

A full-page background image showing a scuba diver in a cave. The diver is positioned in the center, facing right, with a bright light illuminating the scene. The cave walls are dark and textured, and the water is clear. The title 'Underwater Speleology' is overlaid in a large, yellow, serif font at the top.

# Underwater Speleology

*Journal of the Cave Diving Section of the National Speleological Society*

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# Visit With A Cave



The cavern.

Wes Skiles Peacock Springs State Park, named in honor of the late Wes Skiles and area settler Dr. Peacock, is a popular cave diving site in North Florida. Shallow, with low flow, plenty of parking, picnic tables, tank racks and walkways to the water, it could hardly be easier to dive.

Peacock is perfect for any weekend, but with so much tunnel available, it can be hard for teams to decide where to go. One good choice is the Olsen, Nicholson and Cisteen lines, culminating in the Wishbone circuit or The Crypt. This affords tons of passage for teams of all levels to stay busy for a weekend.



Pile of bones.

The cavern is beautiful, but divers heading to The Crypt will quickly leave it behind. The vertical shaft on the right wall separates divers from daylight faster than The Peanut line to the left does. In under 500 feet, divers will pass Pothole Sink (no longer an exit), but don't get so caught up in the right-hand turn that you ignore the deer bones left on the ledge.

The Olsen Line features nice, big rooms with plenty to enjoy, from debris washed in during floods to fossils left eons before. The large tunnel is best lit by multiple teams passing each other on a weekend morning.



A winter chill has divers enjoying the sun while leaving stages in the basin.

The first marked jump after Pothole Sink is the Nicholson Line. This tunnel always seems highly populated by crayfish and amphipods which appear to rain down as divers pass.



# Peacock Springs

By: Michael Gibby



Exiting the crack at the cavern.

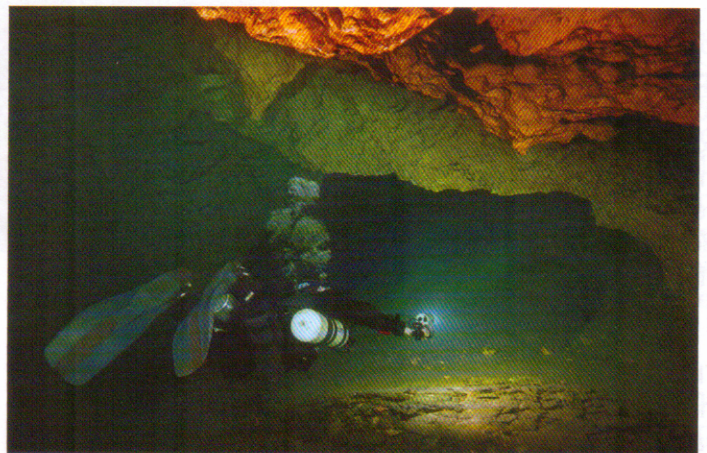
The Nicholson Line connects to the next marked jump off the mainline, the Cisteen Tunnel, forming a triangle. The Cisteen line has large passages and gently rolling hills. It's impossible to be bored with either tunnel.



The silty entrance to the Crypt.

Cisteen Sink hosts a possibly confusing intersection. It's best to add your own personal markers to the small collection there to make sure you exit the right way. I've never heard of someone saying they enjoyed surfacing in Cisteen Sink, which is probably best enjoyed topside from the walkway down to Orange Grove. (It's the duckweed-covered muckhole in the woods to the right.)

The Olsen, Nicholson and Cisteen lines make for several years of great diving on their own. There are two great places to visit off Cisteen: the Wishbone Circuit and The Crypt. The Wishbone Tunnel is on the left as you swim into the cave before Cisteen Sink. It is named for the triangle it forms with the Cisteen line. It has very white walls and often has large pockets of tannic water and an area of bacteria growth similar to the Insulation Rooms at Gin-nie.



Cisteen Tunnel hills and fossils.

The Crypt deserves caution and respect due to the inherent instabilities of the room. It's not a place to go testing your no-mount diving. The entrance is quite beautiful, if a little silty, as the passage shrinks and shrinks before suddenly opening into a huge room. While beautiful, The Crypt is also home to several small monuments to divers who are no longer with us, and warrants a pause for reflection.

Whatever you end up diving, it's hard to surface without a smile!