



This Newsletter is issued by the Bureau of the European Speleological Federation (FSE)

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Editorial

This newsletter presents the two award-winning EuroSpeleo Cave Protection Label projects 2018 as well as speleo media news, European caving events, recent information about the Fédération Spéléologique Européenne (FSE) and upcoming events on the European (and world-wide) speleo agenda.

Please share this newsletter as widely as possible amongst caving clubs and individual cavers and all those interested.

Season's greetings The FSE Bureau



Hirlatzhöhle (Austria) much extended

Joel Corrigan, Tom Ford, Axel Hack and Ian Holmes, members of an international team, consisting of cavers from Germany, UK, Ireland, France, Romania and Israel, have significantly extended Hirlatzhöhle in Austria in early September 2018.

The group succeeded to link Schmelzwasserhöhle (a.k.a. What Have You Got Pot) with the Hirlatz System.

This increases the length of Hirlatzhöhle for 7.2 km to 113 km, shifting it from rank 23 to 20 of the world's longest caves. The depth increased from -1,073 m to more than -1,560 m and pushed the cave system from rank 79 to rank 9 on the world-wide list.

Eleven years of systematic research preceded this great success of the afore-mentioned team.

Further connections with other vertical caves appear to be possible.

Sources: Internet & media

EEB Board elections

ECPC president Jean-Claude Thies (on the left) will follow Bärbel Vogel (on the right) on to the board of the European Environmental Bureau EEB. In this way the FSE stays represented in the EEB board. EEB President Jouni Nissinen (center) thanked Bärbel for her work in the EEB Board and welcomed ECPC President Jean Claude Thies, who will be representing FSE for the next 3 years.



Cave and Karst related events

9-10 March 2019

Colloquium on the Caves of Azé "Histoire de désob"

Saône-et-Loire, France. – lionel.barriguand@wanadoo.fr

20-25 May 2019

Hypogea 2019, Intl. Congress of Speleology in Artificial Cavities

Dobrich, Bulgaria. – <http://www.hypogea2019.org/>

7-10 June 2019

48th French National Speleo Congress - La Ciotat (Marseille) -

<https://www.facebook.com/FFSpeleologie/>

9-12 August 2019

Sinterlaken, 14th National Swiss Congress of Speleology

Interlaken, Switzerland. – <https://sinterlaken.ch/en/>

11-17 August 2019

Summer School on Speleothen Science (designed for students and Early career researchers) - Cluj-Napoca, Romania. -

<https://www.speleothen.school.com/>

15-18 August 2019

German Annual Speleo Meeting

Nesselwang (Bavaria). – check out news at www.vdhk.de

11-13 September 2019

Armenian Conference "Caves as Natural and Cultural Monuments" - Yerevan, Armenia. – <http://armconference2019.com/>

26-29 September 2019

13th EuroSpeleo Forum

Dolni Lozen, near Sofia – website will be available soon

Casola 2018 - Nuvole

2,490 speleologists from all over Europe gathered for the 2018 Italian caver's meeting in "Speleopolis" (Casola Valsenio, Ravenna, Emilia Romagna) to enjoy good food in the Speleobar, purchasing equipment in two main vendor halls, having a good time with friends, and following a world-class programme of presentations – website: <http://www.speleopolis.org/casola2018>. FSE Official Partners Scurion and AV gear were present as well.

The 2018 annual meeting of the European Cave Rescue Association (ECRA) was also organized during the meeting, which added international value to the event.



Please send info
on all your international
events (expeditions,
congresses,
symposia etc.)

to

contact@eurospeleo.org

The motto of Casola 2018 - "Nuvole" (cloud) - was reminiscent to the very first speleo meeting in Casola, 25 years ago. This meeting in 1993 was called "Nebbia '93" (nebbia means "fog") – with both fog and clouds being part of the water circle which has created our underground heritage.

A small FSE stand, which was well frequented by visitors, was also present in Casola. FSE furthermore contributed with 2 presentations on the EuroSpeleo Projects to the programme. Also, the winner of the 2018 European Cave Protection Label of FSE's European Cave Protection Commission (ECPC), the Italian cave cleaning project Puliamo il Buio (see the last page in this Newsletter), was honoured in front of a large public audience and FSE's Official Partner Aventure Verticale (AV) donated equipment to the prize winners.

FSE once again congratulates our Italian colleagues for the perfect organisation of such a huge international event.

The next Italian caver's meeting will take place on the island of Sardinia in early November 2019.

The lovely landscape around Casola Valsenio / Ravenna (Emilia Romagna, Italy) (photo: Ernest Geyer).





The 13th EuroSpeleo Forum will be organized by the Bulgarian Federation of Speleology (BFS) and the Cave Rescue of Bulgaria in the National Education Centre of the Red Cross in Dolni Lozen, at the foot of the Lozen mountain, about 20 km southeast from the centre of Sofia city (address: Polovrag Str. 31, Dolni Lozen, Sofia).

The EuroSpeleo Forum is held between 26th to 29th September 2019 and there will be pre-excursions with mountain hikes and caving trips between the 21st and 25th of September.

Registration will be opened on 1st February 2019.

There will be an early-bird registration fee of 25 EUR until end of May 2019, with a standard registration fee being 35 EUR from 1st of June onwards.

This includes free access to all conference sites, a



conference bag and the proceedings, as well as a free dinner with one drink. Expenses for fieldtrips will be invoiced separately.

