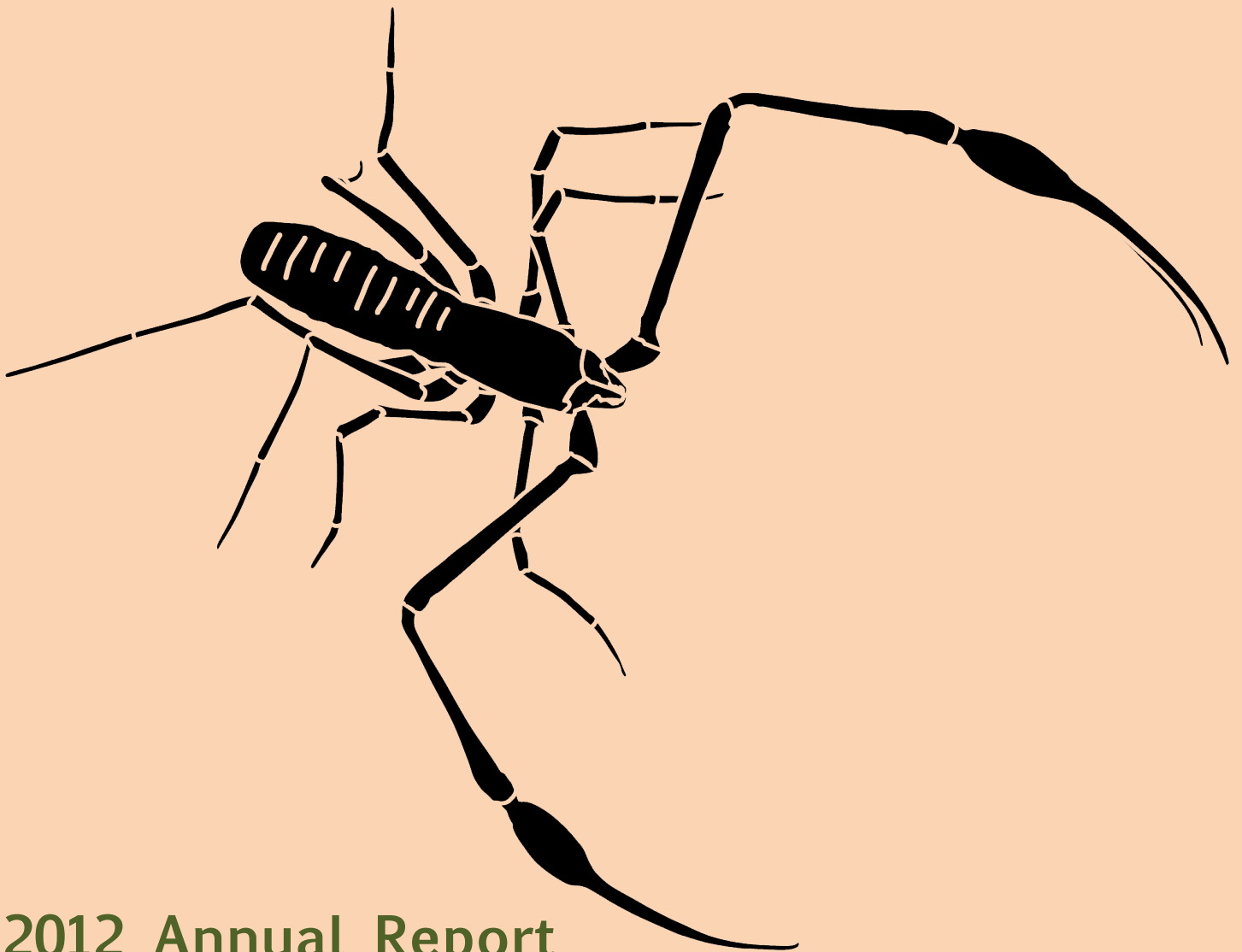


Subterranean Ecology Institute, Inc.

1116 W William St, Champaign, IL 61821
info@cavelife.org <http://cavelife.org/>



2012 Annual Report

In 2012, the Subterranean Ecology Institute (SEI) continued to document and explore cave life in southern **Belize, Arkansas, Illinois** and the **Galapagos Islands**. We succeeded in greatly reducing our administrative costs this year, and anticipate further cost reductions in 2013. The SEI website has seen several additions, and this outlet will continue to serve as means of providing greater understanding and protection for subterranean environments. We're talking with other like-minded organizations about future collaborations to support cave research and outreach efforts, and hope to have more to report on this in the near future.



During our second expedition to the Toledo District of Belize, funded in part by an International Exploration Grant from the National Speleological Society Foundation as well as generous contributions from donors, we made some exciting new discoveries, including the highly cave adapted pseudoscorpion shown on the cover of this report. In 2012, we also increased emphasis on activities in Arkansas.

