

The Caves of Sukhothai, Thailand

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03. Khiri Mat

Tham Chorakhe† SI0003
47Q 572047 1872132
Ban Tham Chorakhe

The village is 1km south of the H1332 heading towards Wat Tham Phra Mae Ya. The Khao Luang mountain is about a kilometre south of the village.
Dunkley (1995)

Tham Thong Pha Ngap† SI0020
47Q 568397 1854478
Tham Thong Pha Ngap Priest's Campsite

The campsite is between Ban Nam Phu and Ban Khao Thong Pha Ngap, a few hundred metres west of the H3019.

Ramkamhaeng National Park

Ramkamheang National park covers an area of 341 sq km.

Tham Maherok† SI0002
Khao Luang, Ramkamhaeng National Park

Near Khao Luang in Ramkamhaeng National Park, marked on a map in Dobias.
Dobias (1982); Dunkley (1995)

Tham Phrabat SI0017
Khao Tham Phrabat, Ramkamhaeng National Park

The hill has a 600 year old Buddha footprint.

Tham Narai SI0018
Ramkamhaeng National Park

The cave used to house a statue of Phra Bodhisattva Awalokitesuan, but only the base is now left.

Tham Phra Mae Ya SI0019
ถ้ำพระแม่ย่า
47Q 569640 1873821
Wat Tham Phra Mae Ya, Ban Wong Bo, Ramkhamheang Nation Park

A minor road, the H1332, leaves the H1271 westward from between Khiri Mat and Sukhotai Historical Park. The extensive wat is at the end of the H1332, past Ban Wong Bo. The cave used to house a statue of Phra Mae Ya which is now in the Phra Moe Ya shrine in the town hall compound.
Mekloy (2007)

04. Kong Krailat

Tham Mai Klai† SI0023
47Q 604918 1866770
Ban Tham Mai Klai

The village is 5km east of the H1055.

05. Si Satchanalai

Tham Tao† SI0004
47Q 570747 1942369
Doi Tham Tao

This hill is marked on the 1:250,000 map 10km west-north-west of Si Satchanalai, around 6km south-west of the junction of the H1177 with the H101.
Dunkley (1995)

Si Satchanalai National Park

Si Satchanalai National Park covers an area of 213 sq km.

Tham Thara Wasan SI0005
ถ้ำธาราวสันต์
Si Satchanalai National Park

The cave is located about 1.5km from the park office.
The cave has hundreds of thousands of bats. Mekloy described it as "an amazing maze of caves and tunnels".
Dunkley (1995); Mekloy (2007)

Tham Khang Khao SI0006
Si Satchanalai National Park

The cave is located about 20km from the park office.
Tham Khang Khao is also home to hundreds of thousands of bats.
Dunkley (1995)

Tham Ta Rao San SI0007
Si Satchanalai National Park

Up a hill 1.5 km west of Si Satchanalai National Park headquarters.
Anon. (1983); Dunkley (1995)

06. Si Samrong

Tham Rakhang† SI0016

ถ้ำระฆัง

47Q 559926 1897592

Wat Tham Rakhang

4km east of Ban Huai Khrai or 2.5km west of Ban Wang Ta Mon, which is on the H1327. The wat is at the southern end of the hill with the Tham Thorani Siriram priest's campsite.

Satellite images show what may be a resurgence near the wat.

Tham Thorani Siriram† SI0021

47Q 560088 1899985

Tham Thorani Siriram Priest's Campsite

The campsite is 1km south of the H1327.

Tham Pha Weluwan† SI0022

Wat Tham Pha Weluwan

This wat is on the opposite side of the side to the Tham Lom-Tham Wang Forest Park, about 1km to the east-south-east.

Tham Lom - Tham Wang Forest Park

The forest park is about 2km east of the H1327 from Ban Sok Puai. It is a part of the Mae Mok-Mae Phan Lam national preservation forest and covers an area of about 12.8 sq km. Several decorated caves are reported from the park. Ancient tools and arms found here indicate that the park was used by troops during the early Sukhothai period.

Tham Lom SI0014

47Q 557023 1904185

Tham Lom - Tham Wang Forest Park, Ban Sok Puai

Tham Lom is described as being decorated and having a cool breeze.

Tham Wang SI0015

47Q 557023 1904185

Tham Lom - Tham Wang Forest Park, Ban Sok Puai

07. Sawankhalok

No caves have been recorded from this amphoe.

08. Si Nakhon

No caves have been recorded from this amphoe.

09. Thung Saliam

Tham Phra Ram Non-Hunting Area

Tham Chao Ram SI0008
47Q 549436 1901918
Tham Phra Ram Non-Hunting Area
Length: 1,091m VR: 128m
Other names: Tham Phra Ram, Tham Jowlarm

This cave is located in Tham Phra Ram Non-Hunting Area, about 50km north-west of Sukhothai town. Turn off the main road about halfway between Sukhothai and Tak. The caves are located in two isolated towers surrounded by hills of sandstone and shale.

