The Caves of Satun

Martin Ellis
March 2011

00. Unknown Amphoe

Secret Cave SA0061
Length: 1,000 m

The location of the cave is kept secret by John Grey Sea Canoe for the use by their kayaking tours. It is near the Satun mainland, but not on Ko Taratao. It is a tidal cave, formed along a fault, that gives access to several hongs. The commercial literature describes it as being "Thailand's biggest tidal sea cave and the most beautiful we know in SE Asia."

Tham Kem SA0062
Khao Daeng

The only information on this cave is that the bat Rhinolophus pearsoni Horsfield, 1851 has been recorded there.

Tham Ko To Kieng SA0015
Ko To Kieng

Birds'-nests are harvested in the cave.
Dunkley (1995)

Tham La Hoi SA0040

The cave is signed off the road to Thale Ban National Park from Satun. After about 600 m the track reaches a picnic table at the foot of a limestone cliff and the cave is 30 m away at the base of the cliff. The entrance is a 5 m high by 1 m wide rift with many squeeky bats. Bamboo poles lead up to a higher entrance which has not been explored. The cave was visited by the SMCC in November 2007.

01. Amphoe Muang Satun

Ko Adang Caves SA0024
47N 533524 0722082
Ko Adang, Tarutao Marine National Park

Ko Adang is mentioned in Gray, Piprell & Graham with a comment that there are an abundance of cave systems, many of which have never been explored.
Dunkley (1995); Gray, Piprell & Graham (1994)

Ko Rawi Caves SA0025
47N 535954 0725394
Ko Rawi, Tarutao Marine National Park
Ko Rawi is mentioned in Gray, Piprell & Graham with a comment that there are an abundance of cave systems, many of which have never been explored.
Dunkley (1995); Gray, Piprell & Graham (1994)

**Tham Chorakhe** SA0012
47N 572358 0740224 Alt.: 65 m
Ko Tarutao, Tarutao Marine National Park
Length: 1,000 m
Other names: Tham Jareki

A well decorated stream cave resurging in mangroves several kilometres from the boat landing on Ko Tarutao, accessible by boat only at low tide.
The entrance is a resurgence and the show cave has floating walkways through a large horizontal tunnel. However, deep mud stopped access to the rest of the cave. In 1993 floods had destroyed the walkways after 200m.
The bat *Hipposideros cineraceus* Blyth, 1853 has been recorded in the cave.
The only recorded visit to the cave by speleologists was Liz Price’s visit.

**Tham Dong** SA0021
47N 573143 0738672
Ko Tarutao, Tarutao Marine National Park

Tham Dong is near the north end of Ko Tarutao, to the east of the national park headquarters.
Dunkley (1995)

**Tham Ka Yang** SA0035
47N 626465 0722478

The cave is marked on a map, but no further information is known.

**Tham Khang Khao** SA0010
Thale Ban National Park
Other names: Tham Kaeng Khao

On an inlet of the sea opposite Tham Lot Pu Yu, 20 km south-east of Satun and accessible only by boat.

**Tham Khao Chin** SA0043
Wat Tham Khao Chin, Khlong Kut

The cave is signed to the east of the main road just north of Satun town.
Khao Chin is an isolated hill with a large shrine and wat. Two rockshelters have shrines. Metal steps lead up the cliff, but were not explored.
The site was recorded by the SMCC in November 2007.

**Tham Ko Rang Nok** SA0016
Ko Rang Nok, Tarutao Marine National Park

A cave on an island off the south-west tip of Ko Tarutao.
The cave was formerly used for birds’-nest collection, but is now protected in the national park. Dunkley (1995)

**Tham Lot Pu Yu**  
SA0009  
47N 624500 0720900  
Khao Kayang, Thale Ban National Park  
Other names: Tham Lot Poo Yoo; Tham Poo You