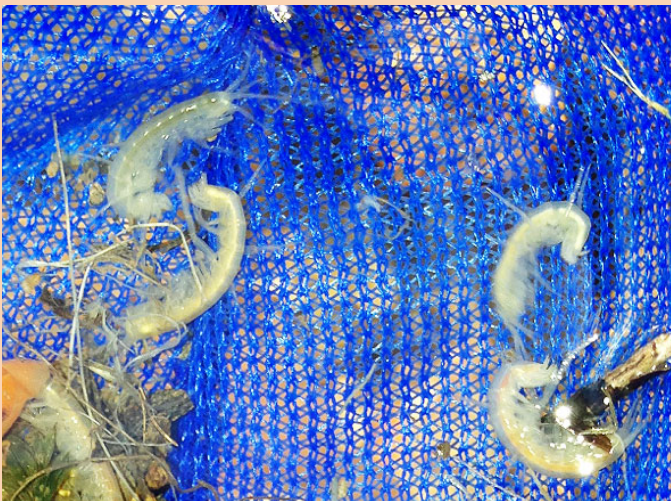
As we continue documenting, studying & conserving subterranean ecosystems, our efforts include a growing list of collaborators and volunteers. Possibilities for leveraging unique skills of different individuals and organizations, including Clifftop Alliance, the Illinois Speleological Survey, and the Ozark Highland Office of the Nature Conservancy, offers promise for fruitful collaborations. During 2012 we've presented our findings at meetings, and worked towards ensuring the description of several new species, with publication of papers anticipated in the coming year.

Our second year as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization has been busy and exciting. Our organization has begun to gain recognition as a conservation organization. In the coming year, through collaborative alliances, generous donors, volunteers, and funding agencies the Subterranean Ecology Institute will continue to serve the public good by drawing attention the fragile underground ecosystems of the world, by providing new knowledge to facilitate conservation and management of these resources. Through outreach and education, we will seek new ways of giving people a greater appreciation of the importance of subterranean ecosystems.

Steven J. Taylor
President, Subterranean Ecology Institute, Inc.
steve@cavelife.org

Illinois

In Illinois, the Subterranean Ecology Institute continues to work with Clifftop Alliance <<http://clifftopalliance.org/>>, helping to manage a mine in an Illinois nature preserve. We are also working with the Illinois Speleological Survey to find new ways to further the understanding, appreciation, and protection of Illinois' subterranean ecosystems.



Bactrurus brachycaudus, a groundwater amphipod, at a site in Illinois visited by SEI in 2012.

Arkansas

Arkansas' Ozark Region was again a major focus of Subterranean Ecology Institute activities in 2012. We continue to work with the Karst Program Coordinator of the Ozark Highlands Office of The Nature Conservancy to study caves and karst ecosystems in the eastern part of the Arkansas Ozarks, where SEI personnel participated in a meeting of cave biologists from across the country, in field research on cave biota, and began survey of a wild cave.



A bat roosting in an Izard County, Arkansas cave. Although this individual is healthy, bats are at risk of being infected with a disease causing fungus, *Geomyces destructans*, which has been spreading from the northeastern United States.



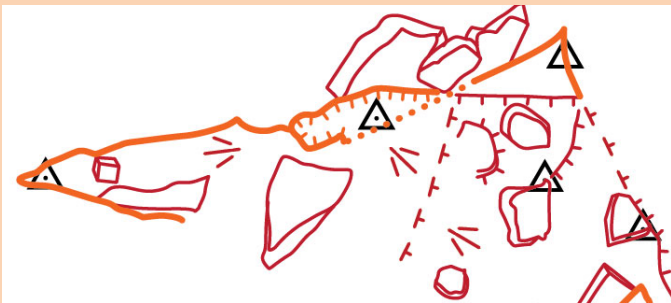
A spider in an Izard County, Arkansas cave.



A group of scientists from across the USA approach a Newton County, Arkansas cave.



SEI representatives surveying a cave in Izard County, Arkansas during 2012.



A portion of the cave map being produced from the above survey. Cave maps facilitate better cave resource management and allow for more complex biological investigation.

