of karst resources on the Hoosier National Forest (HNF). We also wish to recognize the Indiana Cave Survey as a long-time partner in this effort.

The IKC/HNF project started in 1988 to assist the HNF in locating and inventorying their karst resources. Over the years, the project has involved hundreds of volunteers ridgewalking, surveying, drawing maps, documenting "values", writing management plans, maintaining databases, and completing necessary paperwork.

This award is the third one received by the IKC and recognizes recent contributors including: Dick Vernier, Sue Vernier, Keith Dunlap, Kriste Lindberg, Steve Lockwood, Nick Noe, Bruce Trotter, Ray Sheldon, Jerry Walker, Kevin Wools, Bob Vandeventer, Bruce Bowman, Bob Sergesketter, Charles Sprague, Pam Frazier, Jeff Frazier, Ray Rough, and Eric Higbie.

The text on the award plaque reads, "In recognition of outstanding assistance in protecting caves and karst resources of southern Indiana through the implementation of the Hoosier National Forest Cave and Karst Management Plan."

In the announcement letter, James Lowe, Acting Forest Supervisor, stated, "The commitment of the IKC has increased the credibility of the cave and karst program on the Hoosier. In fact, the Hoosier received several comments on the Proposed Forest Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement regarding our thorough analysis

and consideration of these resources. This alone is an impressive achievement." Lowe also acknowledged, "The IKC has provided a wealth of information that we would not have been able to collect without assistance. This information allows the Forest Service biologists to prescribe meaningful management on a site-specific basis and raise the professionalism of administration to a level commensurate with other resources."

Kriste Lindberg, IKC Director, Education Chair, and long time participant for the HNF Project represented us at the Awards Ceremony held on December 1st in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Bob Vandeventer, IKC Director, also attended.



impoundment is Click Cave). The mill unfortunately has suffered from neglect. However, there is a new non-profit group that plans to restore the mill. The *Friends of Becks Mill* are in the process of getting their 501c3 classification and will eventually take ownership of the mill and approximately 13 acres surrounding the site. Their next meeting will be January 5th, 2006 in Salem. For more information, contact Larry Nelson (iceandfire@epowerc.net).

ROBINSON LADDER CAVE PRESERVE

by Keith Dunlap

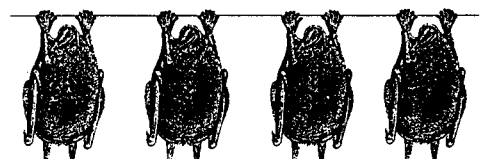
ROBINSON LADDER DONATION LIST	
\$10,000 or more	
The Nature Conservancy	
\$5,000 to \$9,999	
Richard Blenz*	
National Speleological Society	
\$1,000 to \$4,999	
Bruce Bowman	
George Brutchan	
Keith Dunlap	
Tom Sollman	
Bruce Trotter	
Cave Conservancy Foundation	
Central Indiana Grotto	
The Robertson Association	
\$250 to \$999	
Mark Deebel	
Bob & Phyllis Sergesketter	
Bill Tozer	
Richard & Sue Vernier	
Birmingham Grotto	
St Joseph Valley Grotto	
\$100 to \$249	
John Benton	Gordon Smith
Dave Black	Richard Van Rheenen
Carl Brown	Jamie Winner
Keith Calkins	Bloomington Indiana Grotto
Geroge Cesnik	Bluesprings Cavern Park
Tony Cunningham	Eastern Indiana Grotto
Dave Haun	Evansville Metro Grotto
Don Ingle	Greater Cincinnati Grotto
Dan Lucas	Harrison-Crawford Grotto
Dan McDowell	Lewis and Associates
Nathan Pate	Northern Indiana Grotto
Everett Pulliam	Windy City Grotto
Russ Romme	
\$50 to \$99	\$5 to \$49
David Anderson	Aaron Atz
Chris Carpenter	Cindy Basile
Jeff Cody	James Braswell
Debi Cress	Dave Everton
Jeff Farr	Mark Gelzeichter
Scott Fee	Tim & Andrea Grissom
Cassandra Hauswald	Scott Hammon
Mark Kraus	Adam Manship
Jacqueline & Ernie Payne	Tom & Kim Metzgar
Andrew & Shavon Peacock	Jon Miller
Don Peters	Pat Mudd
Kelle Reynolds	George Mundy
Robert Roundy	Steve Ragsdale
Don & June Shofstall	Kevin Rasmus
Carla Striegel	Tom Rea
Steve Taylor	Charles Rex
BSA Troop 321 (Laporte)	Gary Roberson
	Patty Ruback
	Ray Sheldon
	Mark Webb
	Norbert Welch
	Kathy Welling
Fund-raising goal: \$83,000 Donations/Pledges: \$58,097 Amount unfunded: \$24,903 Percent funded: 70.0% December 4, 2005	

The IKC is now into its ninth month of ownership of the Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve. The cave is now "closed" for the winter to allow the bats to hibernate without disturbance and most of the surface efforts have ceased for the year. However, much planning is still underway related to the field restoration work being planned for next year in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy, the Indiana DNR, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

As a reminder, there is another small cave on the property that can be visited (with permission) year around. Also camping, hiking, and other surface activities can be enjoyed anytime (contact Property Manager John Benton for details).

Financially, since the September report, we have raised another \$6,000 towards our goal of \$83,000 (this includes our Stewardship Endowment Fund contribution). The largest donations were \$1,500 from the Central Indiana Grotto, \$1,000 from the Cave Conservation Foundation, and Dick Blenz who is matching non-grant donations. We still have grants pending with the National Speleological Foundation, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Florida Power & Light, the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, and the Efroymson Fund. However, most of these grant requests are speculative, so we still need support from individuals and organizations within the caving community.

Remember, Dick Blenz has once again offered to match non-grant donations made or pledged by December 31st. So now is an excellent time to give, making your donation go twice as far.



RECENT SINKHOLE CLEANUPS

by Dave Everton

Claude Earl Sinkhole Cleanup

September 17, 2005

Situated a few miles east of Spring Mill State Park in Lawrence County and located in the Fishing Creek drainage system is the Claude Earl farm. In 2004, during the course of a cave exploration and survey project on the property immediately west of his (which is being purchased by Willie Roberts), it was determined that a portion of Roberts Cave was taking in trash from one of the sinkholes on Claude's property. Willie chatted with him about it from time to time, and Claude agreed to allow cavers to work on cleaning it out.

The window of opportunity for holding the cleanup was somewhat limited due to livestock issues. However, it was decided that a good faith effort should be put forth prior to the October 2005 relocation of livestock back to that segment of land, so on fairly short notice and in spite of busy schedules, Saturday the 17th of September was set as the cleanup date, with Willie and Dave deciding it would be a worthwhile venture, even if participants were few. Willie and his friend Shane Savage had spent some time over the course of the summer removing some of the metal from the sinkhole, and then hauling it to JB Salvage in Bloomington, where they had an account set up in which the proceeds would go toward securing a dumpster to be brought on-site for removal of other debris from that and other sinkholes on the property. However, for the first caver assault, the dumpster was intentionally not secured.

Several persons showed up to help on the

17th. Lots of automobile and truck tires were removed from the sinkhole, many of which were buried and had to be dug out, some with much effort. Willie took two (small) flatbed trailer loads of them back to his property, and planned to haul them away at a later date. Over 100 tires in all were removed, although some still remain buried



in the sinkhole. Many seed bags donated by Brian Leavell were filled with trash, which was scattered about and difficult to collect, having been thrown into the sinkhole in plastic bags which had deteriorated, and would therefore fall apart when attempts to pick them up were made. Various odds and ends of trash (too numerous to mention all of them) were found from time to time, which sparked conversation, fun, and laughter among the participants, including a Pioneer Village directional sign, possibly stolen by youths on some sort of midnight raid. Willie bought sandwiches from Back Yard Burgers in Mitchell for lunch, and provided drinks for the work crew as well. After several hours of effort, the group called it a work day.