A long-tailed boat can be hired from Tammalung Pier, about 9 km to the south of Satun, for trips to Tham Lot Pu Yu which is in the south of the park. After crossing an estuary the boat enters a maze of meandering channels through mangrove forest as it approaches precipitous limestone cliffs that plunge into the sea. The cave is in tambon Pu Yu.  
It is a short cave and the boat goes right through the limestone island, emerging into an equally attractive stretch of mangrove forest on the other side.  
Dunkley (1995); Elliott & Cubitt (2001); National Park Office (2006)

**Tham Nak That**  
SA0031  
Ko Tarutao, Tarutao Marine National Park

Tham Nak That is associated with a waterfall behind the beach at Tala Wao Bay, on the south-east coast of Ko Tarutao.  
Dunkley (1995); Parkes (1992)

**Tham Phaya Bangsa**  
SA0036  
47N 615729 0748796  
Ban Mai, Khuan Po

This decorated cave is in moo 3 Khuan Po.

**Tham Tarun**  
SA0022  
Ko Tarutao, Tarutao Marine National Park  
Other names: Tham Tatun

The cave is south of the national park headquarters on Ko Tarutao.  

**Tham To Ya Wang**  
SA0013  
Ko Tarutao, Tarutao Marine National Park

The cave is in overhanging cliffs on Ko Tarutao.  
Dunkley (1995)

**02. Amphoe Khuan Don**

**Bat Guano Cave**  
SA0018  
Ban Wang Prachan, Thale Ban National Park  
Length: 100 m  
VR: 27 m

The cave is in the Thale Ban National Park.  
The main entrance opens to a rising passage past a second entrance to some short climbs, a small chamber and several small passages which open to further entrances 7 m and 27 m above the entrance level.
The cave was explored and surveyed by the New Zealand Speleological Society expedition in 1989.
Dunkley (1995)

**Cave SA0017**
Ban Wang Prachan, Thale Ban National Park
Length 120 m

The cave is behind the Ban Wang Prachan ranger station in the Thale Ban National Park. There are two entrances which join up in a moderate sized chamber beyond which two passages eventually become too tight.
The cave was explored and surveyed by the New Zealand Speleological Society expedition in 1989.
Dunkley (1995)

**Resurgence SA0006**
Thale Ban National Park

Opposite Thale Ban National Park headquarters near the H4184 and just before the Malaysia border. It is not known if a cave is accessible.
Dunkley (1995)

**Tham Don Din**
47N 682300 742950
Thale Ban National Park
Length: 422 m
Other names: Tham Ton Din

The cave entrance is marked with toilets and sign board about 2 km before you reach the turning to the Thale Ban National Park headquarters. A few steps lead up to the entrance. The entrance is 1 m high by 1 m wide with a muddy descent. After 30 m a ladder descends to the stream passage, which is mostly 5-6 m wide and high which can then be followed to a pool at the end which was not pushed. Many types of fresh water fish and mining equipment left over from the World War 2 can also be found.
The following bats have been recorded in the cave:-
*Rhinolophus coelophylus*
*Hipposideros bicolour*
Abdullah, et al. (2007); Dunkley (1995); Elliott & Cubitt (2001); Miller (1990); National Park Office (2006); Price (2002)

**Tham Kang Kouy**
Ban Wang Prachan, Thale Ban National Park
Length: 60 m

Tham Kang Kouy in the Thale Ban National Park. The cave has a 20 m wide entrance which leads to a short passage.
The cave was explored and surveyed by the New Zealand Speleological Society expedition in 1989.
Dunkley (1995)

**Tham Khon Tan**
Thale Ban National Park
Other names: Tham Kon Tan
Tham Khon Tan is in the west of part of the Thale Ban National Park. It is accessed 5 km along a track heading east from the H406, then an 8 to 10 km walk through forest. There is no information on the cave.

**Tham Krun Krang**
Thale Ban National Park

This is a stream cave.
Price (2002)

**Tham Nam**
Thale Ban National Park
Other names: Broken Leg Cave

This is a stream cave.
Price (2002)

**Tham Pha Diu**
Thale Ban National Park
Other names: Tham Pha Deo; Tham Pha Diao

The cave is 5 km north of Thaleban National Park headquarters, then 3 km along a track to the west. It is reported to be a large cave.

