

# **Cave Diving on the Roe Plain Burnabbie Cave 2006**

***Paul Hosie***

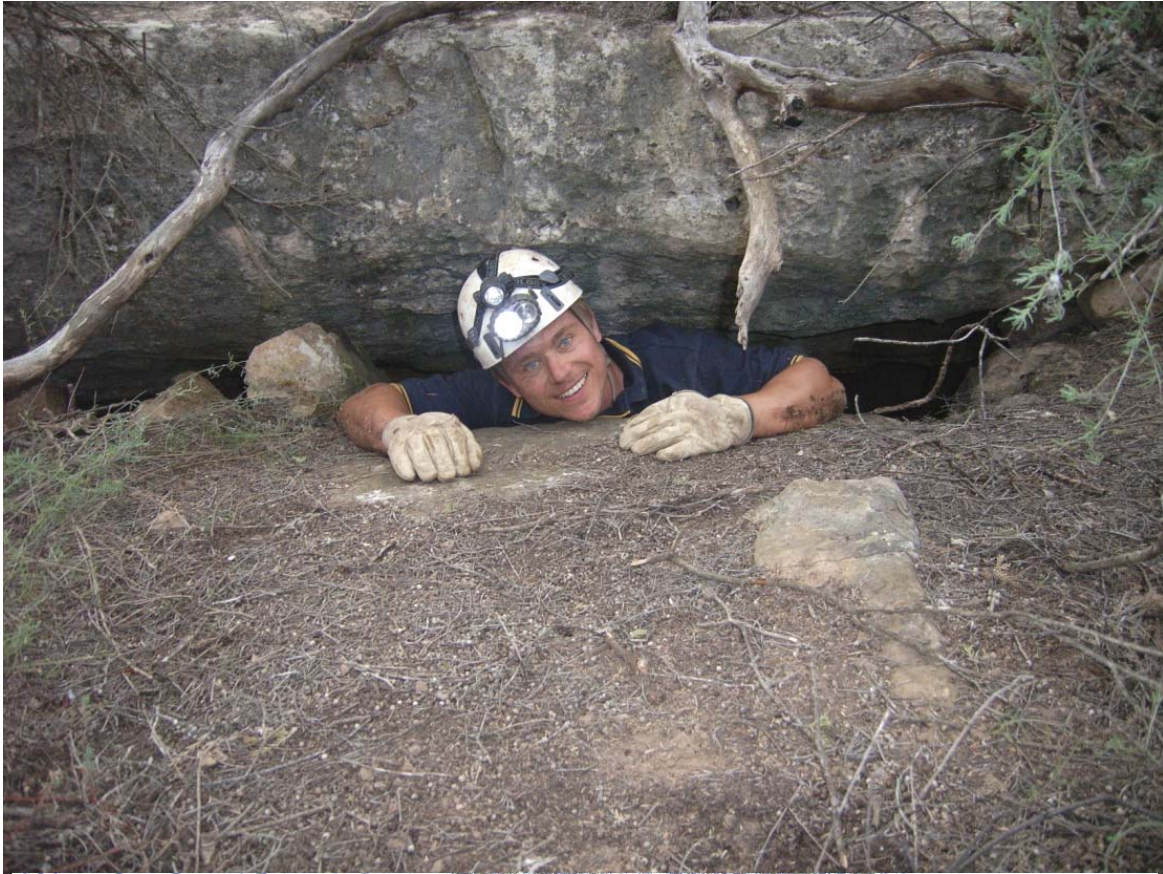
The Roe Plains of the Nullarbor hold some incredibly complicated cave systems. Fortunately for some 'special' cavers, most of them are full of hyper-saline, crystal clear water! Burnabbie Cave is undoubtedly the current King of the Roe Plain caves with over 2.2km of surveyed passages, most of it underwater, but there are some large half submerged chambers which are rich troglobitic fauna habitats.

With difficult cave diving penetrations of over 900m from the entrance, exploration and mapping of the cave was continued by WASG members Alan Polini and Paul Hosie during the period 30 Oct – 04 Nov 2006. Preparations for this trip included modification of closed circuit rebreathing equipment into an 'off-mount configuration' and familiarisation with them beforehand. The first dive was done together on open circuit scuba to suss out the ten restrictions between the entrance and the end of the cave to see whether the rebreathers would fit through or not. Staged bailout cylinders were also dropped off 500m into the cave to serve as safety backup for the rest of the week's diving.

The rebreathers worked beautifully and allowed the cave divers to safely travel to the end of the cave where normal scuba cylinders were used to explore and map the many new passages there. By the week's end, over 500m of new passages had been added to the map, making Burnabbie the 4<sup>th</sup> longest diveable cave so far discovered in Australia. As usually happens on exploration trips like this, the last dive turned out to be the most revealing with a whole new section of tunnels discovered in the most unexpected area of the cave.

Between dives, Alan and Paul also walked to over twenty karst features spotted from aerial photos and provided by Paul Devine. Most were blind dolines, but three were identified as caves and one even went down to the water level. Without doubt, there is plenty more discoveries to be made on the beautiful Roe Plains. If you like bushwalking and exploration, contact Paul Hosie about the next planned trip.

Much more remains to be done and it is planned to return to continue the exploration and mapping efforts in April 2007.