All in all, it was a worthwhile effort, and although the cleanup is certainly not complete, it is anticipated to be continued in 2006. It is hoped that you will be able to participate.

A huge thanks goes out to Craig Deiner, Elaina Frederick, Frank Hodges, Sean Lewis, and Mark Sparks. Shane Savage, who although not present on the 17th, made multiple previous trips. Willie Roberts for all of his effort in the project, not to mention buying lunch! Lastly, Claude Earl's willingness to not only allow the cleanup, but his commitment to keep the sinkholes trash free is



greatly appreciated; not all landowners care (his health prevented him from participating in the cleanup). It should also be noted that long ago, he discontinued the practice of allowing trash to be dumped in his sinkholes, and no longer does so, either.

Click Cave Area Sinkhole Cleanup

Phase I: November 12, 2005

On a February 2005 trip to Click Cave in Washington County southwest of Salem, Dave Everton spotted an obnoxious-looking, trash-filled sinkhole adjoining the one containing the cave entrance. When later in the year he was asked by members of the Indiana University Caving Club (IUCC) about any ideas for a community service type of project in the fall semester, that particular sinkhole came immediately to his mind. He put Jess Deli in touch with Click Cave owner Violet Gilstrap, and Jess learned that although the sinkhole was not on Violet's property, cleaning it out would be appreciated; that got the ball rolling for the cleanup. Organization responsibilities for the event later got transferred to Tymme Laun and Marianne Batchelder, and although there was interest expressed by IUCC members weeks in advance of the project, the planned workday came around with only three persons actually committing to participation: Tymme, Marianne, and Dave Everton.


It was a grand November day, with temperatures in the high 60s to low 70s; unseasonably warm for southern Indiana, but gorgeous indeed, with blue skies dominating and few clouds present. All three of the crew showed up within minutes of each other at around 10 AM, and with little ado, headed for the sinkhole with more seed bags donated by Brian Leavell in hand, as well as some plastic bags, a shovel, and other related items.

At first, the group attempted to sort the trash with the intention of recycling. Since there was an abundance of glass pop bottles, the idea seemed to make sense. That went on for a while until it was decidedly a waste of time and effort. Interestingly, many of the bottles had a plastic, foam-type insulation around the outside, and the majority of them had been peeled off the outside in little strips and stuffed in the empty bottles! Dave imagined the country folk sitting around on Saturday night, playing cards, drinking pop, and with possibly nothing better to do than peel off the bottle labels and stuff them in

the empty bottles afterward. Ah, country life relaxation in the 70s at its finest.

While the trash had been leaf-covered to start with, it became obvious pretty quickly that the bulk of the trash in the sinkhole was comprised of cans, glass and plastic bottles, and household waste. Although some occasional larger items were seen such as an old refrigerator, a bench seat from an automobile, and storm doors, the small stuff would likely prevail, and require considerable time and effort. The trio worked in the pit for a few hours, then relocated all the trash bags to the edge of the sinkhole. After a few amusing photos were taken which displayed some of the finer treasures, it was time to go caving.

While back at the vehicles preparing to go underground and having a bite to eat, Violet's son-in-law Bill came by, accompanied by his son Ben; they were in the process of doing chores. They kindly stopped to chat with the trio, and during the course of the conversation, Bill mentioned that a hole had opened up next to a sinkhole on his property just up the road. He acted interested in knowing what was down there, but since he wasn't keen on personally checking it out, the three decided to take a look prior to visiting Click Cave. What they found was a pleasant surprise; the hole was indeed enticing, being about 1.5 feet in diameter, perhaps 8-10 feet deep, and a passage appeared to exist under a ledge below! They were equipped with a rope, but Dave went down to the bottom of the sinkhole, which turned out to be a swallowhole that takes flood water, and found a horizontal, crawl-in cave entrance and passage. He followed it inside, and soon it intersected the vertical "shaft". Unfortunately, in just a few more feet, the passage size got quite smaller, and would require digging to continue on in. The cave length was perhaps 30 feet long, with the passage width in one place at least 15 feet wide, although most of that was clay filled. There didn't seem to be any obvious air movement, but the water certainly goes somewhere. Tymme and Marianne shortly joined Dave inside, and after a few photos including ones of some highly-decorated moldy feces, they exited. A short trip into Clicks Cave was enjoyable, with Tymme and Marianne helping Dave with some photos, but soon the time came to leave. It was an

...continued on page 11 

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE REPORT

by Kriste Lindberg

As always, there are many things to report. Most recently, Bob Vandeventer and I represented the IKC in accepting the "Volunteer of the Year" award from the Forest Service Eastern Region (for more details, see the article on page 6). The awards ceremony was held in Milwaukee. While there, we also participated in a "poster session" that included information from not only what the IKC/HNF are doing together, but also on the cave biology video Dave McGowan is producing for the HNF. The poster session allowed us to network like crazy and have even more opportunities to explore, including much potential with the City of Bloomington. The new Acting Supervisor, James Lowe, is very interested in forging new partnerships, as is Cindy Basile and others with the HNF. Needless to say, we're excited!

Other activities in the past three months have included an all-day Project Underground workshop at O'Bannon Woods State Park. Thanks to Carla Striegel of the Indiana DNR and the Crawford County Soil and Water Conservation District for hosting the event and Bob Vandeventer and George Cesnik for helping out!

Members of the IKC Education Committee also presented a session on karst conservation for the Hoosier Heartland Resource

Conservation and Development Master Naturalist program. It included elements from Project Underground and introduced participants to Leonard Springs Nature Park to show them karst in action. We now have several new Master Naturalists that are working with us to help protect karstlands. Once again, thanks to Bob Vandeventer and George Cesnik for assisting with this inspiring event.

In November, Bob Vandeventer and I attended the "Growing Communities on Karst" workshop in West Virginia, sponsored by agency partners on the east coast including Virginia Tech, Maxwellton GeoSolutions, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (home of national Project Underground). This invaluable workshop helped us tremendously with our understanding of working with development in karst areas, including engineering, regulations, and so on. An informative field trip of best management practices in downtown Lewisburg ensued. Of interest, Jeff Bray of Maxwellton GeoSolutions spearheaded a storm drain marking program that was modeled after the City of Bloomington Utilities Storm Drain Marking Program. Jeff learned of the marking program while visiting Bloomington last year to present at the Bloomington Envi-

Kriste Lindberg posing at the Forest Service Eastern Region "poster session". In addition to the poster explaining the HNF/IKC cooperative cave and karst project, Kriste and Cindy Basile demonstrated their ground-water demonstration model and had video clips from the cavebiota.com website.



ronmental Commission on detecting underground features using microgravity. We will be leveraging more of the information gleaned from this conference later, and those that organized the conference are interested in helping us do a workshop locally. Thanks to the IKC and Hoosier National Forest for supporting us on this quest.

Only a week after we returned from the above conference, I turned right around and flew out to Albany, New York for the National Cave and Karst Management Symposium. I presented, "Karst Education: Working with Development".

In between those events, Rickard Toomey, Director of the newly created Mammoth Cave Center for Science and Learning came to speak at Indiana University's SPEA department regarding research he is doing on bats and I was once again the guest speaker for Les Wadzinski's (of the Hoosier National Forest) SPEA class on public lands. In addition, I organized a trip to Leonard Springs Nature Park via the Franklin Initiative, to bring high school students out in order to dispel myths of natural areas and critters before Halloween with the Monroe County Humane Association.