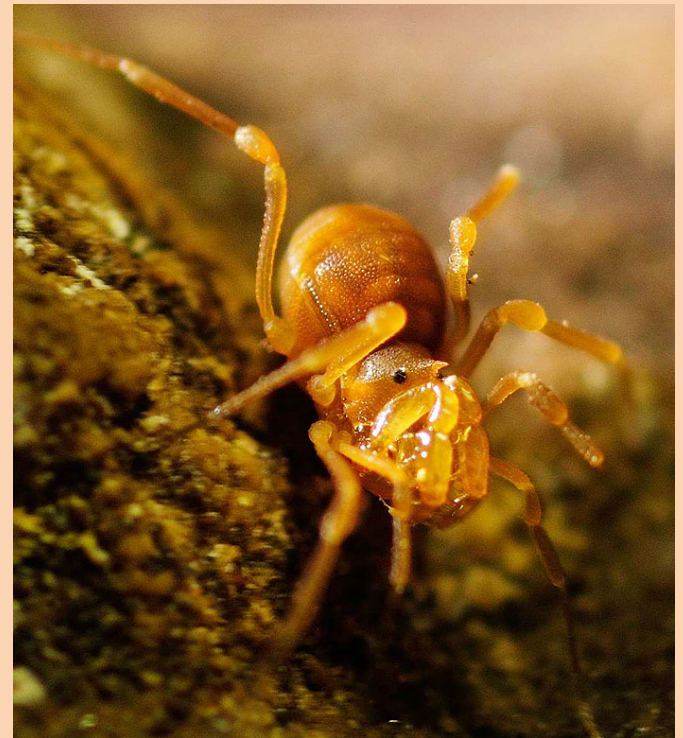
Galapagos

The involvement of the Subterranean Ecology Institute in the Galapagos Islands in 2012 included a small role in the new series *Galapagos 3D with David*

Attenborough (Sky TV & Colossus Productions, United Kingdom), which is providing broad exposure of the public to various aspects of lava tube ecology. SEI continues to work with an Ecuadorian vulcanospeleologist at the Escuela Politécnica del Ejército (Sangolquí, Ecuador) and a speleologist from Washington University (St. Louis, Missouri).

Belize

Belize was the focus of a second major expedition led by the Subterranean Ecology Institute in 2012. This year, we returned to the far southern Toledo District of Belize, where biospeleological research focused on sampling additional caves, as well as returning to some sites visited in 2011. As SEI becomes more established in the



A harvestman found in a cave in southern Belize during the 2012 Subterranean Ecology Institute expedition. Photo © Jean Krejca.

country, our contacts are improving, and we see greater opportunities for outreach and education in addition to our scientific activities. In 2012, we made a number of discoveries of undescribed species, and also got better samples of undescribed species found during 2011. This biological material is presently being worked up by taxonomic specialists. We plan to return in 2013 for more work in this area.



A local Mayan guide collecting invertebrates during the 2012 Subterranean Ecology Institute expedition.



Volunteers collect and record data in a Belizian cave, while a local guide watches.

As information about our 2011 & 2012 expedition discoveries becomes available, you'll be able to find it on the Subterranean Ecology Institute website: <http://cavelife.org/>

Board of Directors

Steven J. Taylor

President

JoAnn Jacoby

Secretary

Ira W. Taylor

Treasurer

Donors

Ira W. Taylor

Steven J. Taylor

JoAnn Jacoby

Kristina Hager

Jean K. Krejca

Grants

National Speleological Society Foundation

Collaborating Organizations

Clifftop Alliance

The Nature Conservancy

Zara Environmental

Illinois Natural History Survey

Belize Institute of Archeology

Belize Forest Department

University of Illinois

University of Arkansas

Auburn University

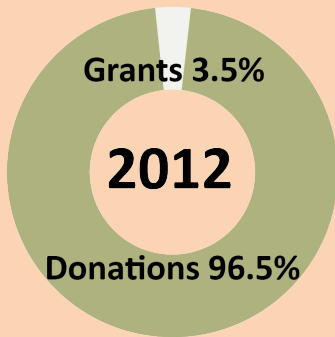
Escuela Politécnica del Ejército

Washington University

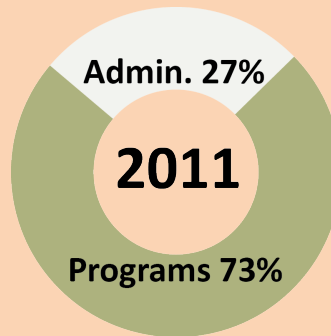
Volunteers

Aimee Beveridge
Geoffrey B Hoese
Jean K. Krejca
Kristina Hager

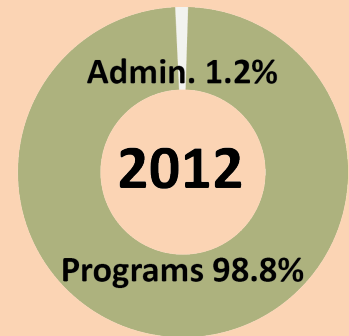
Sam W. Heads
Robert McIntyre
Steve McIntyre
Michael E. Slay
Christy M. Slay
Jack D. Taylor



Resources



Expenses



Our 2012 funding was dominated by a generous contribution from a single donor, but our organization also saw our list of donors growing. We again obtained grant funding to support an expedition to southern Belize. Startup administrative costs (legal fees, 501(c)3 nonprofit filing fees, developing a web presence) that burdened us during our first year have been greatly reduced in 2012. These efforts at reducing overhead have allowed us to better utilize the funds secured through donations and grants to focus a greater proportion of our resources on programmatic activities, increasing public understanding and appreciation of subterranean ecosystems.



Volunteers during the Subterranean Ecology Institute's 2012 expedition to southern Belize.