

THE LAST

SPELEOLOGY (from ancient Greek *speláion* = cave and *logós* = study) is not a mere “SPORT”, a little bit strange and of course different from the others. It is rather a fascinating activity, capable of involving both explorers of the hypogeal world and scientists from a wide range of areas.

So, let us have a look and explore the most important speleological activities through this little funny “comic” story.

COOLVENTS

Experts who study the flora of the cave's entrance and, sometimes, of its interior (ferns, mosses, lichens, mushrooms etc.) are called **SPELEOBOTANISTS**. (from ancient Greek *speláion* = cave, *botáne* = grass and *téchne* = art, science)



The activity of **TOPOGRAPHERS** is useful to all other experts. They detect, measure and draw the outline of the cave's path. (from ancient Greek *tópos* = place and *graphia* = to draw signs, writing)

SPELEOHYDROLOGY too studies caves themselves. In such a case, the subject of research regards hypogeal karst waters from present and past times. (from ancient Greek *speláion* = cave, *hýdor* = water and *logós* = study)

However, “to go spelunking” does not only mean to study and to make research. Caves mean also **FOLKLORE**, that is legends, traditions, celebrations and mystery (from English *folk* = people and *lore* = doctrine)

Those who study the fauna living in caves (bats, cave insects, proteseus etc.) are called **SPELEOZOOLOGISTS**. (from ancient Greek *speláion* = cave, *zôion* = living being and *logós* = study)

Instead, **ARCHAEOLOGISTS** dig the cave's ground in search of pottery fragments, tools and other hand-made objects made by primitive men (from ancient Greek *archaios* = primitive and *logós* = study)

PALEOETHNOLOGISTS carry out a similar research. They study our ancestors' civilizations and cultures analysing the various finds detected in caves. (from ancient Greek *palaios* = ancient, *ethnos* = people and *logós* = study)

Other people take delight in studying and classifying fossils of animals and plants accumulated in caves down the centuries: they are called **PALEONTOLOGISTS**. (from ancient Greek *palaios* = ancient, *ontos* = which exists and *logós* = study)

But research is being done also on caves themselves, as far as their structure, their rocks, their millenarian layers are concerned. This is the task of **GEOLOGISTS**. (from ancient Greek *gê* = earth and *logós* = study)

SPELEOBIOLOGY studies forms of life and living conditions in caves (from ancient Greek *speláion* = cave, *bio* = life and *logós* = study)



CLUB ALPINISTICO TRIESTINO
Gruppo Grotte
Via Raffaele Abro 5/a - 34144 Trieste
e-mail: cat@cat.ts.it – www.cat.ts.it