Speaking of this type of work, things are moving right along for helping to designate the Indiana bat as the *official* State Bat. We have much support in this area, including that from the Bloomington newspaper (*The Herald-Times*), the Hoosier Environmental Council, show caves, and more. It ties in very nicely not only with conservation efforts but also economic development via tourism and more. Good timing!

You may be wondering what *The Herald-*

Times is doing for Indiana bat education. Well, as you may recall, they ran an article in June by the title of, "Underground Education". Reporter and outdoor section editor, Carol Kugler, did a great job on making the general public aware of local efforts. We decided to work together to do an expanded education and outreach effort working with local schools, much as they did last year with bobcats. It will include a blog on their website, www.heraldtimesonline.com and is yet another venue for karst conservation and agency partnerships! I have put Carol in touch with the other folks that we work with so we can all network together. She has even been in touch regarding the cave biota video. Things are really falling into place.

In order to facilitate an effort so that we can all move on together in an even more organized fashion that will help not only coordinate but expand upon our collective resources. We'll likely be having a brainstorming session soon to discuss our individual involvement in the synthesis. We visualize a meeting of the minds to come up with a regional plan for karst conservation that will focus on priorities, a time line, etc. A fellow land trust in the area, the Sycamore Land Trust, has also expressed interest in this pursuit. The cave biota video will likely play a major role, too, helping to tie all together. If you haven't visited the site lately, please do so at www.cavebiota.com. Producer Dave McGowan has done an incredible job at combining his artistic and conservation skills into an expanding list of fantastic clips to show you while the video is in progress.

We will keep you posted on the progress being made with the above and more!

Continued from page 10...

enjoyable day's activities. Dave later discovered from a check of the Indiana Cave Survey files that the small cave was indeed on record as Clicks Annex Cave, having been submitted in 1993 by Tony Cunningham, an SJVG member currently active in the Lost River System, who had helped in the survey of Click Cave in the early 1990s.

There is plenty enough work for several persons to work simultaneously on the next Click sinkhole cleanup trip. The group has

been given permission to place a dumpster at the edge of the woods within 100 feet of the sinkhole, and it should be fairly easy to transport trash between the two. Frozen ground could certainly add difficulty to removing the trash from the pit, but time will tell what the circumstances will be when the next cleanup is held, which is undetermined. One thing is for sure: the trash in that sinkhole isn't going anywhere, and even when gone, there will not be a lack of southern Indiana sinkholes to clean out for a long, long time to come.

POPULATION TRENDS OF INDIANA BATS IN INDIANA

by Keith Dunlap

As part of the Recovery Plan for the federally endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), biennial population counts are conducted to assess the status of the species. In this article, as in the past, I will present the cumulative data systematically collected over the past thirteen censuses (1981-2005), along with some historic data dating as far back as 1950. The majority of the recent data has been collected by Dr Virgil Brack, originally as part of his PhD work in the early 1980's, and more recently under contract with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. The exceptions are the population figures for Batwing and Twin Domes caves which were censused under the direction of Richard Clawson of the Missouri Department of Conservation. Clawson is the USFWS Indiana Bat Recovery Team leader and since 1981 has been responsible for counting the original seven Priority I caves in Indiana, Kentucky, and Missouri.

The table below represents the summary of over 249 cave visits to thirty-two different caves documented to have had Indiana bats

in recent years. In addition, another forty-three caves have been visited one or more times over the past twenty-five years to look for Indiana bats without success (although four caves have historic records).

It is interesting to note that most of the current active hibernacula have been "discovered" in the last twenty years, many originally reported by cavers. Most of these new caves have small colonies that do not contribute much to the overall population; nevertheless, these caves could be significant in the long term recovery of the species.

The table lists the caves in descending order of colony size based upon the most recent census. Studying the right-most column of the table, one can see that nearly 85% of the state's population is in just four caves, while over 97% of the population hibernate in just seven caves.

The Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) was one of the first species to be protected under the Endangered Species Act (March 11, 1967). The reason for the bat's listing was the well documented observations of population de-

RECENT POPULATIONS OF MYOTIS SODALIS IN INDIANA CAVES

CAVE NAME	1981	1982/83	1985	1987	1989	1991	1993	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
Wyandotte (Crawford)	2152	4550	4627	6681	10344	12994	17304	23878	25424	26854	28584	31217	54913
Ray's Cave (Greene)	12500	13475	16200	22990	28581	41854	38386	41157	51365	62464	48219	50941	54325
Twin Domes (Harrison) ¹	98250	70750	56650	79650	70800	78500	87350	78875	67100	59775	50325	49350	36800
Jug Hole (Harrison)				5535	6424	7640	13924	12463	20741	11900	20151	19240	29430
Grotto Cave (Monroe)	3190	2692	4198	3778	2985	1996	1568	2018	2435	4361	5419	10338	9875
Coon Cave (Monroe)	1190	550	777	2950	2103	3696	4451	4455	4786	6341	6395	10675	9270
Batwing Cave (Crawford) ¹	29960	26650	14750	17450	14500	13150	9350	9300	7400	10125	9350	6900	6850
Endless Cave (Washington)		2		1		134	335	450	404	403	800	863	958
Walther Cave (Harrison)						36	72	465	409	381	310	541	917
Saltpeter (Crawford)		352		427	295	508	375	647	577	800	849	681	907
Clyffy Cave (Greene)		66		198	412	357	307	299	369	379	469	457	575
Panther/Neyman (Washington)								86	156	167	220	337	349
Parker's Pit (Harrison) ²		(500)		1803	1104	926	1045	1276	1139	(987)	989	(447)	(298)
Swinney Cave (Harrison) ³									(11)	29	39	184	200
King Blair/Brinegar (Monroe) ⁴				(12)			442	514	663	453	263	190	193
Robinson Ladder (Crawford) ⁵					(95)	388	376	219	326	223	366	204	192
Gypsy Bill Allen											134	250	177
Leonard Springs (Monroe)					135	112	92	82	92	81	25	138	109
Sexton Spring Cave (Greene)						(0)	67	117	98	75	100	113	95
Saltpeter (Monroe) ⁶		(83)		(19)		221	245	175	136	40	24	96	88
Storm Pit (Lawrence)													28
Sullivan (Lawrence)													25
Nichols Cave (Orange) ⁷							200					39	
Reeves (Monroe) ⁸												34	17
Buckner Cave (Monroe)		488	301	336	24	51	25	41	15	6	1	40	12
Mitchell Quarry (Lawrence)						9				31		38	3
Achcraft Cave (Greene)							20	28		3			0
Wildcat Cave (Crawford)		29		0		31	61	34	48	19	35	17	0
Salamander Cave (Monroe)		74		0		0			1			0	0
Binkley Cave (Harrison)									84		9		
River Cave (Washington)		104		5		1				2		2	
Bentz Cave (Crawford)		0			3						0		
TOTAL (adjusted)⁹	155800	127000	105500	143000	138900	163100	176000	176500	184000	186200	173300	183600	208900

1 Twin Domes and Batwing census conducted by Richard Clawson for the USFWS.

2 Parker Pit census in 1983 conducted by Michele Wright. Partial census in 1999, 2003, and 2005.

3 Swinney partial census in 1997.

4 King Blair / Bringer partial census in 1989.

5 Robinson Ladder partial census in 1989.

6 Saltpeter partial survey in 1983 and 1987.

7 Nichols census in 1992 conducted by Scott Johnson and Keith Dunlap.

8 Reeves census in 2003 conducted by Andy King, US Fish & Wildlife.

9 For the purpose of comparisons, populations for non-censused (or unknown) caves were estimated to give an adjusted total.



clines in the seven major hibernacula known at the time in Indiana, Kentucky, and Missouri.

