

NSS A/V Library Program S753  
Lechuguilla Cave Slides

| <u>Slide#</u> | <u>Description</u>   |
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| 1             | Title Slide  |
| 2             | The 80' entrance drop to Lechuguilla and the room below had been known since the early 1900s and were mined for guano.                               |
| 3             | A series of digs by Colorado cavers broke through in 1986. Entrance is now through this culvert, where 60 mph winds have been recorded.              |
| 4             | Deep secrets, in the Western Branch, was the first arm of the cave explored. These planar coralloids mark the entrance to Deep Sea camp.             |
| 5             | Mammillaries or cave clouds are found in many parts of the cave, in old pool basins. These orange ones are above Lake Louise.                        |
| 6             | The ABCS Room marks the start of the Western Borehole, the largest, most continuous passage in the cave. It extends over a mile.                     |
| 7             | Gypsum floors much of the Western Borehole and "drilled" formations such as these are found along the trail. Note the tiny shield rock on each.      |
| 8             | The Three Amigos are probably the largest gypsum "drill" formations in the Western Borehole.   |
| 9             | Passage shot about halfway down the borehole. Note the Three Amigos in the distance.   |
| 10            | The "Leaning Tower" is a raft cone covered with aragonite - perhaps the largest in the cave. It's found in an old pool basin.                        |
| 11            | "Raft Cone Land" is a portion of the Western Borehole floored entirely with layers of calcite rafts and numerous raft cones.                         |
| 12            | The Huapache Highway is one of the largest passages in the cave, just beyond Hard Daze Night Hall, a huge chamber.                                   |
| 13            | After a mile of bone-dry passage, an active area is reached at the end of the Western Inside the Oasis Pool Room, near the top of the water line.    |
| 14            | Inside the Oasis Room, near the top of the water line.   |
| 15            | Little is left of the pool which once filled the Oasis Chamber, but it's a welcome source of water for thirsty caver. Note orange mammillary crusts. |
| 16            | The Red Lake Passage is in the same vicinity as the Oasis. Note the 5' long soda straw which extends directly into the pool.                         |
| 17            | South Winds, a complex of passage south of the Western Borehole, is noted for its impressive aragonite bushes.                                       |

- 18 The Northwest Passage leads from the Western Borehole to Hudson Bay. I call this area of the room the "Toasted Marshmallows".
- 19 These unusual mammillaries are found in the Northwest Passage.
- 20 Spar City is a portion of the Northwest Passage entirely covered with large spar crystals. Note the caver peering through the hole.
- 21 Beyond Spar City, a series of ascents on flowstone led to the well decorated "There Be Dragons section".
- 22 The second arm of the cave discovered was accessed by Apricot Pit, over 300' of ropework down a sloping rift.
- 23 Below the rift are a series of decorated chambers known collectively as Nirvana. This is the Emperor's Chamber.
- 24 The Emperor formation.
- 25 Aragonite towers are strewn throughout the Great Beyond, a large chamber marking the end of Nirvana and beginning the Near East.
- 26 The Orange Bowl is a dry pool basin.
- 27 Not all the lakes in Nirvana are dry. This is the Lake of the Blue Giants, named for its large, submerged stalagmites, up to 12' tall.
- 28 Submerged stalagmites in Lake of the Blue Giants, shot at a depth of about 20'. Note the encrusted shelf-stone on the left, indicating former pool levels.
- 29 Diving in nearby Stud Lake turned up these unique subaqueous helictites, about ten feet below the water's surface.
- 30 After traveling through Nirvana and the Near East, a 200' ascent leads to the top of the Aragonitemare and the Far East.
- 31 The top of the Aragonitemare, like much of the Far East, is well decorated.
- 32 A major chamber in the Far East is the Land of Fire and Ice.
- 33 Beyond Fire and Ice, a major trunk passage called Glacier Way leads to Grand Guadalupe camp.
- 34 A side passage off Glacier Way leads to Bryce Canyon, where acidic waters have carved impressive rillenkarren.
- 35 One of the most impressive aragonite bushes is found in the Far East. The "plate" is remarkably two dimensional and almost 2' high.
- 36 Just beyond the Far East camp, a gypsum-lined passage leads into dry pool basins.
- 37 Donald Davis admires aragonite bushes on red shelfstone in the dry pool basins.
- 38 A rare form of "feathered" aragonite in the Far East.
- 39 Gypsum crystals in the Far East.

