

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

Important safety information about using CNCC descriptions and rigging topos

This MUST be read and understood by anyone using a CNCC-provided cave description or rigging topo

These descriptions and rigging topos are provided by the CNCC for use by experienced cavers only in assisting with trip planning and route-finding on some of the popular sporting routes in our region. They are not exhaustive, they do not cover every passage or feature, and details may have been greatly simplified to try to keep them concise and clear.

Great efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the information. Nonetheless, there are likely to be errors and (over time) an increasing number of inaccuracies due to changes in the caves and the replacement of resin anchors. The descriptions may also contain subjective viewpoints which could be open to misinterpretation. It is entirely incumbent upon all cavers to exercise appropriate care and caution when going underground using these topos and descriptions, and to have researched the trip from several other sources. Never make any safety critical decisions based on the information in these descriptions or topos.

Pull through trips must only ever be undertaken by cavers who are confident in finding the lower route out of the cave without a description, and who understand the extra precautions demanded of such trips (e.g. carrying multiple ropes).

The rope lengths stated in the rigging topos are considered the minimum length required based on average rigging. There may be errors, or your rigging may use more rope than anticipated. Therefore, it is critical that all ropes that are deployed for use have two tightened knots in both ends, to mitigate against the risks associated with the ropes not reaching the bottom of pitches.

Difficulty ratings, or 'grades' have been omitted from these descriptions. All cavers must make their own informed judgements of whether the cave is suitable for their capabilities, backed up by thorough research into the nature of the cave from numerous sources and an understanding of the capabilities of others in your group.

Many in-site ropes and ladders are mentioned throughout the descriptions. These should only ever be considered navigational markers and not safety critical belays. The CNCC does not install or maintain any fixed aids in caves other than the resin anchors shown on the topos. Never trust your safety to a rope or ladder which is left in a cave. For resin anchors you must understand the importance of belaying your rope to multiple anchors, including full traverse ropes leading to pitches, and always performing a pre-use inspection on every anchor. If any resin anchor shows movement, or fracturing in the nearby rock, it must not be used.

Rigging must always be performed to avoid any rub points or other hazards. Rigging exactly as depicted in the rigging topos does not guarantee a rub-free descent; this must be assessed and ensured by each individual caver on each pitch in every cave.

Many caves which are susceptible to danger from flooding have been highlighted in the descriptions. However, all caves, even typically dry ones, can flood in various circumstances, and it is therefore critical that the experienced caver using these descriptions makes their own judgement based on experience, extensive research and weather forecasts. Decisions to descend any cave after or during wet weather, or when wet weather is forecast, should be made based on an informed judgement backed up by thorough research from multiple sources. The critical moto which should be adhered to is "If in doubt, stay out!"

Although warnings are provided where there are some specific known hazards, the absence of a warning does not indicate that there are no hazards. Caves can (and do) change over time. Furthermore, the CNCC does not perform routine inspections or surveys of caves to look for specific hazards (e.g. loose rocks). All cavers are strongly advised to view the webpage on the CNCC website for their chosen cave to check for any warnings that have come to our attention. Experienced cavers using these descriptions must make their own evaluations for hazards throughout the duration of their trip and act appropriately to mitigate any risks.

Neither the author of the descriptions/topos or the CNCC will accept any responsibility for any damage, injury or loss (however caused) resulting from the use, misuse or misinterpretation of information in these cave descriptions or rigging topos.

Growling Hole

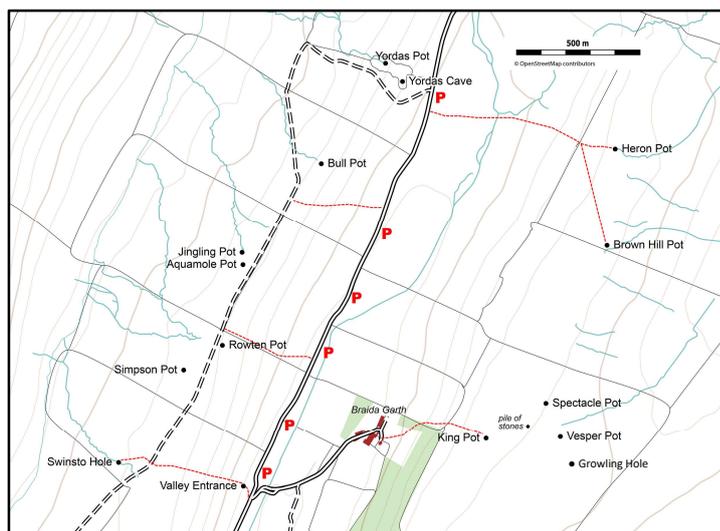
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Growling Hole fulfils East Kingsdale's reputation for more challenging potholes. The Fault, a stunning 75m pitch, is guarded by some wet canals and tight crawls. The canals flood severely, so dry and settled weather is essential prior to and during your trip.

Parking: Park in a layby near the Braida Garth Farm track.

Location: Grid reference: SD 7125 7749

Call at Braida Garth Farm for permission. Past the farm, go through two gates and bear left up the hillside with limestone outcrops to intercept the wall on the far left of the enclosure. Follow up the wall to a gate into a smaller enclosure with a very steep embankment. At the top, a gate leads onto the open fells. About 300m away (bearing 90°, away from the wall) is the start of a shallow dry valley, marked by a large pile of stones. 100m along this valley on the left is the entrance to Vesper Pot (a small hole with metal surround). About 100m further around the valley (bearing right) is the entrance to Growling Hole, a small opening at the bottom of a shakehole.



Rigging:

The rigging topo is available on the CNCC website.

Navigation:

The entrance pitch, not shown on the topo, is a 3m drop down a hole into a rift. Many cavers will climb this without tackle, however, a handline or ladder belayed to a rock at the pitch head may be appreciated later when you are exhausted!

At the foot of the entrance rift, the way on is downstream in a cobbled crawl. This crawl develops into a low, wet canal involving a low squeeze and later becoming increasingly narrow and awkward (and particularly snaggy for anyone wearing SRT kits or carrying a bag).

The crawl should take only about 10 minutes and reaches a short drop into Pool Chamber, a small chamber with an inlet joining.

Downstream from Pool Chamber, the passage enlarges after a brief crawl into a narrow rift leading to Waterfall Inlet Pitch.

Below this pitch the water is lost down a too-tight rift, which you must now traverse above to reach a small chamber beneath Scimitar Aven where Scimitar pitch is found. Scimitar Pitch is often just treated as a handline climb down into a tight rift, rigged from the obvious large spike.

The way on is downstream in the tight rift. This involves awkward sideways crawling, soon reaching a calcite blockage where you must squeeze down a challenging slot. Below the slot, more awkward sideways crawling and squeezes along the rift reach Stemple Pitch which, continuing the theme of the preceding passages, is narrow at the top but opens out a little further down.

Below Stemple Pitch a short crawl reaches the cave's first substantial enlargement, at the top of Fault Pitch. This 75m pitch passes a multitude of ledges. Those in search of a spectacular Yorkshire Dales shaft will not be disappointed.

There are a few short and uninspiring routes for cavers to explore at the bottom of Fault Pitch, while waiting your turn to ascend. However, for most cavers the bottom of Fault Pitch marks a spot for a well-deserved chocolate bar in preparation for the squeeze journey out.