From 1965 to 2001, the population declined by more than 50% (883,300 to 376,900) and appeared to be on its way to extinction despite positive gains in Indiana and a few other states. Fortunately the last two counts have shown some gains which provides hope for the bat. The population in Indiana is likely to be the highest it has been in 100 years and is nearly twice what it was in 1985, and new hibernacula in Illinois and Ohio are showing great promise.

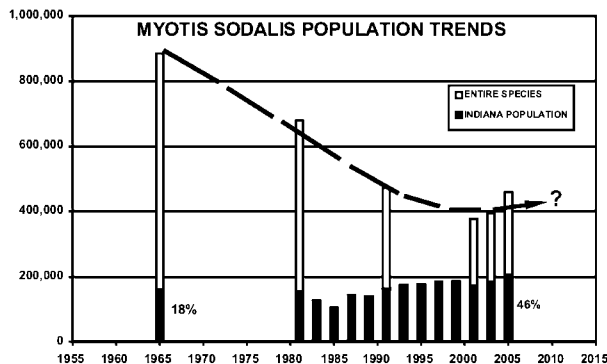


Figure 1

Looking at population trends in individual Indiana caves is interesting in that several caves have been showing consistently increasing trends, other caves have been generally decreasing, while the remainder have undeterminable trends or there has not been enough data collected to make a determination.

Recent Indiana bat populations in Twin Domes cave (figure 2) have fluctuated up and down over the past thirty years, but has shown a definite decreasing trend during the past six censuses. The 2005 population was

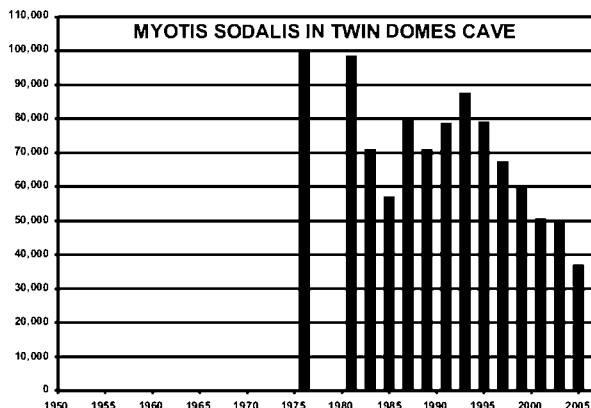


Figure 2

the lowest ever recorded and is cause for some concern since this cave's population is such a large component of the total population. However, it is likely the population loss there is merely migrating to Wyandotte and Jughole, both have shown remarkable increases. Twin Domes has dropped from Indiana's perennial first to the third largest hibernacula in just four years.

Likewise, Batwing Cave (figure 3), Indiana's other original Priority I hibernacula, has shown disconcerting population decreases since it was first documented in the mid 70's. The 2005 census was no exception with 6850 bats, the lowest number to date (less than 14% of the 1977 estimate). Again, it is likely these bats are not really disappearing, rather they are ending up at nearby Wyandotte or Jughole caves. There has been much speculation why this cave is not attracting bats like it once did (the gate, entrance debris, flooding?). The current hypothesis is that it has always been a marginal cave, but served as a refuge when

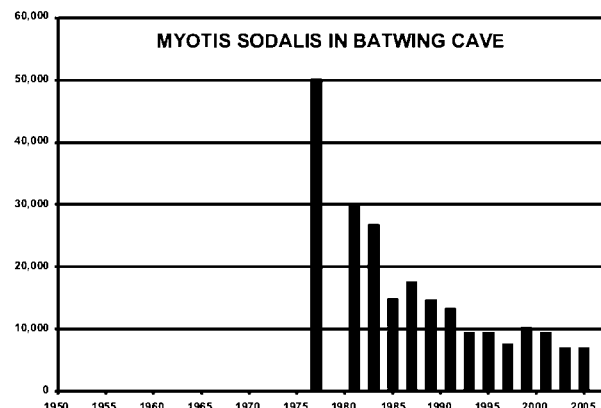


Figure 3

changes at Wyandotte Cave made it undesirable for the species. Now that Wyandotte is again "bat-friendly" the bats are "coming home to roost".

Over the years, Wyandotte Cave is an interesting contradiction in resource management. While it serves as an ever increasingly significant hibernacula, it is also a commercial tourist cave run by the Department of Natural Resources. Large populations of bats have been documented in this cave for over one hundred years (in fact, the *sodalis* was first classified as a separate *Myotis* species in this cave and thus the "Indiana" designation). Numerous gates have been placed on the cave with different degrees of air flow restrictions. A 1953 re-

port by Mumford estimated the population at 10,000 bats (see figure 4). However, just a few years later and after a solid stone wall gate was installed, the population was only one-tenth that size. The population fluctuated around 2000 bats until the late 1970's when the original gate was replaced with a more open grate-type. It is presumed that this partially restored the pre-gate airflow into the cave, providing a better winter habitat. Since 1981, the population has increased every census to over 54,800, now the

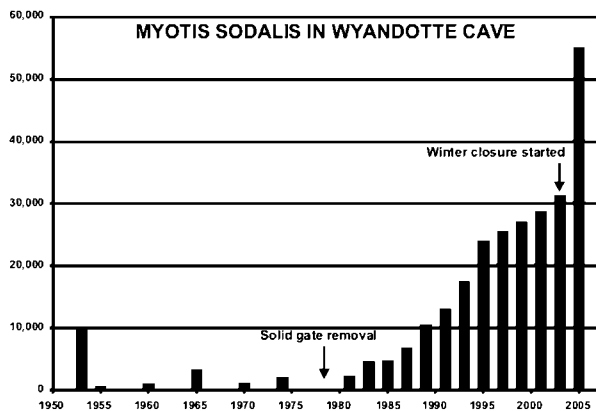


Figure 4

largest in the state. The “bat-friendly” gate replacement in July of 1991 apparently has been acceptable to the bats and may have further improved airflow into the cave, witnessed by the significant and consistent increases over the past seven counts. Then in 2003, the Indiana DNR took a bold step by closing Wyandotte from September until May. The dramatic jump in the 2005 population count is an obvious positive reaction to this closure decision. Given Wyandotte’s physical characteristics, it could easily become a huge factor in the bat’s overall recovery.

Just a short distance north of Wyandotte Cave is Saltpeter Cave. While the number of bats hibernating there is small compared to its neighboring caves just discussed, it is nevertheless an important cave for Indiana bats and was probably a very significant hibernacula historically (Merlin Tuttle, personal communication). Figure 5 shows a general seesaw, but increasing trend that hopefully will continue. The 2005 census with 575 Indiana bats is the largest number in recent history. The number of little brown bats (*Myotis lucifugus*) in Saltpeter was also the largest in recent times.

Of the other caves in the Harrison/Craw-

ford area, Jug Hole is of the greatest importance with the fourth largest population. First censused in 1987 with 5500 bats (see figure 6), the populations in 1989 and 1991 showed modest increases, but nearly doubled in 1993 to almost 14,000 bats. The 1995 census showed a slight decrease, but the cave took another huge jump to over 20,700 in 1997, only to fall significantly in 1999. The counts 2001 and 2003 showed the population rebounded to nearly the 1997 number. In 2005, the population took another large jump to nearly 30,000, essentially reaching Priority I status. The population here seems quite variable, although part of this may be explained by the difficulty of estimating cluster sizes on the high ceilings in this cave.

