

# 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)



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