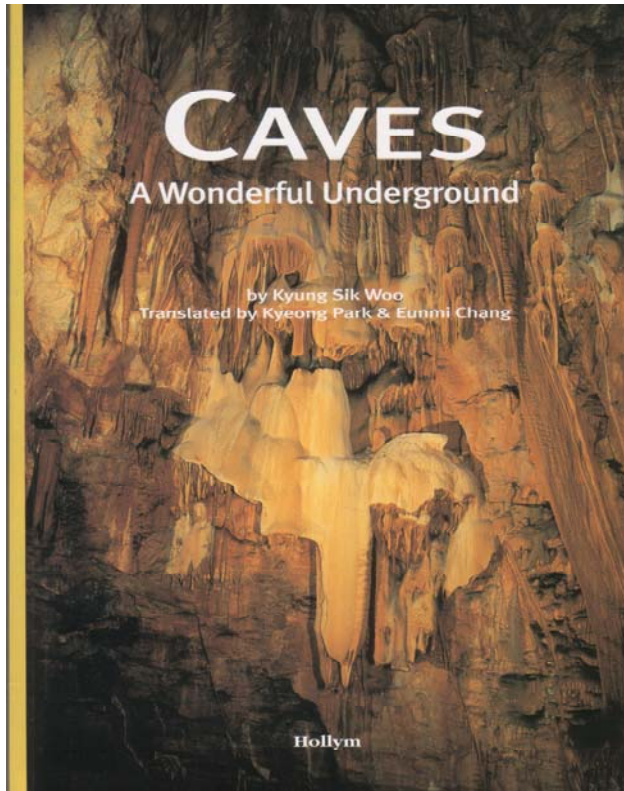


BOOK & DVD REVIEWS

CAVES: A WONDERFUL UNDERGROUND. Kyung Sik Woo. Translated by Kyeong Park and Eunmi Chang. Hollym Press, New Jersey, USA. ISBN: 1-56591-221-7. Inquiries: Andy Spate <andyspate@aliencamel.com>. **Reviewed by Cathie Plowman.**



Kyung Sik Woo has opened a new door for those wanting to learn more about the wonders of caves. This highly readable, 230 page soft-cover, book is an introduction to the various types of caves and has detailed sections on lava tubes and karst.

The book also 'tours' the caves of Korea. This section is enjoyable for some glimpses of Korean culture as well as the country's caves.

Sections on humans in caves, cave fauna, learning about caves and cave conservation are included and

THE CAVE. DVD. Running Time: 97 minutes. Produced by Lakeshore Entertainment. Filmed in Central Europe, Romania, and Mexico. Directed by Bruce Hunt. Starring Cole Hauser, Morris Chestnut, Eddie Cibrian, Piper Perabo, Lena Headey, Marcel Iures, Kieran Darcy Smith, Daniel Dae Kim, Rick Ravanello, and Brian Steele. DVD Release date: 6 April 2006. Price: \$39.95. **Reviewed by Kent Henderson.**

I saw this movie in London last September, although it was not released in Australia until late last year. It had a fairly short run at the Box Office, and mostly unfavourable reviews.

For example, reviewer Luke Buckmaster writes: "The Cave, is a loud and obtuse sci-fi clunker about strange beasts attacking a crew of stranded researchers in – you guessed it – a gigantic cave network is a painfully nauseating experience that deserves to have its own paragraph inside a medical dictionary of preventable illnesses. Any poor soul

there are text boxes with various 'cave facts' positioned throughout the book.

The book is rich with photographs from caves around the world. These have mostly been taken by the author and illustrate both the diversity of caves types and the variety and beauty of the features within them.

Caves: A Wonderful Underground was originally written for Korean high school students and was selected by the Korean government as one of the top 100 books published in that country and was included in the Korean contributions, as guest nation, at the prestigious Frankfurt Book fair.