A 1st circular is available, also with information for vendors and exhibitors, at the conference website: <http://ESF2019.speleo-bg.org>

The two-star hotel complex of the National Education Centre consists of five hotel buildings, located in a pine forest, with single (16 EUR), double (24 EUR) and triple rooms (30 EUR), and apartments (35 EUR). Caravan/camper is 6 EUR, and tent 3 EUR. All prices for the accommodation are per night.

The Centre also features meeting rooms, a 110-seat restaurant as well as an outdoor terrace.

The official language of the EuroSpeleo Forum will be English.

A number of thematic sessions and symposia are planned, such as on caving expeditions and exploration, geology, karst geomorphology and geography, biospeleology, cave rescue, show caves etc. There will also be a photo competition, a EuroSpeleo Image'In Film Festival, and Speleo Olympics.

For most European countries, there is no visa requirement to visit Bulgaria. If any participant requires an invitation letter, please contact bfsc@speleo-bg.org.

We are looking forward to meet all of you in Bulgaria soon!

90 years of organized speleology in Bulgaria

45 years of cave rescue in Bulgaria



The EuroSpeleo Protection Label 2018

Every year, the European Speleological Federation (FSE) and its European Cave Protection Commission (ECPC) launches a call for the EuroSpeleo Protection Label. The label supports cave protection activities in the speleo clubs, committees, national commissions etc., all over Europe and intends to share ideas as well as best practises throughout Europe. The FSE / ECPC seeks to acknowledge quality projects which can help to find better solutions for cave protection by awarding them the EuroSpeleo Protection Label, which consists of a cash award and equipment sponsorship by FSE's Official Partners. In 2018 two projects were awarded.

The 1st prize went to the Italian Speleological Society SSI for its programme Puliamo il Buio (PiB) (Cleaning Up The Darkness), which is an initiative linked to Puliamo il Mondo, the Italian edition of "Clean-up the World", the largest voluntary international environmental event, organized in Italy by Legambiente. Since 12 years (2005) hundreds of speleologists throughout Italy contributed to the cleaning activities. In the meantime, educational programs have been developed around the practical activities and there is a web platform online, including a register of sites facing environmental risk (<http://www.puliamoilbuio.it/cavita-con-Rischi-Ambientali/>).

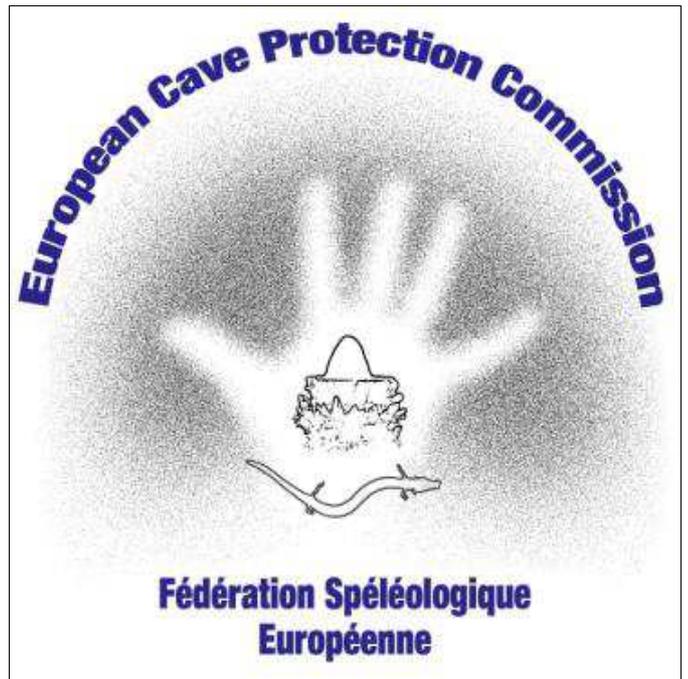
To date, 2,908,394 working hours have been spent underground and 148 tons of waste has been safely disposed of.

In addition to the cleaning activities in and outside caves, events such as conferences, presentations and round tables were organized disseminating the message of awareness on the protection of the caves. This reached an estimate of 2,000,000 people in local populations and users of tourist caves. Approximately 45 key stakeholders are involved, such as public waste management services or environmental associations and local governments.

The award, consisting of an equipment set valued of 400 EUR from FSE's Official Partner Aventure Verticale (France), as well as a financial grant of FSE of 500 EUR was handed over to SSI at the 12th EuroSpeleo Forum in Ebensee (Austria) in August 2018.

The 2nd prize was received by the Zagreb Speleological Association and its Clean Underground project dedicated to polluted Bebina kakica, a narrow pit located near the village of Špehari (Karlovac, Croatia). The surrounding area was severely impacted by a dam for a hydro power plant with many caves and pits now partly or entirely flooded. The oscillating karst water table facilitates the spread of waste by water in such polluted caves. The lack of organized waste disposal in the nearby village also contributes to the contamination of caves.

A tyrolean traverse combined with a pulley and a gasoline powered ascender was used to manually extract the waste from the pitch. About 3 m³ of garbage were removed.



Local residents, foresters and members of the Bosiljevo volunteer fire department assisted the project.

The 2nd award consisted of a 200 m rope donation from FSE's Official Partner Korda's (Barcelona/Spain), which also was bestowed at the EuroSpeleo Forum in Ebensee (Austria).

Watch out for the call in early 2019 for a new edition of the EuroSpeleo Protection Label.



View of Bebina kakica pit during the Croatian Clean Underground project (photo: M Uroič).

FSE Partners

