On September 23, 2004 Clarksville Cave and eleven surrounding acres were purchased by the Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. (NCC). The NCC is a non-profit group dedicated to protecting and preserving caves and keeping them open for public use free of charge.

Volunteer stewards who are NCC members will be greeting visitors to Clarksville Cave. We ask that you cooperate with these stewards and follow the general guidelines listed on the opposite side. The stewards will be happy to answer questions about the NCC or the guidelines. For more information contact the NCC at the address listed on the front or visit the NCC web site.

Our main priorities are protecting the cave and the lands above it, providing a safe experience for those who enter, and being a good neighbor in the village of Clarksville. The guidelines below were developed with these priorities in mind.

We hope you enjoy your visit to Clarksville Cave and that you will consider joining and contributing to the NCC. Your membership (Regular, $15 per year) and generous donations are tax deductible.

The NCC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation operating in the public interest and committed to the conservation, study, management and acquisition of caves and karst (cave landforms) areas having significant geological, hydrological, biological, recreational, historical or aesthetic features.

For more information on caving in the Northeast check out: http://www.caves.org/region/nro/.

Geology of Clarksville Cave

Clarksville Cave is developed in a rock formation known as the Onondaga Limestone. This formed nearly 400 million years ago from sediments deposited among reefs in a shallow tropical sea. The cave itself is much younger than the Onondaga Limestone but is at least as old as the most recent glaciation some 20 thousand years ago. We know this because glacial sediments are found in places in the cave such as Perry Avenue near the Thook Passage.

Like most caves in the area, Clarksville Cave is formed by the dissolving away of the rock. Features (called karst) that result from this include sinkholes, springs, caves, open fissures and sinking streams. Limestone will not dissolve in plain water, but mix the water with carbon dioxide (CO_2) and the two form carbonic acid. It is this carbonic acid which dissolves limestone. (People frequently drink carbonic acid in soft drinks.) Most of the CO_2 which forms caves comes from roots and decaying vegetable material in the upper soil layer.

Throughout the cave are layers and blobs of a black rock that jut out of the walls and ceilings. This is called chert, a deposit made of silica (SiO_2). Since silica dissolves much more slowly than limestone does, it is left behind when the cave is formed.

The water in Clarksville Cave comes from two sources: diffuse input and discrete stream sinks. All of the latter comes from the Onesquethaw Creek, which sinks at many points along its course. That is why much of the creek is dry during a normal summer. The diffuse input comes from an area roughly bounded by Stove Pipe Rd and NY Routes 443 and 85. Rain or snow melt in this area flows into cracks in the rocks and, eventually, into conduits that direct water into the cave system. All this water comes to the surface at Mill Pond (on private property) between Rt 443 and the Onesquethaw Creek.

A quick look at a map of the cave shows that the cave is surprisingly straight. This is because the cave is formed along a fault zone. This type of fault is known as a thrust fault because it is less than 45 degrees from the horizontal. (In places, like the Lake Room, a secondary fault that is steeper than 45 degrees may come up off the main thrust.)

The fault may be seen at several places in the cave. Among these are the Slickenside Block Room and near the ceiling on the east side of the downstream end of Perry Avenue. (Slickensides are "scratches" formed on a fault by the rocks sliding past each other.)

Welcome
to
the

Clarksville

Cave

Preserve

of the

The Northeastern Cave Conservancy Inc
PO Box 254
Schoharie, NY 12157-0254
http://www.necaveconservancy.org/