Previous research supports the observation that Indiana bats are very habitual in using the same hibernacula year after year. But as suggested earlier, with the population increasing so fast at Wyandotte and Jughole while similar decreases are being experienced at nearby Batwing and Twin Domes, one can only speculate that at least some transferring is occurring. To better quantify this Wyandotte area meta-population, figure 7 shows the combined numbers from Twin Domes, Batwing, Wyandotte, Saltpeter, and Jughole caves which accounts for approximately 60% of the total Indiana population.

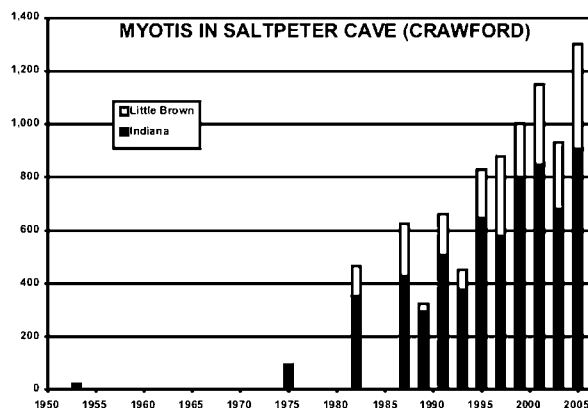


Figure 5

It can be observed that the population appears to be much more stable and indicates that the number of bats within the region hasn’t really changed that much over the past thirteen censuses.

Figure 8 shows the number of bats counted in Parker’s Pit. This is another difficult cave to census, not in counting the bats per se, but in getting the “counters” to the bats. Most of the counts include all areas from the

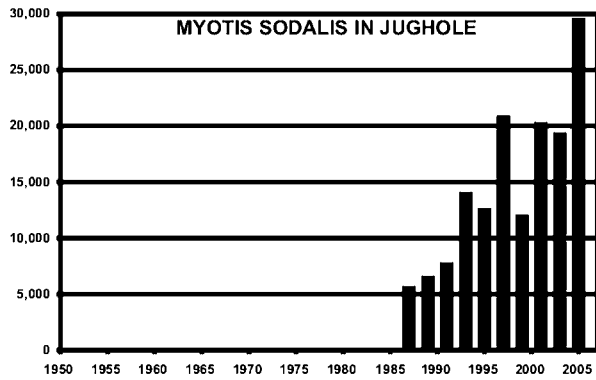


Figure 6

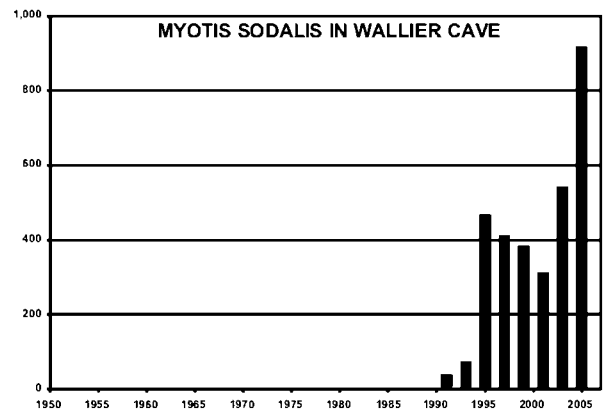


Figure 10

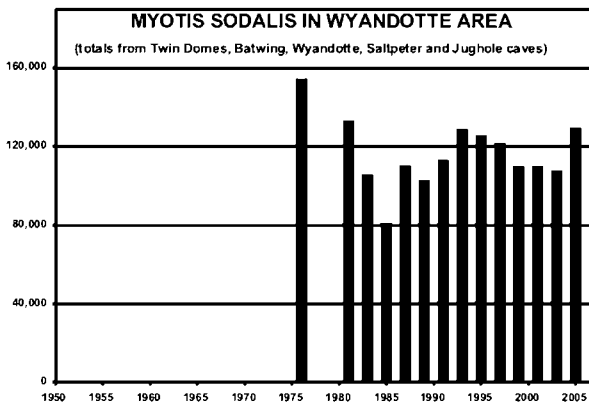


Figure 7

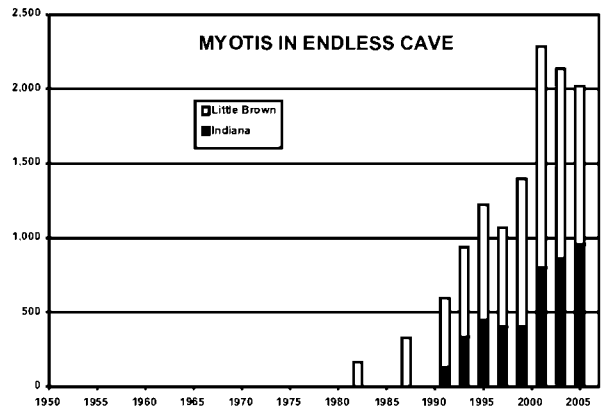


Figure 11

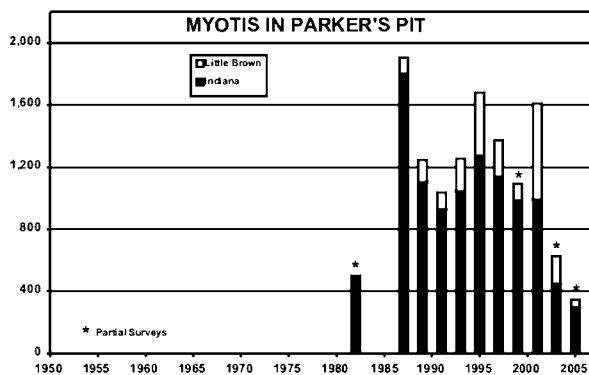


Figure 8

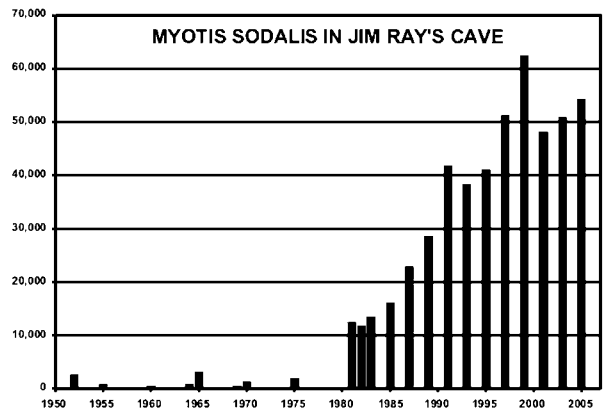


Figure 12

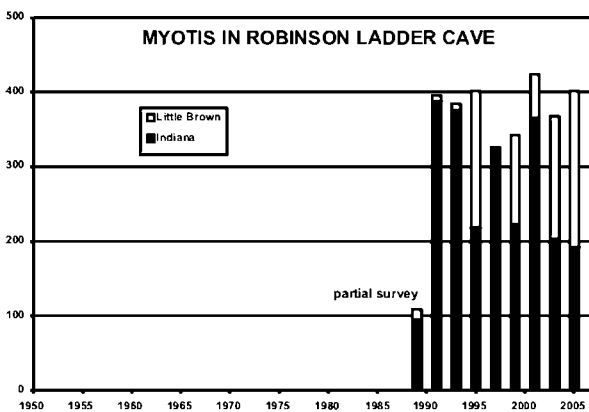


Figure 9

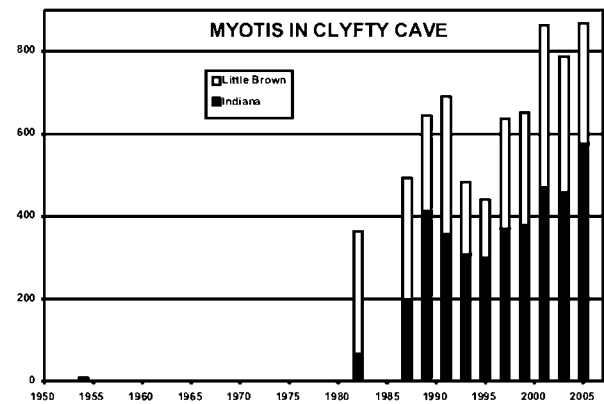


Figure 13

entrance pit to the e¹ Room. The 1982 count (performed by Michelle Wright) and the 1999, 2003, and 2005 counts included only the entrance pit area and the room below the second drop (just before the S-bend). The 2005 visit recorded the smallest number of bats to date. Even taking into account that only part of the cave was censused, the population appears to be decreasing at this cave for some reason (likely the “Wyandotte-effect”).

