

**The Caves of
Nong Bua Lam Phu,
Thailand**

Martin Ellis

The Caves of Thailand
Volume X: The Caves of Nong Bua Lam Phu
Draft November 2009

Published by
Takobi Ltd
Lom Sak
Phetchabun
Thailand
takobilt@yahoo.co.uk
<http://www.thailandcaves.shepton.org.uk>

Copyright © Martin Ellis, 2009

DRAFT

CONTENTS

CAVE DESCRIPTIONS	4
01. MUANG NONG BUA LAM PHU.....	4
02. NA KLANG.....	5
03. NON SANG.....	6
04. SI BUNG RUENG.....	8
05. SUWAN KHUHA.....	8
06. NA WANG.....	9
REFERENCES	11
INDEX	12

CAVE DESCRIPTIONS

The caves are grouped by amphoe (administrative district) and then listed alphabetically. The code letters were created by John Dunkley in 'Caves of Thailand' and have been continued in the Thai caves database maintained by the author.

All grid references are UTM grid on the Indian 1954 (Thailand-Vietnam) datum.

Abbreviations, acronyms and symbols used:

∩ = cave visited by the author

† = topographic name from map or gazetteer – it is possible that there isn't a cave at these locations.

Alt.: - altitude

SMCC – Shepton Mallet Caving Club, UK

01. Muang Nong Bua Lam Phu

Ban Na Tham∩ NB0011
48Q 207300 1885150

The co-ordinates in the reference place the village 8km north-north-west of Si Buan Ruang and 5km south-east of Yang Lo.
Dunkley (1995)

Huai Tham Du† NB0010
48Q 225448 1916276

This stream is 13km east of Nong Bua Lam Phu.
Dunkley (1995)

Tham Ang Burapha Sila At† NB0016
48Q 236757 1910994
Wat Tham Ang Burapha Sila At, Ban Ang Burapha

The wat is 3km north of the H210.

Tham Duuk∩ NB0002
Wat Tham Duuk, Ban Nong Aw Tai

Wat Tham Duuk is a famous meditation wat near Ban Nong Aw Tai. It is about 40 km from Udon Thani town along the H210 towards Nong Bua Lam Phu.
There are no details of the cave, assuming there is a cave in the wat.
Dunkley (1997)

Tham Klong Phen NB0001

ถ้ำกลองเพล

48Q 241600 1906900

Wat Tham Klong Phen, Khao Phu Phan

Other names: Tham Klaung Phen; Tham Klong Pear; Midday Drum Cave

This is a famous temple cave at the foot of Phu Phan mountains 13km from Nong Bua Lam Phu town on the H210 towards Udon Thani town then 2km along a road on the right (an Internet map of the province shows the cave to be on the left (north) of the H210).

The area was once the site of an ancient Khmer temple, but was then deserted until 1958 when the renowned meditation master Phra Ajan Luang Pu Khao Analyo turned it into a meditation centre until his death in 1983 (or 1989 depending on website). The cave is on two levels. The main chamber has a large statue of the Buddha in the position of dispelling evil, known as the Phra Buddha Banthon Nimitr, along with many smaller Buddhas and a two-faced ancient drum which gives the wat its name.

The 87 year old Ajan Khaw had a Royal visit at the cave.

Dunkley (1995); Tiyanich (1997)

Tham Namthip† NB0018

48Q 232449 1908101

Wat Tham Namthip Priest's Campsite, Nong Bua Lam Phu

The campsite is 1.5km north of the H210 and 4km east of Nong Bua Lam Phu town.

Tham Phra Phu Kao† NB0036

48Q 226202 1878464

Wat Pha Tham Phra Phu Kao, Ban Lat

02. Na Klang

Tham Kheng† NB0030

48Q 195760 1910686

Khao Pha Tham Kheng

Fontaine, et al. (2005)

Tham Pho Cho† NB0029

48Q 193912 1915637

Khao Tham Pha Chao, Ban Thep Khiri

The hill is just south of the H210, 1km west of Ban Thep Khiri.

Fontaine, et al. (2005)

Tham Pha Wiang NB0021

ถ้ำผาเวียง

Phu Pha Wiang

The cave is home to a large number of bats.