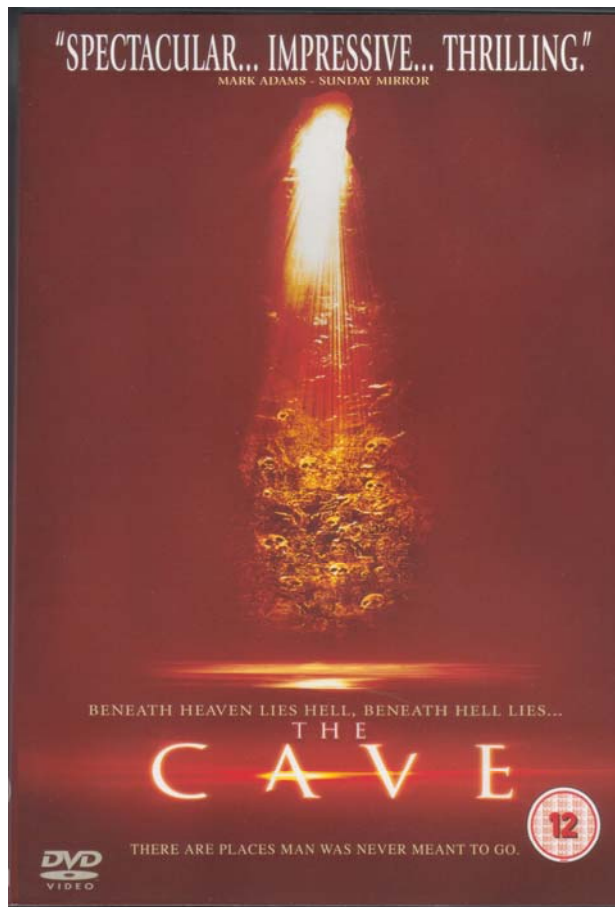
The book makes caves and their science more accessible to those who do not necessarily understand the complexities of the underground. Cave guides, cave managers and cavers will all find it a terrific resource.

This book is also one for the community in general and especially those who live in cave areas. It will help people understand the rich and complex environments of caves. I'd like to see it in public libraries, news agencies and book-shops where it can reach the wider 'non-cave' community. By helping people understand caves, this book has the potential to be a great tool for cave conservation.

This is the author's wish as he concludes his introduction with the hope that his 'Dear Reader', will learn more about caves and understand the importance of them from his book'.

Caves: A Wonderful Underground is published by Hollym and retails for approximately \$A25.00. Currently it is not readily available in Australia but Andy Spate has a few copies on hand and can organise to import more if there is interest.

duped into forking over cash for a ticket will quickly realise they have more dollars than sense, and the monetary outlay – obscene even if it were free – guarantees only that brain cells will be lost by the time the final credits roll. In the interim a smattering of archaic conventions, lifeless characters, wooden performances and cruddy special effects make this tour-de-force of D grade cinema an aggravatingly banal ride into the netherworlds of lunacy. That description almost makes the movie sound so bad it's good. Believe me, it's not...."

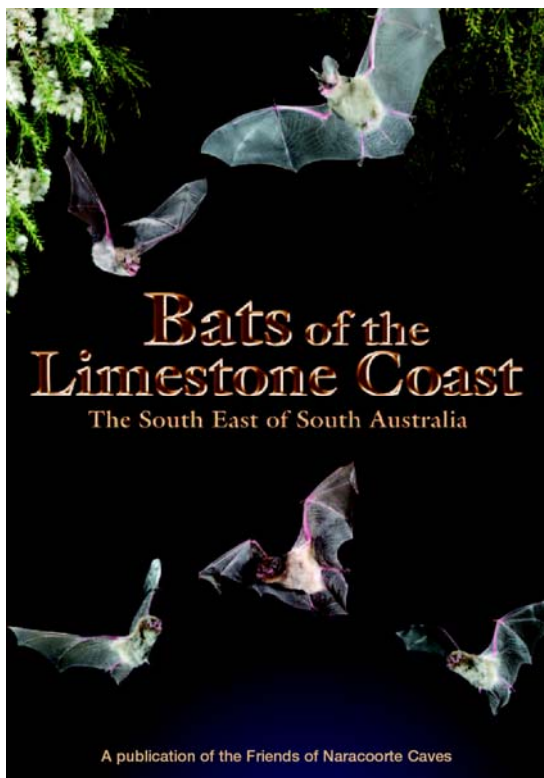


However, some reviews were positive. Reviewer Steve Rhodes commented: "The Cave, one of the last popcorn movies of the summer, is essentially 'Aliens Underground'. A fun film, it turns out smarter than you'd expect..."