Figure 9 shows recent censuses in Robinson Ladder Cave. Since 1991, the population of *Myotis* have been remarkably stable. However, the *sodalis* and *lucifugus* species are always in mixed clusters, making it more difficult to distinguish the specific species, thus the data shows more variation.

The final cave in the Harrison/Crawford area to highlight is Wallier Cave, southeast of Laconia. The 1991 and 1993 census included 36 and 72 Indiana bats respectively (see figure 10). The 1995 through 2003 counts were 465, 409, 381, 310, and 541 bats. The 2005 jumped to 916, the greatest number to date. It is unclear what caused this significant jump in 2005 or where these additional bats came from; and there are no other known hibernacula even remotely close. It will be interesting to see what the future holds for this cave.

Moving north to Washington County is Endless Cave in Cave River Valley. Visits in

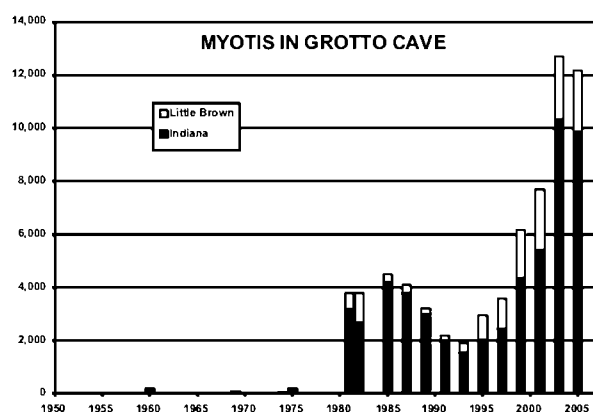


Figure 14

1982 and 1987 found only 2 and 1 Indiana bats, respectively (see figure 11). However, the last eight counts have shown an encouraging population increase of both Indiana and little brown bats. In 2005, 958 *sodalis* were counted, the greatest number to date. Likewise, the number of little brown bats this census were relatively high, third only

to the 2001 survey. These numbers are impressive considering there are still a significant number of winter disturbances occurring in this cave.

Jim Ray's Cave in Greene County has had remarkable population growth over the past 30 years (see figure 12). Historic records by Mumford and others showed the cave's population never exceeded 3200 bats in nine visits between 1952 and 1975. Brack's visits in

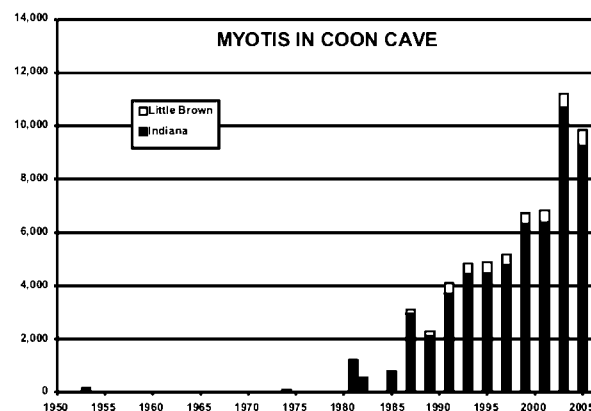


Figure 15

the early 1980's showed the population had already jumped to approximately 12,000 Indiana bats and several thousand little brown bats. In 1987, 1989, and 1991, the population exploded, topping out at almost 42,000 Indiana bats (making it the second largest hibernacula in Indiana). In 1993, the population decreased slightly, but rebounded slightly in 1995 and made large jumps in 1997 and 1999 to over 62,000 bats. The 2001 and 2003 censuses showed a retreat, recovering slightly to 54,000 bats in 2005, but still enough to be on par with Wyandotte Cave. The dramatic increase over the past twenty-five years has had no clear explanation, but two contributing factors may have played important roles. First it is known that a medical researcher from IU was illegally collecting perhaps thousands of bats each winter during the 1970's. This may have kept the population below some critical level to grow. Second, the “rear” entrance to the cave may have naturally enlarged itself, allowing more airflow to cool the cave, and thus making it a better hibernacula. Currently there are two winter temperature studies being conducted in Ray's (one by the DNR/IKC and one by BCI) to see if there is anything obvious to make this such a desirable cave for Indiana bats.

Approximately five miles to the north of



Ray's is Clyfty Cave. Figure 13 shows an Indiana bat population that appears to be gradually increasing over the past nine counts, while the population of little browns over that same time period appear to be relatively constant.

Moving to Monroe County, Grotto Cave has been another puzzling hibernacula. Historic records showed very small populations in the 1960's and 1970's (see figure 14). However, in the early 1980's Brack reported significant numbers of Indiana and little brown bats. The cave peaked in 1985 with 4200 Indiana bats and then decreased the next four census to a low of less than 1600. However, in 1995 and 1997, the population rebounded slightly, and in 1999 and 2001, the numbers jump substantially. In 2003, the population nearly doubled compared to 2001. The 2005 count was down slightly, but nearly reached 10,000 *sodalis*. Furthermore, the 2001-2005 censuses recorded approximately 2300 little brown bats, the largest winter concentration known in *any* cave within Indiana.

The "sister" cave to Grotto is Coon Cave located less than one-half mile away on the same property. It too had historic records in the 1950's through 1970's of only a few hundred bats (see figure 15). Brack's observations in the early 1980's were around 1000 bats. Since 1985 when only 777 bats were found, the population has increased significantly to almost 6400 Indiana bats in 2001. In 2003, like Grotto Cave, the population jumped substantially to over 10,000. In 2005, the count was down by approximately 10 percent.

The last cave in Monroe County for which there is long term data is Buckner Cave. Historically (1950-1980) Buckner has had a relative stable population of 300 to 500 bats in its entrance room (see figure 16), but since 1989 there has not been more than 50 bats

found. Obviously repeated disturbances could be blamed, but the sudden drop between 1987 and 1989 would be more indicative of a single-event, intentional or accidental eradication (e.g., shotgun or entrance room campfire). Only *one* Indiana bat was found in Buckner Cave in 2001 which pretty much tells the story. In 2003 the number jumped back to 40, but then dropped to only 12 bats in 2005. There is little hope for this

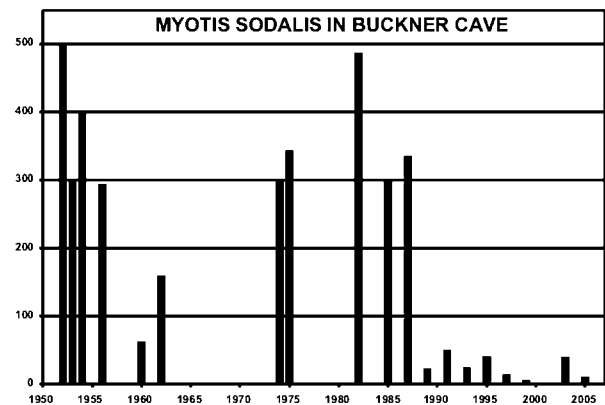


Figure 16

hibernacula to recover to previous levels unless there is a significant change in its winter visitation policy.

