

# SPELEOTHEM CHALLENGE:

Pictures with more than one kind of speleothem!

Here are some actual pictures from Carlsbad Caverns National Park. This is a black and white world, a dark world that is deep underground! Each picture shows two or more kinds of cave decorations, or speleothems. See how many speleothems you can recognize. Enjoy the challenge!

## DIRECTIONS:

Print out the list of 10 different cave pictures on the next page. Or, on a piece of paper, write down the letter of each picture. Then look at each cave picture and write down the names of the speleothems that you think you see in that picture.

## HINT:

The number in parenthesis after the picture's letter is the number of kinds of speleothems that we can find in the picture. In picture A we think we see three kinds of speleothems. The "lion's tail" is a *stalactite*, and there is *popcorn* at the stalactite's end, looking like the tip of the tail. Maybe there are some *curtains* on the ceiling also.

When you've completed the challenge, check your answers on the Speleothem Challenge: Answer Page.

**SPELEOTHEM CHALLENGE:** Here is a “word bank” to use; you can use words more than once:

Boneyard      draperies      helictites      soda straws      stalagmites  
cave pearls      flowstone      popcorn      stalactites

Print this page, or copy the names of the formations onto your paper.

**Picture A (3) – Lion’s Tail, Big Room** -- *stalactite, popcorn, curtains*

**Picture B (2) – High Hopes, Lechuguilla Cave**

**Picture C (4) – Christmas Tree, New/Slaughter Cave**

**Picture D (4) – Cave Man, Big Room**

**Picture E (3) – Jungle Room, Lechuguilla Cave**

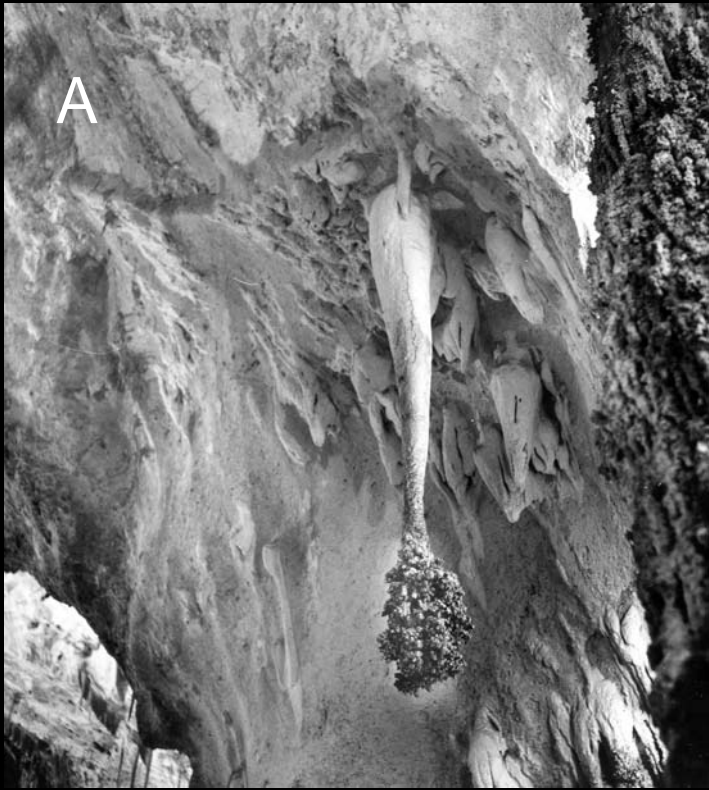
**Picture F (3) – Leaning Tower, Lechuguilla Cave**