**03. Amphoe Khuan Kalong**

**Tham Thalu†**
SA0034
47N 615265 0756117
Ban Tham Thalu, Khao Tham Thalu

**Khao Wang Caves**
SA0060
47N 613232 0766971
Khao Wang, Ban Khao Khrai

The hill is to the west of Ban Khao Khrai. The caves of this mountain range are shown in Thai on an old piece of wood. There are numerous caves at the foot of the cliff, very often ending in a few tens of metres at an old fill or massive formations. One chamber had a species of bat of about 50 cm big and a gallery floored with dry gours. Several big entrances high up and probably a deep resurgence at the base of the massif, but difficult to access (vegetation of bamboo and other things made progress painful). These caves were visited by Thierry Tournier in 2010.

**04. Amphoe Tha Phae**

No caves have been recorded in this amphoe.

**05. Amphoe La-nga**

**Ko Bu Lon Yai Bat Cave**
SA0027
47N 559079 0754852
Ko Bu Lon Yai
Other names: Ho Bulon Lae Cave

A cave containing bats located on the south coast of Ko Bu Lon Yai. It is accessible by boat from Pak Bara.
Dunkley (1995); Parkes (1992)

Ko Lidi Caves  SA0026
47N 585350 0750200
Ko Lidi, Mu Ko Phetra National Park
Other names: Ko Lindi Caves

The 10 sq km island is in the Mu Ko Phetra National Park, 7 km from Pak Bara pier. The island has several swift nesting caves.

Tham Jet Lot  SA0002
47N 603413 0785936  Alt.: 15 m
Wang Sai Thong Waterfall, Khao Banthat Wildlife Sanctuary
Length: 719 m
Other names: Tham Chet Kot; Tham Satta Khuha

Located in moo 10 Ban Wang Na Nai at the southern end of the Khao Banthat Wildlife Sanctuary. The resurgence is in amphoe La Ngu and the sink in amphoe Manang. Turn off the main Satun - Trang highway at Saphan Wa and follow the signs (in Thai) for 20 km to a ranger station at Wang Sai Thong Waterfall. Continue along a dirt track for a further 4 km. Turn right and the resurgence is at the base of the cliff on the opposite side of the river. Signposts on roads in the area also point the way to the sink entrance.
Tham Jet Khot is a massive river tunnel taking the Khlong Lam Non through a ridge. The passage averages 15 m wide and 30 m high and sweeps gently around broad bends. There are two skylight entrances way up in the roof near to the resurgence. Most of the cave is easy walking for 650 m on large sandbanks with short paddles across the river. At the sink entrance a large deep pool is encountered requiring a wade and a short swim.
Drainage entering the cave comes from a vast catchment area covering approximately 112 sq km. Flow rate in the cave was measured at 1 cumec in March 2002. During the rainy season the cave suffers from massive flooding that obliterates any sign of human disturbance.
The following bats have been recorded in the cave:-
Rhinolophus malayanus Bonhote, 1903
Eonycteris spelaea (Dobson, 1871)
The cave was surveyed by a NZSS expedition in 1989.
Anon. (1983); Dunkley (1995); Gray (2001); Hutacharem (ed.) (2004); Prize (2001); Smart & Cunningham (2002); Soisook (2008); Soisook, et al. (2008)

Tham Ko Kai  SA0028
47N 555897 0751574
Ko Kai
Other names: Tham Khao Khai

On the tiny island of Ko Kai which is to the west of Ko Bu Lon Yai.
Dunkley (1995); Parkes (1992)
Tham Urai  SA0064
Khamphaeng
Other names: Tham Luk Sao

The cave is in moo 8 Kamphaeng.

Tham Wang Kram  SA0044
Khao Khao

This bat cave is in a park.

06. Amphoe Thung Wa

Ban Wang Tong Caves  SA0063
Ban Wang Tong

At base of limestone hills east of Ban Wang Tong and the H416. These are a series of archaeological caves.

