

THE FLORIDA SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
SAFETY REGULATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

REGULATIONS

1. Do not go caving alone. If possible have at least three persons.
2. No one shall enter a cave without a reliable source of light.
3. A first aid kit is to be taken on all field trips.
4. The person rigging a ladder or rope shall be the first one down.
5. A rope or ladder shall be used by only one person at a time.
6. When a person is on the ladder there shall be, whenever possible, one person below and one person above to give necessary aid and to steady the ladder.
7. Each person descending or ascending a rope or ladder shall be responsible for the assistance of the next person.
8. When a person is using a rope or ladder, those persons unnecessary for assistance shall stand clear.
9. Persons in the vicinity of the cave entrance shall not stand where there is the possibility of knocking objects down into the cave, or having the earth about the cave entrance give way beneath them.
10. Items of equipment requiring special consideration shall precede the main group both into and out of the cave.
11. No member shall deliberately absent himself from a group without giving notification of his leaving.
12. No one shall persist in an action or continue in a manner which is considered by the group, or person directing activities, to be foolhardy or dangerous.
13. If a group consists of five or more persons, one person, normally the highest ranking officer present, shall be appointed to direct activities.
14. Drivers of transportation vehicles shall be responsible for the persons riding with them and responsible to the person or persons directing trip activity.
15. All underwater cave exploration shall be subject to the rules of the Underwater Exploration Program Committee.
16. All participants of field trips shall be familiar with and agree to abide by these Safety Regulations.
17. Copies of these Safety Regulations and Suggestions shall be made available at all regular meetings and on all field trips.

SUGGESTIONS

1. HEADGEAR: All members are strongly urged to wear some type of protective head gear when caving. Miners' "hard hats" are recommended.
2. SAFETY ROPE: A safety rope should be used whenever and wherever possible. All members should become familiar with proper belaying techniques.
3. RABID BATS: Surveys in recent years have shown that rabid bats are not uncommon in Florida caves. Always avoid touching bats and be on the watch for ones that seem to be sick or acting strangely.
4. POISONOUS SNAKES: All persons should be familiar with first aid treatment for poisonous snake bite. The following summary, adapted from the book Rattlesnakes by L. M. Klauber, applies to all North American poisonous snakes.
 - a. Make sure that the snake is poisonous. Puncture marks by the enlarged poison fangs and a burning sensation around the bite are indications that the snake is poisonous.
 - b. The victim should remain as still as possible. NO strong stimulants, such as alcohol, should be given. These will increase the rate of venom spread throughout the body.
 - c. Immediately apply a tourniquet between the bite and heart, about two inches above bite. If rubber tubing supplied in snake bite kit is not available, use shoestring, necktie, etc. Don't tie it too tightly. You should be able to force a finger under it. Release the tourniquet for about one minute at fifteen minute intervals. Move it to keep ahead of swelling.
 - d. With a sharp, clean instrument make a lengthwise incision beside each fang mark or slightly above it. The cut should be from one-eighth to one-quarter of an inch deep and about half an inch long. Before making an incision, the bite and cutting instrument must both be sterilized. If this cannot be done, the cuts should not be made. Don't cut blood vessels.
 - e. Use the suction bulb supplied in the kit to apply suction to the incisions. If this is not available, the mouth can be used without danger if there are no open sores present.
 - f. Get the assistance of a physician as soon as possible. The above steps are to be taken only while waiting for the doctor.

CORAL SNAKES. A bad case of coral snake bite is often fatal within three or four hours if not treated promptly with special antivenin. This is in addition to the above treatment. Recently imported antivenin for the coral snake is in short supply. Florida plans to store small quantities in key cities (Miami, Tampa, Jacksonville, Orlando, Pensacola). The Highway Patrol is to speed delivery to the victim.