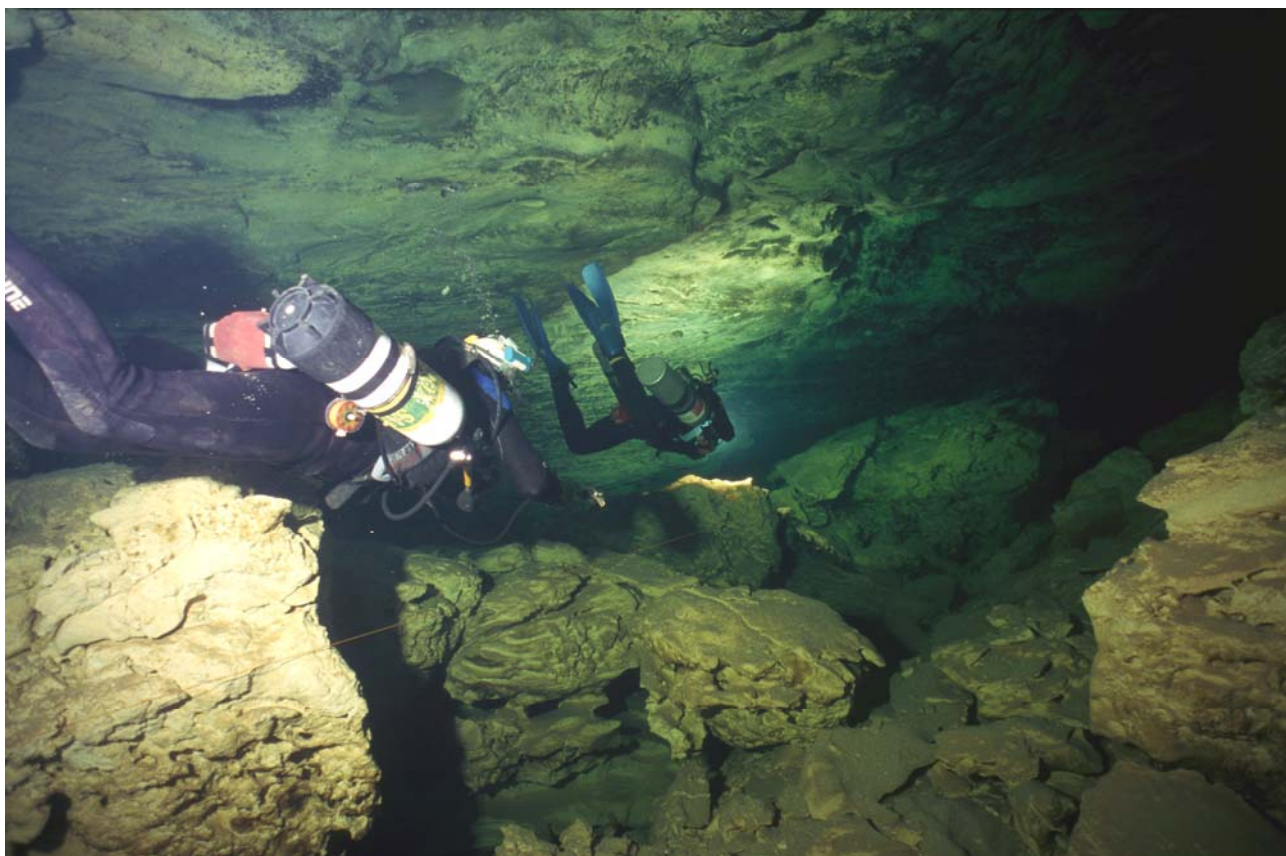


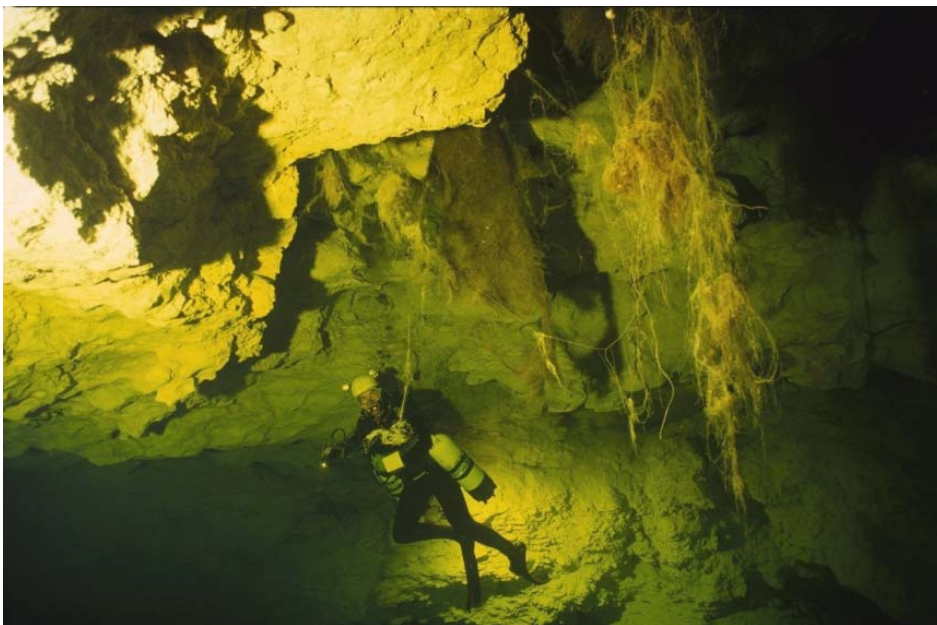














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