- 40 The Swinging Soda Straw Room in the Far East.
- 41 Shelfstone on a dry pool basin in Boundary Waters, Far East
- 42 The third and most spectacular arm of the cave, the F-survey, is reached by a series of drops ending at Lake Lebarge.
- 43 On the far side of Lake Lebarge is this aragonite-encrusted column.
- 44 Separated from Lake Lebarge by a huge boulder is a smaller lake, Chandelier. Here a caver dips drinking water from the lake.
- 45 The Yellow Brick Road is an orange flowstone cascade extending hundreds of feet.
- 46 The Lebarge Borehole is a gypsum-lined passage paralleling the Yellow Brick Road.
- 47 The Chandelier Ballroom is the first large chamber beyond the Borehole. Some of the chandeliers are over 15' long, ending in selenite crystals.
- 48 There are several clusters of chandeliers in the room. This cluster lacks the large sprays of selenite crystals at the tip.
- 49 This is another cluster of chandeliers which have formed columns.
- 50 A larger-scale view of the lower end of the Chandelier Ballroom, taken from high and to the right of the group in #47. Note the two cavers for scale.
- 51 A fifteen-minute trip from the Ballroom leads to the Pearlsian Gulf, with a blue-green lake and impressive columns.
- 52 A wide variety of pearls is found in the Pearlsian Gulf. Many are tiny, such as these.
- 53 Some of the larger, "toasted" pearls have been cemented in.
- 54 Some of the more unusual pearls at the Gulf look as though they have been cut from cylinders of calcite.
- 55 Above the Pearlsian Gulf is a heavily decorated region known as Yo Acres.
- 56 Yo Acres ascends steeply through forests of formations.
- 57 Another large chamber near the Ballroom is Hoodoo Hall, named for its aragonite-encrusted raft cones. Note the caver in the middle distance.
- 58 The F-survey boasts a variety of bizarre gypsum forms. These are the Dilithium Crystals, sub-aqueous selenite.
- 59 This gypsum formation is fondly known as the Easter Bunny
- 60 Here a gypsum rim is separating from a gypsum column.
- 61 These impressive gypsum drip formations are on the slope above the Chandelier Ballroom.
- 62 Between the camera and the caver is a 250' drop called Hotlanta Well, while this room is called Underground Atlanta.

- 63 Above Underground Atlanta is the most impressive dripstone area in the cave, Tower Place. This is the view heading in.
- 64 Large columns and stals in Tower Place.
- 65 This pretty pool contains the Breast of Venus and collects the drip water in the very active Tower Place.
- 66 Some of the more massive columns in Tower Place.
- 67 Another view of the columns in #65.
- 68 Tower place also contains some bizarrely eroded stals, such as these alien twins.
- 69 Pretty patterns in an eroding stal in Tower Place. Note the drill-hole on top.
- 70 Down a drop and back up another rope leads to the High Hopes area, beginning with a fine borehole in boneyard.
- 71 This is perhaps the most impressive display of subaqueous helictites anywhere and is about 3' wide.
- 72 The beautiful Lake Aqua Velva lies at the foot of a long flowstone slope known as Ultra Primo.
- 73 Just outside of Vesuvius is this aragonite-tipped straw we call "The Tickler".
- 74 Vesuvius is a chamber named for this eruption through its flowstone floor, caused by expansion of clay.
- 75 The rest of Vesuvius is a well decorated area. Access throughout is strictly "boots-off".
- 76 Beyond Vesuvius is the Jungle Room, named for its forest of soda straws, war-club stals, and fat helictites.
- 77 A 10' tall shield in the Jungle Room.
- 78 We end our tour of Lechuguilla with a visit to our favorite region, Lake Castrovalva, below the Chandelier Ballroom.
- 79 One must swim or raft across the 100' wide lake. On the far shore is a passage leading to a spectacular chamber.
- 80 Most of this chamber is floored with ankle deep water over shelfstone, with several "cut-outs" into 10' deep water
- 81 One of the largest pieces of shelfstone anywhere on the planet is at the back of the chamber, which ends just beyond.
- 82 The End