I agree, it was fun – although it is supposed to be a horror film! The plot is as follows. Deep in the Romanian forest, a team of scientists stumbles upon the ruins of a 13th century Abbey. On further inspection, they make a startling discovery – the Abbey is built over the entrance to a giant underground cave system. Local biologists believe the cave could be home to an undiscovered eco-system, so they hire a group of American cave-explorers to help them investigate its depths. Jack and his brother Tyler are thrill-seeking professional cave explorers who run a team of the top divers in the world. They arrive in Romania with all the latest equipment, including a new type of scuba tank allowing a diver to remain submerged for up to 24 hours. The crack unit, which also includes Charlie and Buchanan, immediately begins their exploration. But what they find deep inside the cave is not just a new eco-system, but an entirely new species altogether...and a VERY nasty one at that...

The film does feature lots of caving, cave diving, and great special effects, and while certainly not in 'Movie Classic' category, it is most definitely worth a look.

A GUIDE TO THE BATS OF THE LIMESTONE COAST. Terry Reardon and Steve Bourne. Friends of Naracoorte Caves, December 2005. Enquiries to Steve Bourne <Bourne.Steven@saugov.sa.gov.au>. **Reviewed by Steve Bourne.**



The Friends of Naracoorte Caves have produced a booklet on the bats of the region, titled *The Bats of the Limestone Coast*.

This was produced as part of a grant received through the Australian Government Envirofund for the restoration of important wintering habitat for the Southern Bentwing Bat – *Miniopterus bassanii*.

The booklet was written by Terry Reardon from the SA Museum and Steve Bourne from the Department for Environment and Heritage, Naracoorte Caves and illustrated with images taken by them.

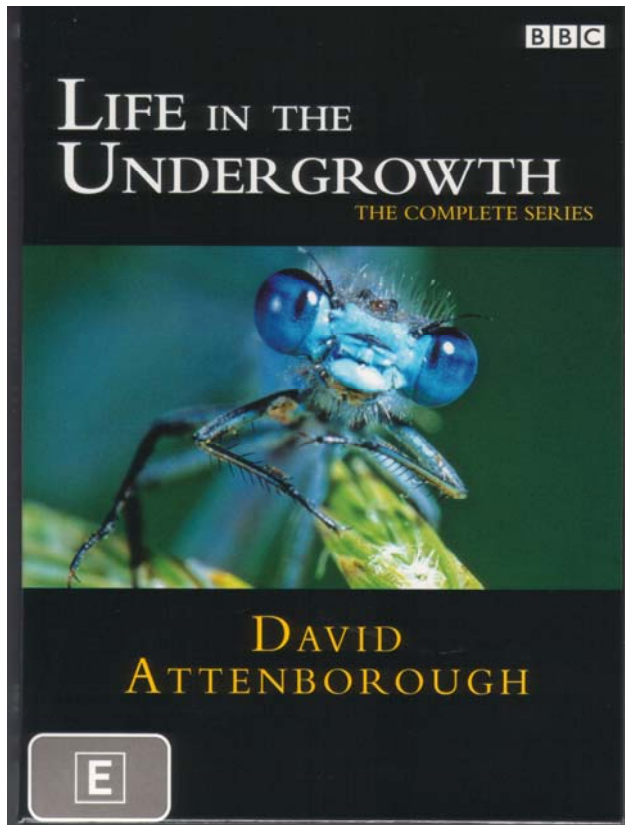
It contains descriptions and images as well as distribution maps for all sixteen species found in the region.

Other important information includes protecting bat habitat, what to do if you find an injured bat and where to go if you wish to observe bats.

It will be a valuable educational resource for school children and those interested in nature in general.