Boonkerd & Wanghongsa (2001)

03. *Non Sang*

Tham Ajaan Sim NB0027
Phu Khao – Phu Phan Kham National Park

About 65km north of Khon Kaen, probably a rockshelter, may not be limestone, contains prehistoric paintings.
Dunkley (1995)

Tham Bong Phak NB0031
Phu Khao – Phu Phan Kham National Park

A cave art site.
National Park Office (2006)

Tham Chan Dai NB0025
Phu Khao – Phu Phan Kham National Park
Other name: Tham Jan Dai

About 65km north of Khon Kaen, probably a rockshelter, may not be limestone, contains prehistoric paintings.
Dunkley (1995); National Park Office (2006)

Tham E-Rued NB0032
Phu Khao – Phu Phan Kham National Park

A cave art site.
National Park Office (2006)

Tham Fa Mue NB0026
Phu Khao – Phu Phan Kham National Park

Precise location uncertain, a rockshelter with free-drawn human hand forms, a display of which can be seen in the National Museum, Bangkok.
Carole (2006); Dunkley (1995)

Tham Hamtang† NB0035
48Q 231329 1874300
Wat Pha Tham Hamtang, Ban Wong Mon

Tham Jek Lae Samta NB0024
Phu Khao – Phu Phan Kham National Park

About 65km north of Khon Kaen, probably a rockshelter, may not be limestone, contains prehistoric paintings.
Dunkley (1995); National Park Office (2006)

Tham Loh Tong NB0023
Phu Khao - Phu Phan Kham National Park

About 65km north of Khon Kaen, probably a rockshelter, may not be limestone, contains prehistoric paintings.
Dunkley (1995)

Tham Mim NB0006
Ban Kut Bak, Phu Khao-Phu Pham Khan National Park
Other name: Tham Muem

The cave is found in the Phu Khao area of the park and officially a park guide is required. From the Ban Nong Sang to Nong Bua Lam Phu road (H2146) a laterite road to Ban Kut Bak heads eastwards. The cave is along this road and has prehistoric drawings.
It is probably a rockshelter in sandstone.
Dunkley (1995); National Park Office (2006)

Tham Phalan Hai NB0007
Phu Khao - Phu Khan National Park
Other names: Tham Phan Hai; Tham Pha Hai

Tham Pha Hai is also in the Phu Khao National Park and is located near the Lan Hin Waterfall. It has prehistoric paintings and is probably a rockshelter in sandstone.
Dunkley (1995); National Park Office (2006)

Tham Rakha Khanit NB0020
Phu Khao - Phu Phan Kham National Park

Prehistoric drawings. Probably a sandstone rock shelter.
National Park Office (2006)

Tham Sam Ta NB0022
Phu Khao - Phu Phan Kham National Park

A cave art site.
National Park Office (2006)

Tham Sua Tok NB0019
Phu Khao - Phu Phan Kham National Park
Other name: Tham Sua

About 65km north of Khon Kaen, probably a rockshelter, may not be limestone, contains prehistoric paintings.
Dunkley (1995); National Park Office (2006)

04. *Si Bung Rueng*

Tham Thep Nimit† NB0015
48Q 189031 1898701

Fontaine, et al. (2005)

05. *Suwan Khuha*

Phu Pha Ya Archaeological Site NB0009

แหล่งโบราณคดีภูผายา

Ban Na Charoen, Dong Mafai

Dunkley describes Tham Suwan Khuha as being the location for some ancient paintings, but they are more likely to be at this site. It is north of Ban Na Charoen in Tambon Dong Mafai. A naga staircase leads up to the shelter which contains two areas of heavily weathered ancient paintings. The drawings are in red paint and depict geometric figures, animals, palm prints and humans and they have been dated to some 2,000 – 3,000 years ago.

Dunkley (1995)

Tham Pha Khong† NB0017
48Q 201399 1949000
Tham Pha Khong Priest's Campsite, Ban Pha Son

The campsite is 2km north of Ban Pha Son.
Fontaine, et al. (2005)

Tham Phra Nimit† NB0037
48Q 212104 1947573
Wat Tham Phra Nimit, Ban Non Sombun

Tham Phudu† NB0033
48Q 211258 1933506
Tham Phudu Priest's Campsite, Ban Khai Sawang

Tham Phu Pha Daeng NB0028
48Q 211152 1930891
Phu Pha Daeng, Ban Wichit Patthana

The hill, with a wat and cave, is 1km north of Ban Wichit Patthana.
Fontaine, et al. (2005)

Tham Sathit† NB0034
48Q 200116 1950926
Tham Sathit Priest's Campsite, Ban Pha Son

Tham Suwan Khuha NB0008
 ถ้ำสุวรรณคูหา
 48Q 211978 1948682
 Wat Tham Suwan Khuha, Ban Khuha Pattana, Ban Na Dee

This cave is in Wat Tham Suwan khuha, Ban Khuha Pattana, Tambon Na Dee which is 5 km from the Suwan Khuha amphoe office. From Nong Bua Lam Phu town take the H210 towards Wang Saphung and then turn right onto the H2097 and continue to amphoe Suwan Khuha. From here take the Chaiya Chettha road to Dong Yang Na Tha Laew School (about 1 km) and then turn right and continue for about 4 km.

