

Living Inside the Earth

by Guy Belleranti

Caves are more than dark holes in the ground. Some contain beautiful formations, running rivers or small lakes. Most caves also contain something else: living creatures using them as homes.



Bats are one of the most well known cave dwellers. In winter they hibernate, but when warm weather returns they come out in search of food.

New Mexico's Carlsbad Caverns is famous for its summer evenings. So many bats live within it that they fill the cave, then slowly fly out of the cave. It is a sight to see.

Other animals that live in caves include cave crickets and cave crickets only. Other cave residents include spiders, cave crickets, and cave crickets.

Then there are cave crickets. Most of these are colorless and even blind. Eyeless fish and shrimp, flatworms and the blind Texas salamander are a few examples.

People, too, have lived in caves. Prehistoric man sought out caves for shelter from heat and cold. The caves also provided protection from predators.

Native Americans of the American Southwest sometimes made homes in shallow

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search of food. t programs on t the cave and the st there are just a few thousands of bats fly beetle, millipede time cave residents e. Most of these are

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cliff-side caves. Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado provides several fine examples of this.

Today, some people still live in caves. China, France, Spain and Turkey are just a few of the places where caves are used as homes. There are even Americans still living in caves.

Some religions have used caves for services. And in some places people were buried in special caves.

A cave was even used as a hospital. In 1984, a man with tuberculosis was treated in Mammoth Cave, a hot spring. Tuberculosis is a lung disease. Some medicines were used. But it didn't. The people died.

Yes, caves are still used. They might be, someone's home.

people were moved to a new place. Tuberculosis, a lung disease, is a disease that people breathe. The people died. It stopped. There have been, and still are, people living in caves.

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1) Why did the author start his account with bats?

2) List a few purposes for which caves have been used according to the passage.

3) Name some parts of caves that have been used by animals to have their cave homes.

4) What purpose do you think these animals had when they lived there?

5) What was a medical misconception about caves?

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