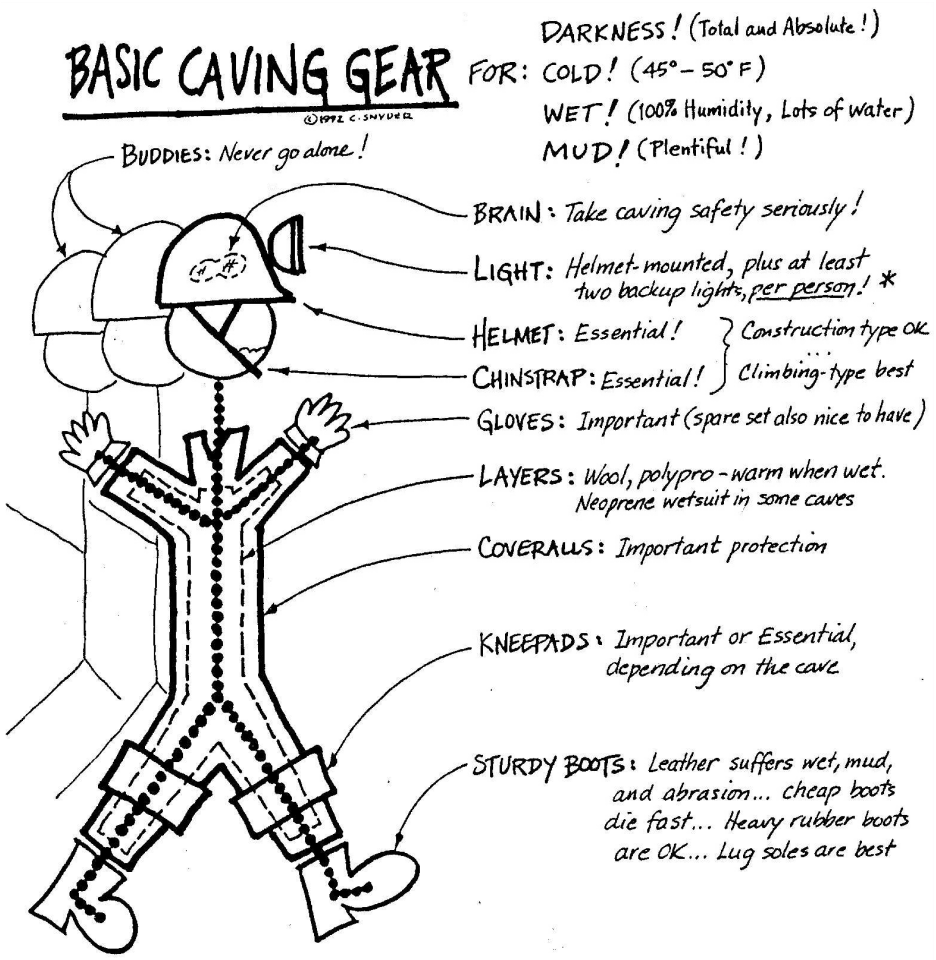
Version 3.0

Guidelines

- Please look at the example of safe cave caving equipment to the right. If visitors are not adequately equipped, such as having no extra lights, they may be asked to not enter the cave for safety reasons.
- Camping, fires, wood cutting, and parties (without written permission) are not permitted.
- This is a carry-it-in, carry-it-out property. Please leave nothing on the property.
- Alcohol, firearms, coolers, glass bottles, spray paint and other objects which might cause safety problems or damage the cave are not permitted in the cave.
- Groups larger than 15 are asked not to enter the cave.
- There is no parking permitted at the Clarksville Cave Preserve between 11 pm and 7 am without written permission.

About groups

Institutional users such as summer camps, church groups, fee-based led trips, school groups, youth outing groups and similar organizations will be required to schedule trips and follow additional regulations similar to those in place for other NCC-managed properties. If your group possibly fits this category please contact the NCC special use coordinators [Amy & Aaron Cox, amycaves2@aol.com or at 203-426-4602 (phone and fax)] who will assist you in facilitating your visit.



* Each person must carry at least 3 independent light sources, each capable of getting you out of the cave alone.

Your primary light must be helmet mounted, sturdy, field fixable

Your secondary light should be helmet mounted

Third, etc lights: good flashlights, cyalumes, candle & waterproof matches, lighter

(Spare batteries, bulbs, parts, etc should be carried; they do not count as sources.)

Important Extras: Water, energy food, first aid kit, plastic garbage bag(shelter)