The cave houses artefacts and a plaster image of the Buddha in the meditation stance. This main Buddha image was built by Phra Chao Chaiya Chettha Thiraj of Vientiane in 1572, or 1555 depending on which Internet site you believe. A photograph on the internet shows the cave to be at the base of a cliff on a limestone tower.
 Dunkley (1995); Fontaine, et al. (2005)

Tham Thep Nimit† NB0014
 48Q 211280 1951697
 Wat Tham Thep Nimit

06. Na Wang

Cave NB0005 NB0005
 Ban Na Klang

The 15m high entrance to this cave is visible from the H210 3km east of Ban Na Klang at the 40km post east of Wang Saphung.

The cave has not been explored.
 Dunkley (1995)

Tham Chang In Plaeng† NB0012
 48Q 183864 1919208
 Ban Tham Chang In Plaeng

Tham Pha Wang† NB0013
 48Q 183680 1817368
 Wat Tham Pha Wang, Ban Pha Wang

The cave is to the north of the H210 just to the west of the village of Ban Pha Wang and the turning to Tham Erawan.

Tham Mi NB0004
 Ban Erawan

Near Tham Erawan and Tham Wang Thong, but no further information.
 The cave is small.
 Dunkley (1995)

Tham Wang Thong∩ NB0003
48Q 184556 1918074 Alt.: 333m
Wat Tham Wang Thong, Ban Pha Wang
Length: 30m

In Ban Pha Wang take the turning north off the H210 towards Tham Erawan (signed). The small wat is at the base of the first tower, beside the road on the left hand side. The cave is a single chamber, lit by skylights, filled with Buddha statues. Of more interest was the large male monkey living there, a pet of the monk, which was very defensive, but apparently only bites children. The cave was visited by the SMCC in June 2009. Dunkley (1995)

DRAFT

REFERENCES

- BOONKERD, KALYANEE; WANGHONGSA, SAWAI (2001) "Management of Bat Caves" Wildlife Research Division, Royal Forest Department, Bangkok Wildlife Yearbook Vol. 3 pp33-45
- CAROLE (2006) "Cave Paintings In Thailand" Hua Hin Today Vol. 5 Issue 5
<http://www.huahintoday.net/index.php?action=show&type=news&id=808>
- DUNKLEY, JOHN ROBERT (1995) "The Caves of Thailand" Speleological Research Council, Sydney ISBN 0-9589253-9-9 124pp
- DUNKLEY, JOHN ROBERT (1997) "The Caves of Thailand - Addendum 1995-97" Speleological Research Council, Sydney 12pp
- FONTAINE, HENRI; SALYAPONSE, SIROT; SUTEETHORN, VARAVUDH; TIAN, PANNIPA; VACHARD, DANIEL (2005) "Sedimentary Rocks of the Loei Region, Northeast Thailand: Stratigraphy, Palaeontology, Sedimentology" Bureau of Geological Survey, Department of Mineral Resources, Bangkok. 165pp
- NATIONAL PARK OFFICE (2006) "National Parks in Thailand" National Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department, Bangkok 280pp
- TIYAVANICH, KAMALA (1997) "Forest Recollections. Wandering Monks in Twentieth-Century Thailand" University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu ISBN 0-8248-1781-8 410pp

INDEX

Ban Na Tham	4	Tham Namthip	5
Cave NB0005	9	Tham Pha Khong	8
Huai Tham Duk	4	Tham Pha Wang	9
Phu Pha Ya Archaeological Site	8	Tham Pha Wiang	5
Tham Ajaan Sim	6	Tham Phalan Hai	7
Tham Ang Burapha Sila At	4	Tham Pho Cho	5
Tham Bong Phak	6	Tham Phra Phu Kao	5
Tham Chan Dai	6	Tham Phu Pha Daeng	8
Tham Chang In Plaeng	9	Tham Phudu	8
Tham Duuk	4	Tham Rakha Khanit	7
Tham E-Rued	6	Tham Sam Ta	7
Tham Fa Mue	6	Tham Sathit	8
Tham Hamtang	6	Tham Sua Tok	7
Tham Jek Lae Samta	6	Tham Suwan Khuha	9
Tham Kheng	5	Tham Thep Nimit	8, 9
Tham Klong Phen	5	Tham Wang Thong	10
Tham Loh Tong	7	แหล่งโบราณคดีภูเขา	8
Tham Mi	9	ถ้ำกลองเพล	5
Tham Mim	7	ถ้ำผาเวียง	5
		ถ้ำสุวรรณคูหา	9