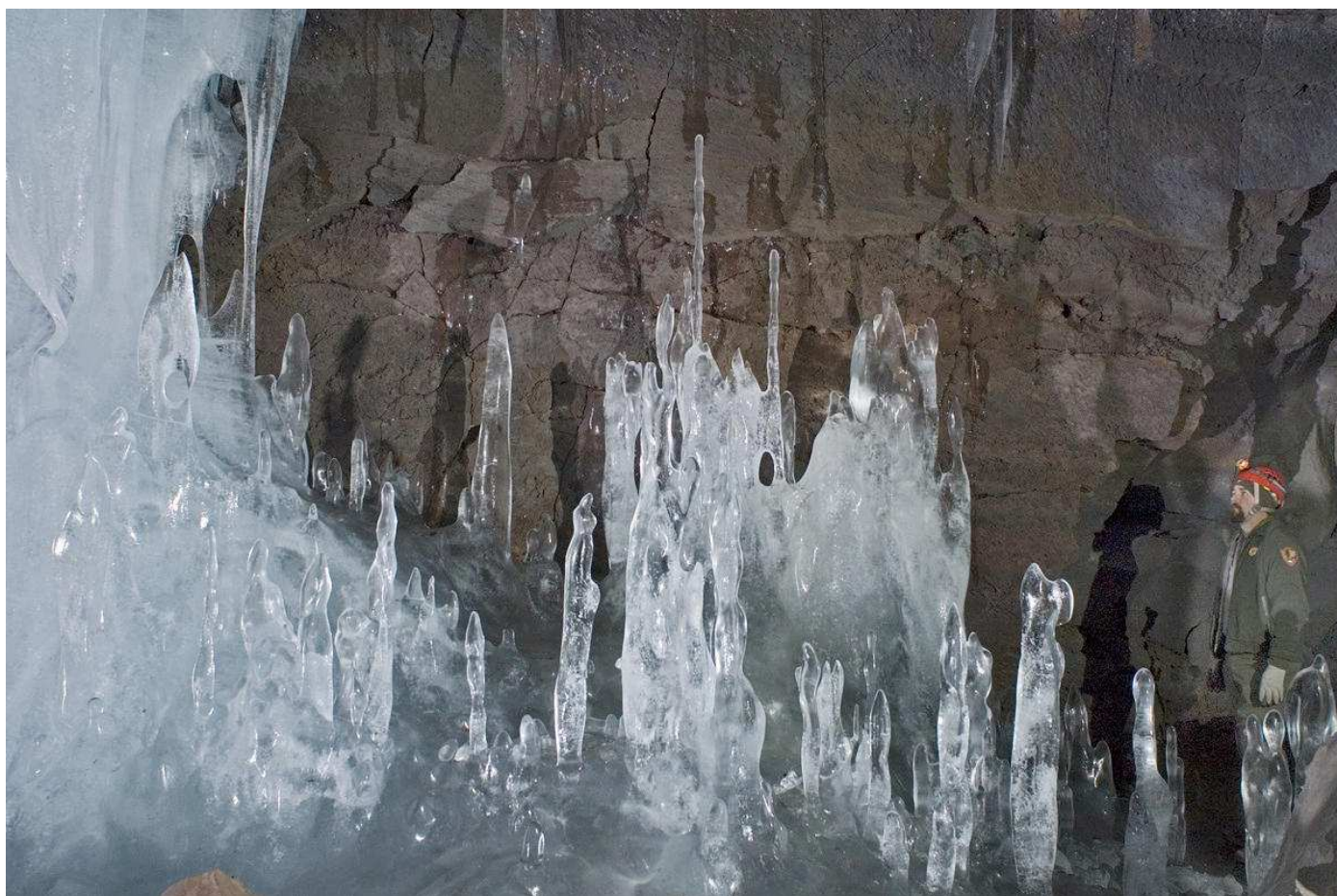


# THE 18<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM on VULCANOSPELEOLOGY is COMING

John Brush

Chairman, IUS Commission on Volcanic Caves



Crystal Cave in Winter.  
Photo: Dave Bunnell

The next International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology (ISV) will take place 21-26 July 2018 in Northern California in and around the Lava Beds National Monument.

The Symposium will include presentations, cave and surface field excursions and a range of social activities over 5-6 days. The symposium is open to anyone, but especially to those with an interest in lava caves, volcanoes and volcanic terrains. ISV participants are usually a friendly mix of cavers, cave scientists and cave managers from all over the world. The last international meeting, held in Hawaii in February 2016, attracted 80 participants. There were 13 Australian participants, many of whom are ACKMA members.

The 2018 Symposium will be a great opportunity for ACKMA members to explore some of the most extensive lava tubes in the western region of the United States. Lava Beds National Monument is a land of turmoil, both geological and historical. Over the last half-million years, volcanic eruptions on the Medicine Lake shield volcano have created a rugged landscape dotted with diverse volcanic features. More than 400 caves as

well as Native American rock art sites, historic battlefields and camp-sites, and a high desert wilderness experience await you!

Most caves in the National Monument area are wild, however some have been modified to facilitate visitor access with stairways or ladders and marked trails. One cave (Mushpot) near the National Monument Visitor Centre has been lit and contains exhibits.