Tham Khantipon  SA0032
47N 588518 0782975  Alt.: 110 m
Wat Tham Khao Nidt Pul, Khao Ya Ra
Length: 150 m
Other names: Tham Kan Dpum; Tham Kawupan; Tham Khao Nidt Pul

The small gravel track to the monastery is marked with a large sign and leads off the Trang - Satun road about 10 km north of Thung Wa.
There are two shrine caves plus a couple of other entrance which are all linked by small mud floored passages.
The cave was visited by the SMCC in 2006 and February 2010.

Tham Khao Ta Nan  SA0004
Other names: Tham Khao Tanam

The cave is signed to the west of the Trang - Satun road about 6 km to the south of Thung Wa.
Anon. (1983); Dunkley (1995)

Tham Put Toe  SA0033
47N 590083 0784918  Alt.: 40 m

This cave was recorded by the WCC in November 2005.

Tham Thung Wa  SA0011
Khao Tham, Khao Tanam

This is possibly the same cave as Tham Khao Tanam (SA0004).

07. Amphoe Manang

Cave SA0042  SA0042
The road to Tham Rakhang Thong passes a spirit house on a sharp corner with a cave entrance behind. The entrance is 2 m high by 2 m, but the cave was not explored. The site was recorded by the SMCC in November 2007.

**Tham Bandai Sawan**

SA0048

Tham Rakhang Thong Priest's Campsite

Length: 30 m

In the Wat Tham Pakhang Thong massif. The massif is 2 km along a side road to the north of the road to Tham Phu Pha Phet.

This is a short cave reached by concrete steps.

Tounier (2009)

**Tham Da Bot**

SA0046

Tham Rakhang Thong Priest's Campsite

In the Wat Tham Pakhang Thong massif. The massif is 2 km along a side road to the north of the road to Tham Phu Pha Phet.

Tounier (2009)

**Tham Ghoy**

SA0041

The cave is sign posted to the north of the road to Tham Phu Pha Phet, after the turning to Tham Rakhang Thong.

**Tham Houai Sombat**

SA0057

Tham Rakhang Thong Priest's Campsite

In the Wat Tham Pakhang Thong massif. The massif is 2 km along a side road to the north of the road to Tham Phu Pha Phet.

Tounier (2009)

**Tham Khang Khao**

SA0058

Tham Rakhang Thong Priest's Campsite

In the Wat Tham Pakhang Thong massif. The massif is 2 km along a side road to the north of the road to Tham Phu Pha Phet.

Tounier (2009)

**Tham Lap Leh**

SA0056

Tham Rakhang Thong Priest's Campsite

In the Wat Tham Pakhang Thong massif. The massif is 2 km along a side road to the north of the road to Tham Phu Pha Phet.

Tounier (2009)

**Tham Loa**

SA0054

Tham Rakhang Thong Priest's Campsite

In the Wat Tham Pakhang Thong massif. The massif is 2 km along a side road to the north of the road to Tham Phu Pha Phet.
Tounier (2009)

**Tham Lot**  
*SA0003*  
Khao Banthat Wildlife Sanctuary  
Length: 150 m

Upstream of Tham Jet Khot the Khlong Lam Lon reportedly flows through another cave. Tham Lot is said to be quite short, in the order of 100 to 200 m in length. The cave was explored by the 1989 NZSS expedition.  
Anon. (1983); Dunkley (1995); Smart & Cunningham (2002)

**Tham Man Thip**  
SA0049  
Tham Rakhang Thong Priest's Campsite

In the Wat Tham Pakhang Thong massif. The massif is 2 km along a side road to the north of the road to Tham Phu Pha Phet.  
Tounier (2009)

**Tham Phet Chang Ha Sian**  
SA0055  
Tham Rakhang Thong Priest's Campsite

In the Wat Tham Pakhang Thong massif. The massif is 2 km along a side road to the north of the road to Tham Phu Pha Phet.  
Tounier (2009)

