

Strømpdalsgrotta

Strømpdalsgrotta

The article describes the discovery, exploration and survey of Strømpdalsgrotta, the first 1000m + cave found in Norway in years. Strømpdalen, in Sørfold, is a very dense cave area with many smaller caves scattered around in the valley. It is believed that the cave found now is the main cave in this area, and it is by far the longest one, therefore it is given the same name as the valley.

The entrance was discovered in 2015 by Torstein Finnesand and Svein Grundstrøm when they removed some blocks and dug their way in. A rather short exploration in 2018 ended up at the top of a pitch just a few metres in. In 2019 this pitch was descended, and the main exploration and survey was conducted in eight days over two gatherings.

Told by Anders Westlund the article also brings life to the day by day progress. With his thorough descriptions you almost feel you are a part of the exploration. Everything from food poisoning to naming of cave passages is covered here.

Surveying method and equipment is also well described. In good tradition the seven cavers who have contributed to the map, are surveying while exploring. DistoX2 and PocketTopo are used for data collection in the cave, while Excel, Therion and Therion Assistent are used to process the data and to draw the final map.

The cave impresses with its large dimensions. Over a 200m distance within the cave the width is typically 9-10m, while the height is typically 15-20m. Many areas in the cave are covered with large boulders, some of them loose, as in The Hanging Stones Passage, so care must be taken. The biggest boulder in the cave measures over 1000 m³.

The cave is now 1264m long and 46m deep. Further exploration will continue coordinated by the leaders of this project.