The Lava Beds area is relatively remote and with little by way of public transport, the organisers have suggested that people rent a car to get to the area. Lava Beds is about 6-7 hours' drive from either San Francisco (California) or Portland (Oregon). The closest major airport (Reno, Nevada) is about 4 hours' drive away. There is also limited accommodation in the immediate area but the organisers have pre-reserved a range of options (from camping to ensuite rooms) at two motels within easy daily driving distance of the National Monument and one of these (Winema Lodge) will be the venue for presentations and also where meals will be served.

**Please visit the Symposium Website (<http://18ivslavabeds.com/>) for more detailed information and to register.**



Valentine Cave.  
Photo: Dave Bunnell



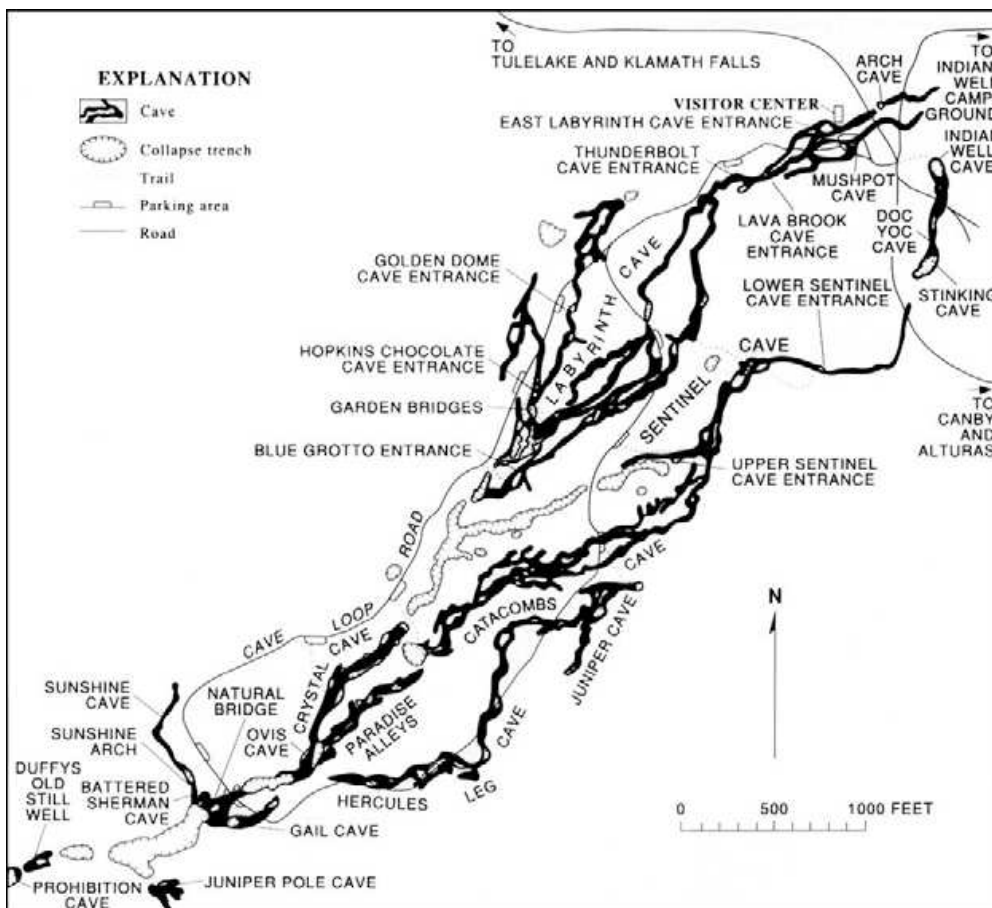
A classic lava tube passage at Lava Beds National Monument.  
Photo: Dave Bunnell

### The IUS Commission on Volcanic Caves – Background

An international group focussing on lava caves was established in the 1970s and became known as the Commission on Volcanic Caves in 1993 after being granted full Commission status by the International Union of Speleology – IUS – (or Union Internationale de Spéléologie – UIS). The first International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology was held in Hawaii in 1972 and since 1998, the symposiums have been held every two years. Locations of recent symposiums include Hawaii, Ecuador (Galapagos Islands), Korea, Jordan, Australia, Mexico, Portugal (Azores), Mexico, Iceland and Spain (Canary Islands). The Commission also meets every four years at IUS Congresses, such the one held at Penrith NSW in July 2017.

The principal objective of the Commission is to advance the scientific exploration, study, and preservation of caves and related features in volcanic rock throughout the world. It seeks to bring together all persons, organisations, and agencies with interests in volcanic caves, their features and their environments. Its members include leading vulcanospeleologists from around the world, cave microbiologists, cavers and cave managers.

IUS is the international body for speleology and caving. It was founded in 1965 and currently has around 60 member countries - its voting members consist of a delegate from each member country. This delegate represents the member country's cavers and speleologists, rather than its national body(s). An elected Bureau runs the affairs of the IUS between the General Assembly meetings held at the International Congresses but the actual speleological 'work' of the IUS is done by the members of its Commissions – such as the one on Volcanic Caves – and Working Groups, which are open to anyone who is interested.



Lava features in the vicinity of the Lava Beds National Monument Visitor Centre (from US Geological Survey Bulletin 1673: Selected Caves and Lava Tube Systems in and near Lava Beds National Monument, California (1990).