Association For

Mexican Cave Studies

NEWSLETTER

The Association for Mexican Cave Studies is a non-profit organization whose goals are the collection and dissemination of information concerning Nexican caves. The AMCS publishes a Newsletter, Bulletin, and Cave Report Series which are available to any sincerely interested conservation-minded person. The AMCS Newsletter is published six issues per volume as frequently as necessary at a cost of $5.00 US per volume. Information concerning the other publications is available upon request. Potential contributors are urged to submit articles for publication. The article may cover any phase of Mexican speleology. Trip reports are requested from all trips. All correspondence and orders for publications should be sent to:

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Cover Photograph–

The tenth anniversary of T. R. Evans' initial descent into Sótano de las Golondrinas is now being celebrated by AMCS cavers throughout the world. We thought it appropriate to reproduce this entrance photo from AMCS Bulletin 2 in honor of the occasion. In the ten years since the 1967 exploration we estimate that more than 300 people (mostly cavers) have entered the pit. It is truly a miracle that no one has been killed, considering the competency and equipment employed by some. The hole's measurements are 62, 48, 333 meters. The floor is an incredible 134 by 304 meters and along the west wall a fissure drops to a total depth of 376 meters. Regardless of what future explorations discover, the Golondrinas chapter will remain one of the grandest in the great Book of Speleology. (Photo by Terry Raines)

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by John W. Greer

Higuerón is in a large depression about 365 m east-northeast of Sótano de los Monos in the jungle region on top of the El Abra range. The sink is a large oval depression 45 m across lined with vertical limestone walls 4.5 to 12 m high containing several narrow, unoccupied rockshelters. A steep breakdown-soil slope at the west end of the depression drops through an entrance about 9 by 9 m into a long, elongated room with a breakdown and dirt floor. Large square boulders lie along and at the bottom of the seemingly terraced entrance slope. The room comprising the cave is about 153 m long and 18 to 40 m wide and averages about 15 m high in the front two-thirds and 6 m high in the remaining back portions. One can nearly always see dim light from the entrance, but nearly the entire room is in total darkness. See map, page 70.

The walls are all mainly steep, smooth, exposed limestone in the front. Especially in the entrance sink, the entrance slope, and the entrance area of the large room, the walls are extremely suitable for paintings, although none are present.