It is a large cave with archaeological remains including an inscribed tablet of the Sukhothai period (1781-1917). It is much visited for the spectacle of up to 750,000 bats leaving the cave at dusk. A 10m wide entrance tunnel leads to a huge 100m x 25m x 40m high chamber lit from roof holes. Several passages lead off and there are holes in the floor which lead to pitches of 30m and 21m. There is abundant cave fauna.

Tham Chao Ram was first explored and surveyed by the Royal Forest Department in 1996 and the work was continued by the Canberra Speleological Society in 1997.

Bolger (1999); Bonkerd & Wanghosa (2000); Coggan, et. al. (1999); Dunkley (1995); Kaufman (1997); Kaufman & Bolger (1997); Smart (1996a), (1996b), (1997a), (1997b), (1997c)

Tham Sidar SI0009
47Q 549621 1901740
Tham Phra Ram Non-Hunting Area
Length: 100m

This cave is located in Tham Phra Ram Non-Hunting Area, about 50km north-west of Sukhothai town. Turn off the main road about halfway between Sukhothai and Tak. The caves are located in two isolated towers surrounded by hills of sandstone and shale. The entrance is in a small cliff behind trees in the southerly tower.

The entrance leads to a spacious chamber up to 15m x 10m x 4m high with several side passages. Wooden support posts may have supported coffins; if so this is the only record of coffins in this area. A small colony of bats (*Taphozous longimanus*) was noted.

The cave was explored and surveyed by the Royal Forest Department in 1996
Dunkley (1995); Smart (1996a), (1996b)

Tham Sidar 2 SI0010
47Q 549621 1901740
Tham Phra Ram Non-Hunting Area
Length: 45m

This cave is located in Tham Phra Ram Non-Hunting Area, about 50km north-west of Sukhothai town. Turn off the main road about halfway between Sukhothai and Tak. The caves are located in two isolated towers surrounded by hills of sandstone and shale. The entrance is visible from the ranger station, about 30m left of Tham Sidar.

A boulder slope descends over dry flowstone to a flat-floored chamber containing 3 religious statues, with several short side passages. No bats or other cave fauna was noted. The cave was explored and surveyed by the Royal Forest Department in 1996 Dunkley (1995); Smart (1996a), (1996b)

Tham Sidar 3 SI0011
47Q 549621 1901740
Tham Phra Ram Non-Hunting Area
Length: 25m

This cave is located in Tham Phra Ram Non-Hunting Area, about 50km north-west of Sukhothai town. Turn off the main road about halfway between Sukhothai and Tak. The caves are located in two isolated towers surrounded by hills of sandstone and shale. The entrance is at the bottom of a very obvious fault line in the centre of the cliff above the ranger station, accessed by a walk along a narrow ledge from Tham Sidar 2.

Tham Sidar 3 consists of a single chamber divided by two large partly active columns. It is home to some bats.

The cave was explored and surveyed by the Royal Forest Department in 1996 Dunkley (1995); Smart (1996a), (1996b)

Tham Sidar 4 SI0012
47Q 549621 1901740
Tham Phra Ram Non-Hunting Area
Length: 20m

This cave is located in Tham Phra Ram Non-Hunting Area, about 50km north-west of Sukhothai town. Turn off the main road about halfway between Sukhothai and Tak. The caves are located in two isolated towers surrounded by hills of sandstone and shale. This entrance is also visible from the ranger station, about 50m further up the fault line from Tham Sidar 3, but best accessed via the gulley and a small side entrance.

A steep descent over boulders leads to the main entrance from which a wonderful view opens out over forests and valley. There are some bats in the cave.

The cave was explored and surveyed by the Royal Forest Department in 1996 Dunkley (1995); Smart (1996a), (1996b)

Appendices

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2. Cave Data (Listed by code number)

Number	Name	Co-ordinates	Altitude	Length	VR
SI0001	Tham Hin				
SI0002	Tham Maherok				
SI0003	Tham Chorakhe	47Q 572763 1872306			
SI0004	Tham Tao	47Q 570747 1942369			
SI0005	Tham Thara Wasan				
SI0006	Tham Khang Khao				
SI0007	Tham Ta Rao San				
SI0008	Tham Chao Ram	47Q 549436 1901918		1091	128
SI0009	Tham Sidar	47Q 549621 1901740		100	
SI0010	Tham Sidar 2	47Q 549621 1901740		45	
SI0011	Tham Sidar 3	47Q 549621 1901740		25	
SI0012	Tham Sidar 4	47Q 549621 1901740		20	
SI0014	Tham Lom	47Q 557023 1904185			
SI0015	Tham Wang	47Q 557023 1904185			
SI0016	Tham Rakhang	47Q 559926 1897592			
SI0017	Tham Phrabat				
SI0018	Tham Narai				
SI0019	Tham Phra Mae Ya	47Q 569640 1873821			
SI0020	Tham Thong Pha Ngap	47Q 568397 1854478			
SI0021	Tham Thorani Siriram	47Q 560088 1899985			
SI0022	Tham Weluwan				
SI0023	Tham Mai Klai	47Q 604918 1866770			

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