The booklet retails at \$Aus 5.00

LIFE IN THE UNDERGROWTH. DVD (2 DVD boxed set). Sir David Attenborough. Produced by the BBC 2006. Running time: 275 minutes, in total. Now available. Price: \$50.95 (inc GST), plus postage if applicable. Available in Australia from ABC shops & centres, or online: <<http://shop.abc.net.au/>>. **Reviewed by Kent Henderson.**



"These tiny creatures of the undergrowth were the first creatures of any kind to colonise land. They established the foundations of the land's ecosystem and were able to transcend the limitations of their small size by bonding together in huge communities of millions. If we, and the rest of the back-boned animals, were to disappear overnight, the rest of the world would get on pretty well.

"But if the invertebrates were to disappear the land's ecosystems would collapse. Wherever we go on land, these small creatures are within a few metres of our feet – often disregarded. We would do well to remember them." – Sir David Attenborough

Sir David Attenborough's new series, now paying on Australian and New Zealand TV, is outstanding, as one would expect. Life in the Undergrowth is a series he has wanted make for a long time, but it has only become technically possible in more recent years – utilizing new technology cameras which allow miniature photography and video without disturbance.

There are five episodes in the series, viz:

- 1) Invasion of the Land
- 2) Taking to the Air
- 3) The Silk Spinners
- 4) Intimate Relations
- 5) Supersocieties

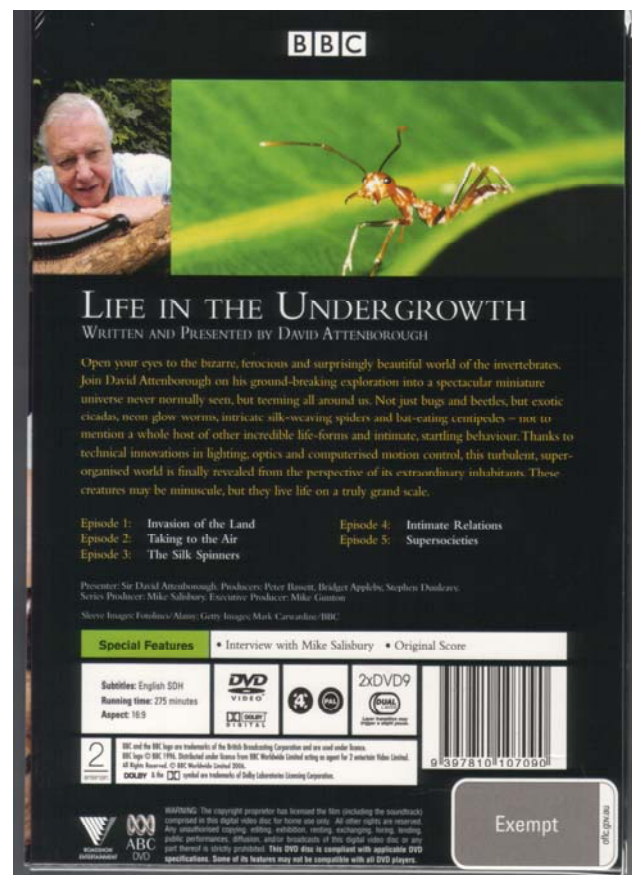
While it the whole series is, or should be, of direct relevance to everyone, it is the third episode "The Silk Spinners" which will be of particular interest to ACKMA members.

The first ten minutes deal with glowworms, and was filmed, under Dr. Claire Baker's technical advice, in Mangawhitikau Glowworm Cave at Waitomo.

The footage is superb, and the commentary outstanding. This is must viewing of the highest order! The balance of the episode largely deals with spiders at various locations around the world.

There is much wisdom in David Attenborough's statement above. Certainly, even cave manager, and ever caver, has a great responsibility in protecting the invertebrate life found in so many of our caves.

We know that, but "creepy crawlies" are hardly etched into the public conscience. Undoubtedly this series will greatly contribute to widening public awareness. Wonderful stuff! Watch it on TV! Get the DVD!



"For every pound of people on Earth, there are three hundred pounds of insects"

– Sir David Attenborough