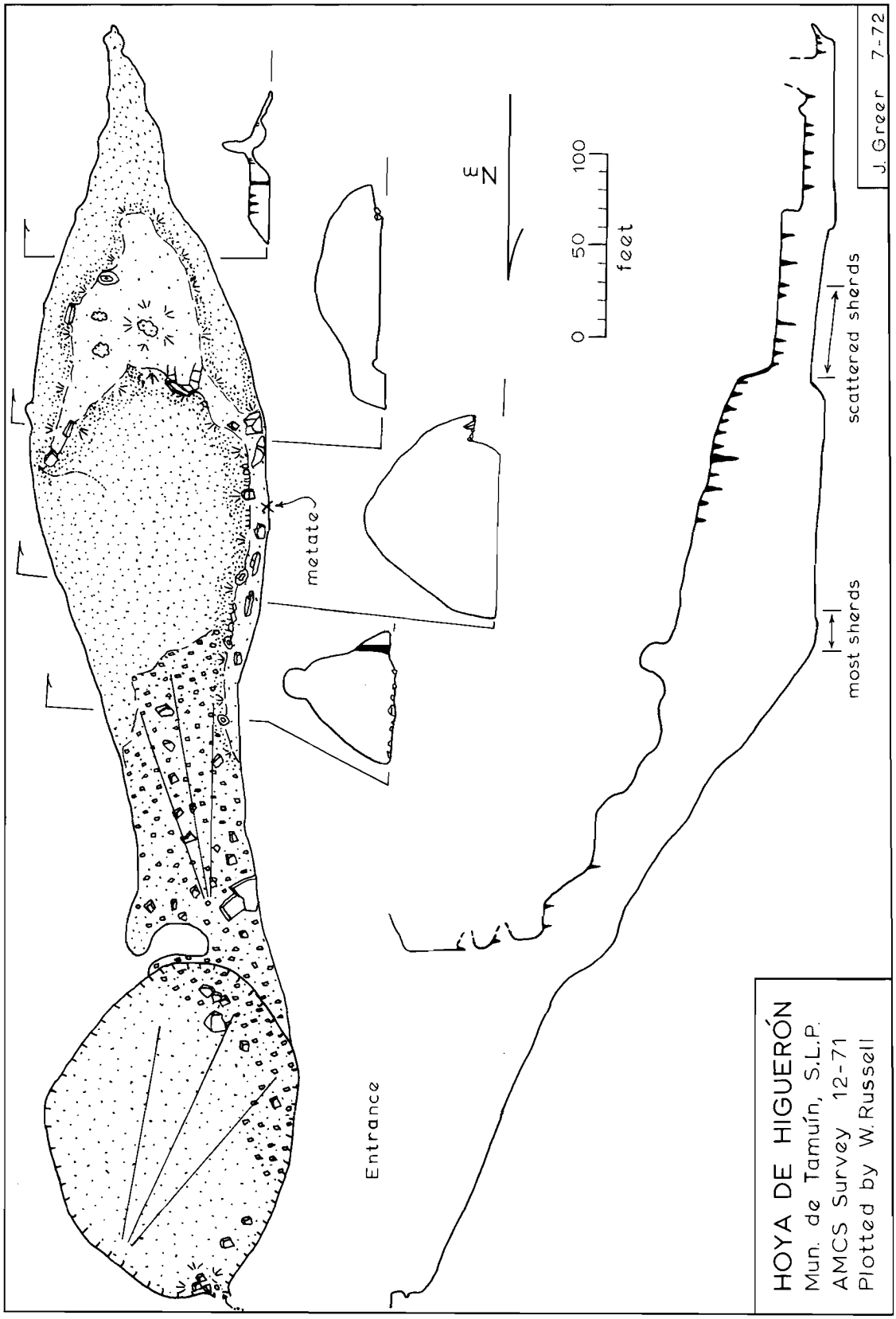
Flowstone and formations are common in the rear portions of the large room. Many or most low stalactites of clear, fine-grained calcite crystal have been broken off. Almost none are on the floor–seemingly they have been taken from the cave. It remains possible that they have been broken by floodwaters and buried in the silt, though this does not seem the most reasonable explanation. From the formations, water drips constantly, sometimes into small, shallow pools.

The floor is quite uneven–the lower parts in the front portion of the cave contain much large breakdown, while back portions contain mainly modern washed-in silt. Along the edges and in a raised area (the "mountain") in the center of the room, the floor is flowstone and old soil. Apparently the cave also floods periodically, judging from washed-in silt and wood fragments at least 1.2 m high on wall ledges.

A milling slab near the "mountain" beside the west wall is a nearly unaltered tabular piece of crystaline flowstone. The nearly circular slab is 40 by 40 by 12 cm and has a somewhat uneven, shallow circular grinding basin with a pecked surface 27 by 3 cm. Sherds were found nearby.

A few sherds are scattered around the floor, especially near the entrance. Most of the lower floor is covered with modern silt, thereby probably covering whatever sherds might have been present. The higher areas, such as the "mountain" about 90 m inside the entrance, are flowstone and dry, nonwashed dirt and rock and contain scattered sherds (and tigre tracks).

All of the 16 analyzed sherds are from jars. Half are tempered with crushed calcite, one with calcite sand, the rest with igneous sand. All the igneous sand tempered sherds and three calcite tempered sherds have paste containing igneous sand. These sherds follow the general thickness pattern of sherds from other El Abra caves in that calcite tempered sherds are thicker than sand tempered–calcite tempered sherds average 8.4 mm, sand tempered average 7.1 mm.


HOYA DE HIGUERÓN
Mun. de Tamuín, S.L.P.
AMCS Survey 12-71
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Entrance
metate
N
0 50 100
feet
most sherds
scattered sherds