Introduction to Cave Rescue Course Level 1

Report by Anthros Speleological Group: Costa Rica anthroscr@gmail.com

Pictures by Victor Carbajal

Within the framework of the IYCK, the Anthros Speleological Group has organized a cave rescue course in September 2021.

In 2005 GEA start a cave Rescue Unit to face with responsibility the increasing of caving activity and the frequent visit of foreign cavers and tourist to some caves open to tourism and since then GEA is keeping updates in techniques and new training for new rescuers.

This course aims to outreach this topic with a technical audience of cavers and rescue teams in Costa Rica with theoretical and practical lessons in artificial environments and a field trip in an adequate cave.

Classes:
- Introduction to speleology
- Importance of caves in nature

Main cave rescue topics:

1. Cave Emergency Response Planning
2. Cave Environment Awareness
3. Cave Rescue Techniques
4. Cave Medical Emergencies
5. Communication in Cave Rescue
6. Cave Entrapment and Vertical Rescue
7. Cave Search and Rescue Operations
8. Cave Surveying and Mapping
9. Cave Hazard Assessment
10. Equipment and Gear for Cave Rescue.

The course was held in conformity with the Anti-Covid security protocols in Costa Rica;

Dates:

- September 11 and 12, 2021
- September 18 and 19, 2021
- September 25 and 26, 2021

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**Field trip date:** September 25, 2021  
**Place of practice:** Caverna Gabinarraca  
"Cavernas del Venado" (Venado Caves) is a large cave system in Costa Rica. It has four entrances, two of which are vertical pits. The cave is largely explored, and explorations are carried out by various organizations, such as the Grupo Espeleologico Anthros (GEA), National Speleological Society (NSS), and the Société Suisse d’Spéléologie (SSS). It is also known as "Caverna Gabinarraca" which is the original name given to it by the indigenous people.

**Exercises in cavern:** Extraction of patient on stretcher utilianzo haulage systems and pulleys. The Gabinarraca cave has 3 levels. We start the exercise on the second level. New anchors were installed at the heads of the rappels. The first exercise we used counterweight technique to bring the stretcher to the top. Then it moved through a very narrow passage manually. Finally, for the rappelling from exit to the surface, two pulley systems were mounted that allowed lifting to the surface and from there a change of direction that allowed the stretcher to travel to a safe place and away from the mouth of the cave.

**Participants:** Allan Brenes, Erick Mendez, Richard Solano, Scott Trescott, Josué Mendez. Victor Carvajal, Sebastian Vallejo

**Additional:** We had a practice in the vertical tower of the GEA the previous weekend where we were performing exercises and lifting stretchers, changes of direction, counterweights, fine-tuning details in the operation of a rescue (managers, chain of command and positions).

The following picture reportage is a visual story of this activity build not only to keep the rescue team updated and trained but also to share caving rescue value with the owners of the touristic cave Caverna de Gabinarraca whom we thanks for the support in this activity.
THANK YOU