There are other interesting observations and speculations that can be made from all this census data, but in the grand scheme of things, even twenty-five or fifty years of data is a relatively short time to truly make any meaningful conclusions. Perhaps in another twenty-five or fifty years of systematic censusing, definitive trends can replace general speculations and we will know the fate of this species.

IKC members who participated on the 2005 bat census were Keith Dunlap, Tom Sollman, Steve Collins, Bambi Dunlap, Robert Sollman, and Steve Harriss. Scott Johnson (DNR) coordinated the project.

Continued from page 6...

- ❑ The Hoosier National Forest has a new Acting Supervisor, James Lowe, while Ken Day is on special assignment. Lowe's temporary assignment is for a minimum of four months and is at a critical time when the final forest management plan is being decided. The IKC had an opportunity to meet with Lowe at our quarterly IKC/HNF committee meeting. After the meeting, he accompanied several of us to Patton Cave (2+ mile hike). This was the first wild cave he had been in and allowed him to experience the "resource" first hand.
- ❑ Two new members have joined the IKC in the past quarter. Please welcome Ray Beach (446) and Ty Spatta (447). The IKC membership now stands at 194.

INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY TREASURY REPORT

Income/Expense Statement
From July 1, 2005 to September 30, 2005

INCOME:

Dues Apportionment and Residuals	698.25	
Donations - General	509.60	
Donations - Acquisition Fund	3927.00	
Hat sales (net)	120.00	
HNF cover project	2300.00	
Interest	<u>240.64</u>	
		\$7,795.49

EXPENSES:

IKC Update (printing, production, mailing)	172.20	
Stewardship/Conservation	43.43	
Membersip (picnic)	37.57	
Business (service charges, postage)	10.35	
Property taxes	291.92	
HNF cover project	1289.93	
Tranfers to/from restricted funds/other adjustments	<u>4168.06</u>	
		(\$6,013.46)

NET OPERATING EXCESS (DEFICIT) THIS PERIOD: \$1,782.03

Balance Sheet
September 30, 2005

ASSETS:

Cash in Checking / Saving Accounts / CDs	42446.84	
Accounts Receivable/Pledges ¹	9511.00	
External Loans	-19000.00	
Wayne Cave Preserve (20.00 acres)	75000.00	
Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve (40 acres)	74000.00	
Sullivan Cave Preserve (28.00 acres)	72000.00	
Buddha Karst Nature Preserve (36.84 acres)	29000.00	
Orangeville Rise Nature Preserve (3.01 acres)	7000.00	
Indian Creek Conservation Easement (valued at \$1/acre)	<u>13.16</u>	
		<u><u>\$289,971.00</u></u>

LIABILITIES & OPERATING EXCESS:

Land Acquisition Restricted Fund	-11688.20
Deferred Dues Restricted Fund (177 members)	2557.50
Stewardship Endowment Restricted Fund	16316.17

Previous Operating Excess	24003.50	
Net Excess (Deficit) This Period	<u>1782.03</u>	
Current Operating Excess (unrestricted funds)	25785.53	
Real estate liquidity	<u>257000.00</u>	
Total Liabilities & Operating Excess		<u><u>\$289,971.00</u></u>

NOTES:

1) Pledges towards Robinson Ladder Cave Preserve (\$7211) and HNF project (\$2300)

IKC AUTUMN BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Saturday, September 24, 2005 Cloverdale, Indiana

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Richard Vernier, President
 Bob Sergesketter, Secretary
 Keith Dunlap, Treasurer
 Bruce Bowman
 Bruce Devore
 Dave Haun
 Don Ingle
 Kriste Lindberg
 Steve Lockwood
 Nick Noe
 Tom Sollman
 Bill Tozer
 Bob Vandeventer
 Sue Vernier
 Jamie Winner

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

none

The meeting was called to order at 1:12 PM at the property of Tom Rea, President Richard Vernier presiding.

Sergesketter reported that several paragraphs were omitted from the published version of the June, 2005 IKC meeting minutes. He handed out a paper containing the missing paragraphs. Dunlap suggested that we publish the additional minutes in the next *IKC Update* and amend the minutes on the website as soon as possible. Haun moved to accept the minutes as amended and Sue Vernier seconded. The motion passed 12-0-1 (two Board members had not yet arrived).

Treasurer Dunlap reported a cash balance of \$39,600 and land holdings of \$257,000. We still have \$19,000 in external loans for the Robinson Ladder Property purchase, so our total assets are about \$287,000, an increase of \$10,000 over the last quarter. The General Fund contains \$25,400 and the Land Acquisition Fund is a minus \$14,000. A detailed Treasury Report may be found in the *IKC Update*.

Dunlap reported that membership stands at 192 of which 176 are paid up. The remaining sixteen will probably be dropped although he expects that about half of those dropped will eventually renew their membership.

Robinson Ladder Cave Acquisition

Vernier reported on Management and Stewardship issues. The cave is now closed for the winter to protect the bats. While on a trip to the cave just prior to the closing he saw that the field had not been mowed but he thinks that the farmer still intends to do so. A meeting with Mark Bennett, Wildlife Biologist with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, is scheduled for Friday, September 30 to discuss the plans for fescue eradication and post oak savanna restoration. John Benton, Property Manager for Robinson Ladder will attend and Vernier also plans to be there. They hope to get Allen Pursell from The Nature Conservancy to attend too.

The project has been approved. Vernier was not sure of the amount of the funding but the IKC will be putting in twenty-five percent although we will probably be reimbursed for that amount by TNC.

Dunlap addressed fund-raising and grant issues. We have raised \$50,400 which sounds pretty good but most of that money came from TNC. We still need \$23,700 to pay off the property. Financial bright spots over the last quarter include \$5,000 from the National Speleological Society. We haven't got the money yet but it has been approved. We requested \$1,000 from The Robertson Association and they gave us \$1,500. Dick Blenz is offering to match any donation made to the Robinson Ladder Fund through the end of December.

In the not so bright spot category, we have not heard from IPL regarding our request for a Golden Eagle Grant of \$10,000. Dunlap thought that we would have heard by now if we were getting it.

We have grant requests in to The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, The National Speleological Foundation, The Cave Conservancy Foundation, The Efroymsen Fund, and The Nina Mason Pulliam Trust. The last two are actually pre-proposals to see if we even qualify to submit a grant request and all of them are long shots.

Vernier wondered about possible grant sources in and around Crawford County, maybe from an area business or manufacturer. If anyone thinks of a grant possibility in the Crawford County area or any source of funding, contact Dunlap or Vernier.

In other news about the Robinson Ladder property, Dunlap said that the other cave on the property has been identified. It is probably Breakdown Falls Cave. It has been mapped and it is 158 feet long and 50 feet deep and it has a waterfall. Our own Bob Vandeventer was on the survey trip in 1986 though his eyes glazed over when he was asked about it. Dunlap also said that most of the visitors to the property are pleased with what they find.

Grotto Liaison Status

The Central Indiana Grotto has signed the Grotto Liaison Agreement.

Vandeventer said that the Windy City Grotto is interested in entering into a Grotto Liaison Agreement. Dunlap said that a grotto representative should contact either him or Vernier.

Growing Communities on Karst Program

Lindberg said that she has an opportunity to attend a conference in West Virginia on various aspects of dealing with karst issues in developing communities. She will be going along with the karst specialist from the Hoosier National Forest but she would like the IKC to fund her registration fee of \$70.00. Sue Vernier moved to pay Lindberg's registration fee of \$70.00, seconded by Vandeventer. The motion



passed 13-0-2.