**Tham Phraya Phet**  
SA0052  
Tham Rakhang Thong Priest's Campsite

In the Wat Tham Pakhang Thong massif. The massif is 2 km along a side road to the north of the road to Tham Phu Pha Phet.  
Tounier (2009)

**Tham Phuttana Plok**  
SA0051  
Tham Rakhang Thong Priest's Campsite

In the Wat Tham Pakhang Thong massif. The massif is 2 km along a side road to the north of the road to Tham Phu Pha Phet.  
Tounier (2009)

**Tham Rakhang Thong**  
SA0037  
47N 601481 0783304  
Tham Rakhang Thong Priest's Campsite  
Length: 20 m

The campsite is 2 km along a side road to the north of the road to Tham Phu Pha Phet. This is a series of small caves at the foot of a cliff in a monastery. One large undercut has been turn into the main shrine and monk's dwelling. The cave next to it is 20 m long and ends in a mud fill. The cave was first visited by the 2001 ACG expedition.  
Price (2001); Tournier (2009)

**Tham Sa Phayanak**  
SA0050  
Tham Rakhang Thong Priest's Campsite
In the Wat Tham Pakhang Thong massif. The massif is 2 km along a side road to the north of the road to Tham Phu Pha Phet.
Tounier (2009)

**Tham Sila Khalai**  
SA0059  
Tham Rakhang Thong Priest’s Campsite

In the Wat Tham Pakhang Thong massif. The massif is 2 km along a side road to the north of the road to Tham Phu Pha Phet.
Tounier (2009)

**Tham Ta Pa Kao**  
SA0053  
Tham Rakhang Thong Priest’s Campsite

In the Wat Tham Pakhang Thong massif. The massif is 2 km along a side road to the north of the road to Tham Phu Pha Phet.
Tounier (2009)

**Tham Touat**  
SA0047  
Tham Rakhang Thong Priest’s Campsite

In the Wat Tham Pakhang Thong massif. The massif is 2 km along a side road to the north of the road to Tham Phu Pha Phet.
Tounier (2009)

**Tham Wang Sai Thong**  
SA0045  
Wang Sai Thong Waterfall, Khao Banthat Wildlife Sanctuary  
Length: 10 m

This resurgence cave is at the kayaking pick up point downstream of Tham Jet Khot. There is a 15 m high bank of travertine dams beside the river with a resurgence at the top. The entrance is 2 m x 2 m, but on a visit in November couldn't progress more than 10 m against the current.
The cave was visited by the WCC in November 2005.
References

Abdullah, M.T.; Jusanit, Puttipong; Di, Prakwat Wo Han; Ariffin, Mohammed Zabani; Hall, L.S. (2007) "Observations on Bats In Three National Parks In Thailand" Tigerpaper

Anon. (n.d.) Wide Woods and Deep Sea No. 10

AnonNON. (1983) Tourist magazine No. 2 May 1983

Douangboubpha, Boungsavane; Bumringsri, Sara; Soisook, Pipat; Murray, Susan W. Puechmaille, Sébastien J.; Satasook, Chutamas; Bu, Si Si Hla; Harrison, David L.; Bates, Paul J. J. (2010) "A Taxonomic Review of Hipposideros halophyllus, with Additional Information on H. ater and H. cinceraceus (Chiroptera: Hipposideridae) from Thailand and Myanmar" Acta Chiropterologica Vol. 12 No. 1 pp29-50


National Park Office (2006) "National Parks in Thailand" National Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department, Bangkok 280pp


Samrt, Dean; Cunningham, Robert (2002) 'Caves of Southern Thailand' Royal Forestry Department, Bangkok Unpublished report 33pp


Soisook, Pipat; Bumrungsri, Sara; Satasook, Chutamas; Thong, Vu Dinh; Bu, Si Si Hla; Harrison, David L.; Bates, Paul J.J. (2008) "A taxonomic review of Rhinolophus stheno and R. malayanus (Chiroptera: Rhinolophidae) from continental Southeast Asia: an evaluation of echolocation call frequency in discriminating between cryptic species" Acta Chiropterologica Vol. 10 No. 2 pp221-242