Piggy Pit (Rominger Well) HNF Project

Dunlap reported that the cover is complete and installed and he stressed that it is not a gate. Access to the pit is not blocked. The IKC netted about \$1,000 on the project that was done for the Hoosier National Forest.

HNF Grant Request/Documentary Video

Vernier reported that the documentary video project is proceeding, funded by the HNF in the amount of \$28,350. In addition, Dave McGowan of Ravenswood Media has also put in \$28,350. The IKC has received a grant request for \$1,500 from the HNF to provide additional funding for the video. The HNF has also applied to the National Speleological Society Conservation Fund for a grant of \$1,000. Vernier started to read the lengthy grant proposal but after several minutes Bowman moved to grant the \$1,500, seconded by Haun. After a very brief discussion the motion passed, 14-0-1.

The documentary has a working title of *Cave Life -- Links In The Web*, and it will be a 30 minute video and available for viewing over the web. Vernier will attempt to insure that the IKC gets mentioned in the credits. There was a discussion of the recent trip to Sullivan Cave with McGowan and of the fun we had carrying all the equipment down to the South Y.

Land Acquisition Opportunities

Dunlap listed several possibilities, all of which were way beyond what we can afford right now. There was still a long discussion on what is or may become available and who we could possibly partner with to acquire more caves.

Indiana State Bat

Lindberg said that it looks like a real possibility that the Indiana legislature could designate an Indiana State Bat. There are a lot of people for it and it would be a great tie in with the 2007 NSS Convention which will be held near Marengo. Dunlap asked if we know how to get it introduced. Noe said that the Hoosier Environmental Council is also working on this and that it is already on the HEC agenda to get a bill introduced. He said that the idea is getting much favorable response. Vernier said that the IKC needs to get behind this as well and we should be prepared to promote it and to express our support when the time comes to do so.

Education and Outreach Report

Lindberg reported that the Project Underground went well at O'Bannon State Park in Harrison County. There were about 25 people in attendance, many from the local show caves.

Wayne Cave Preserve

Robert Sollman reported that the small gravel will not be put on the drive until Spring of 2006. He plans to weed eat at the property after today's meeting. Dunlap said that he has been to the property a few times and it is in good shape. Tozer asked if anyone has a sense of how many trips are going to

Wayne. Robert said that he didn't know. Dunlap said that he thinks that the number of trips has remained about the same as before we took it over/ maybe a few more.

Sullivan Cave Preserve

Dunlap reported that the management plan revision is not ready but he has been doing some research on outhouses. It seems that Indiana has state specifications and regulations concerning outhouses; all contained in a 21 page document published in 1986. If we were to build an outhouse at Sullivan Cave, according to the regulations it would have to be a two-holer. We would have to submit plans and receive approval and certification before proceeding with construction.

Devore said that we've been discussing this problem for a long time and it's a good thing that people haven't been waiting for us to do something. He thinks we should just rent a porta-pot or buy one and have it serviced and be done with it. Vernier asked if we go that route, would we have to provide two of them. Everyone thought that one was enough. Dunlap will check on prices for renting a porta-pot and also for buying one and having it serviced. Sollman said that groups that visit the property often send unsolicited monetary donations and that this would be a good use for that money. Much more discussion took place until Ingle finally said that we need to look into getting a porta -pot and lay this matter to rest unless we find out that it would be prohibitively expensive. Dunlap again said that he'll get prices.

In other Sullivan business, Vernier asked if we are still planning to enlarge the parking area. Dunlap said that he was planning to do that in the Spring when we work on the driveway at the Wayne property so he only has to transport the tractor to the area once.

Items from the Floor

Noe said that he has spoken with the Commissioner of Transportation and within the next ten days they will be issuing their list of doable projects. Noe said that if the list includes an I-69 route that is anything other than the I-70/US 41 route, the Hoosier Environmental Council will probably litigate.

Vernier reported that we received an invitation from TNC to attend the dedication of the Mosquito Creek Woods Nature Preserve in Harrison County on October 15. He also said that we need to be aware that there is a push on in Congress to weaken the Endangered Species Act. We need to monitor this as it could be detrimental to the Indiana Bat as well as anything else that has benefited from the Endangered Species Act.

The next meeting will be on December 17 at the home of Nick and Carita Noe in Indianapolis. The meeting will start at 12:00 noon.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Bob Sergesketter, Secretary

IKC SUMMER BOARD MEETING MINUTES (addendum)

Saturday, June 18, 2005, Bloomington, Indiana

[Editor's note: Due to a technical issue on the part of the editor, part of the June meeting minutes were left out of the September IKC Update. The missing text follows. The minutes in their entirety can be found of the IKC's website.]

Wayne Cave Preserve

Property manager Robert Sollman was not present. There was no report.

Sullivan Cave Preserve

Dunlap reported on a potential acquisition of three-plus acres of adjacent land to the Sullivan property. He has been in negotiation with the owner and there have been offers and counter offers and the ball is now in the owner's court.

Dunlap said that he hasn't made any progress on the management plan revisions and the proposed outhouse is still on his list of things to do.

There was a very long and very lively discussion concerning trespassing issues on and under property surrounding the Sullivan Cave Preserve. There may also be a dispute as to where the property line lies on the east side of the property. We need to get the word out to people using the Sullivan property to stay off our neighbor's property. Cavers exiting the cave at Speed Hollow need to be particularly careful. Winner suggested that we may want to mark an approved trail back to Sullivan from Speed Hollow. No action was taken.

Buddha Karst Preserve

Cesnik reported that he has spoken to someone from the Indiana DNR about possible restoration of the open fields at Buddha but he has taken no action since the initial conversation. Vernier reported that

we have received a request for a donation to the Guthrie Township Volunteer Fire Department. There was a very short discussion. Sergesketter moved that we donate \$20 to the Guthrie Township VFD, seconded by Devore. The motion passed 13-0-1.

Piggy Pit (Rominger Well) Project

The workday is scheduled for Saturday, July 16. A steel cover will be placed over the opening to keep people on foot or on vehicles from falling in.

Items from the Floor

Devore urged everyone to buy a new book about the history of Dunbar Cave in Tennessee. The book is by Larry Matthews and includes the story of the extensive involvement of the Northern Indiana Grotto in the exploration of the cave.

The next meeting will be Saturday, September 24, at 1:00 PM. The meeting place will be at Tom Rea's place near Cloverdale. The CIG annual cookout and the annual IKC dessert contest will take place after the meeting. Everyone is welcome to camp for the weekend. Dunlap moved that the IKC help fund the CIG/IKC picnic with a donation not to exceed \$50. Ingle seconded. The motion passed 14-0-0.

President Vernier adjourned the meeting at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Sergesketter, Secretary

INDIANA KARST CONSERVANCY, PO BOX 2401, INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46206-2401

I would like to help the IKC protect Indiana's unique caves and other karst features. Enclosed is:

\$ _____ for IKC membership dues at \$15 per year (dues expire March 31st of each year, please pro-rate @ \$1.25/month).

\$ _____ donation to the general IKC fund.

\$ _____ donation restricted to a specific IKC project. Please specify: _____

_____ I know of an area worthy of protection. Please contact me.

_____ I would like to volunteer to help. Please contact me.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE # _____

Make checks payable to the Indiana Karst Conservancy, Inc. and mail to the IKC Treasurer, c/o Indiana Karst Conservancy, PO Box 2401, Indianapolis, IN 46206-2401. The IKC is an IRS recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with membership dues and donations fully tax deductible.