**Picture G (3) – “Pearlsian” Gulf, Lechuguilla Cave**

**Picture H (3) – Boundary Waters, Lechuguilla Cave**

**Picture I (5) – Temple of the Sun, Big Room**

**Picture J (2) – Chandelier Ballroom, Lechuguilla Cave**





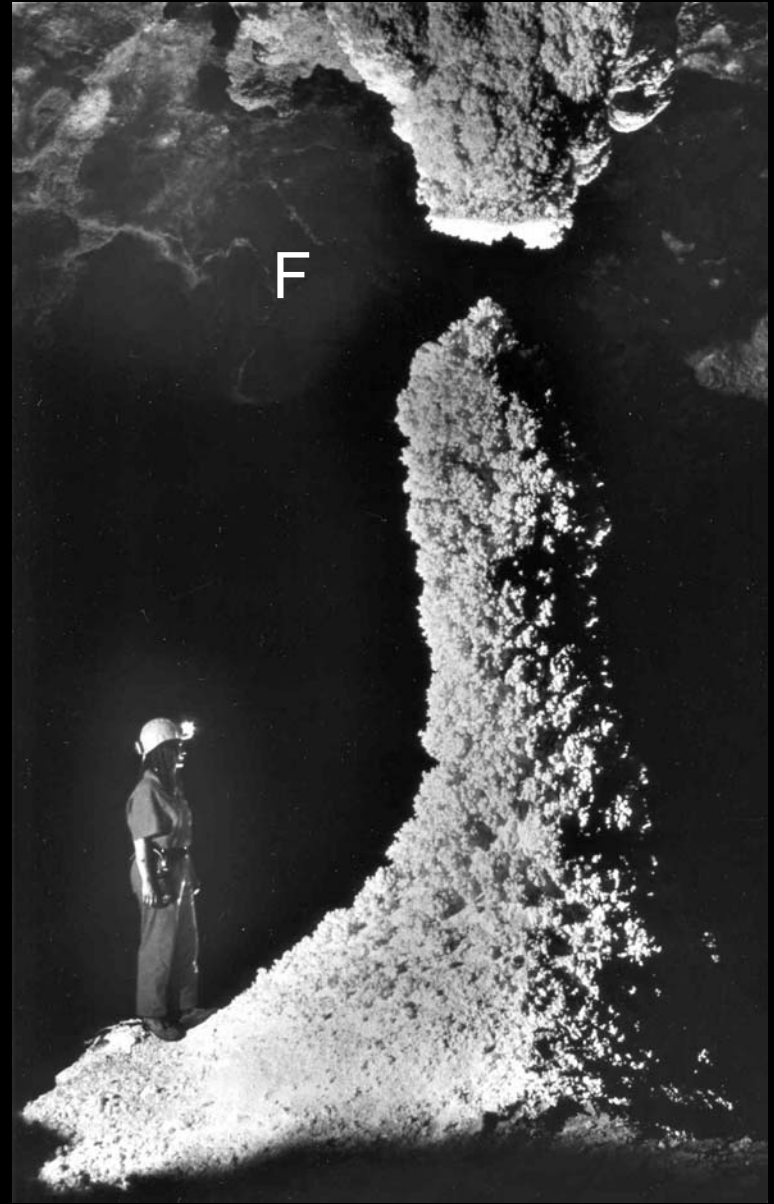
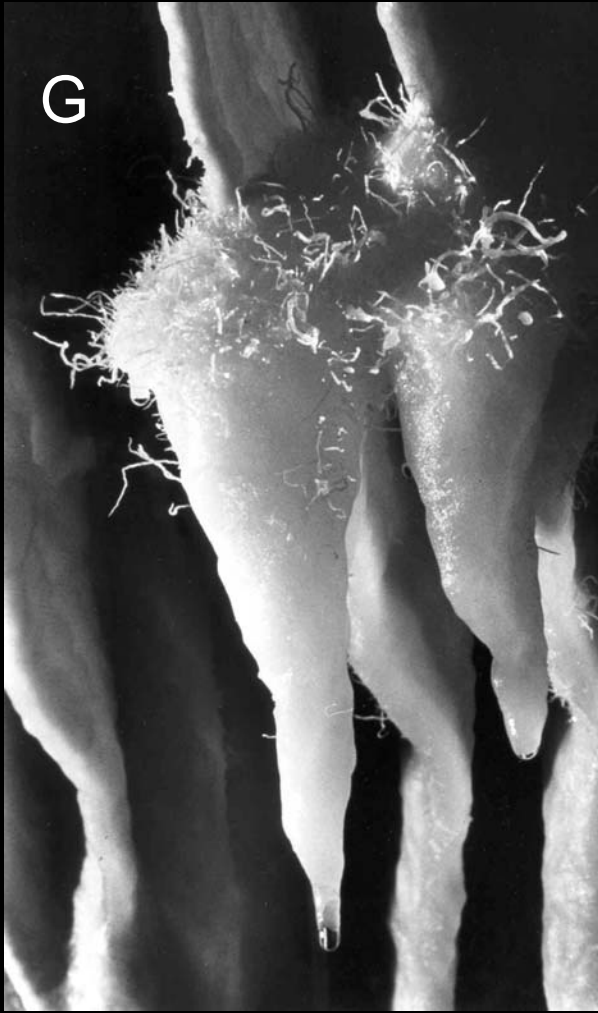
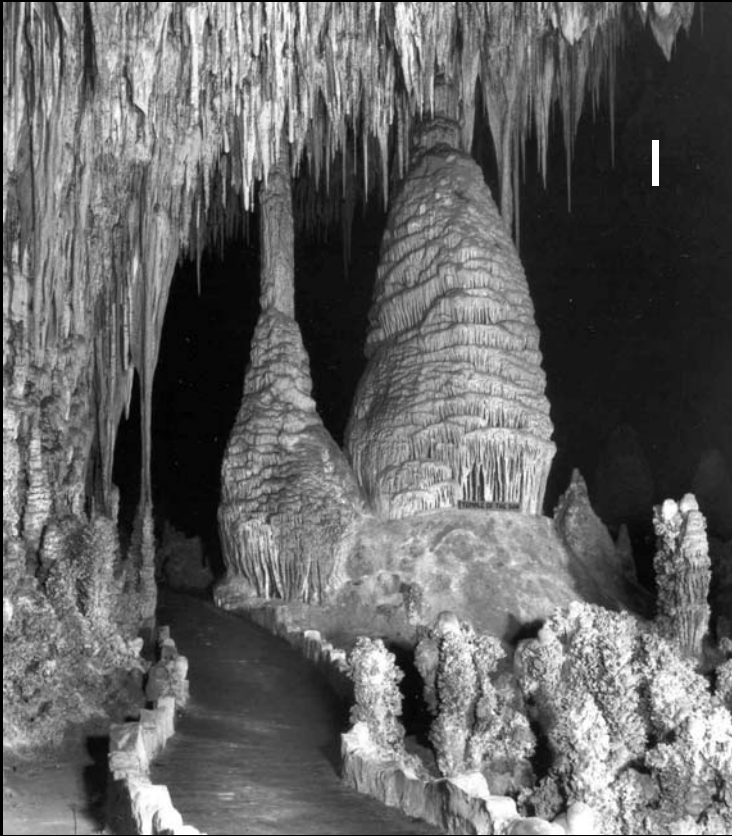


photo by N. R. Thompson



both photos by N. R. Thompson



You've seen all ten pictures! You can go back and look at the pictures again, or you can check the [Speleothem Challenge: Answer Page](#).



# SPELEOTHEM CHALLENGE: Answer Page

## Picture Speleothems

- A *stalactite, popcorn, curtains*
- B *boneyard, stalagmites*
- C *flowstone, popcorn, stalactites, stalagmites*
- D *popcorn, stalactites, stalagmites, flowstone*
- E *soda straws, stalactites, stalagmites*
- F *popcorn, stalactite, stalagmite*
- G *draperies, helictites, stalactites*
- H *stalagmites, soda straw, curtain*
- I *stalactites, stalagmites, columns, flowstone, popcorn*
- J *stalactites, stalagmites*

How did you do?  
Check your scoring.

## Speleothem Challenge scoring:

If your answers aren't exactly the same as ours, don't worry too much. For one thing, real speleothems are complicated; sometimes Mother Nature starts out making one kind of speleothem, and then she seems to change her mind and starts adding another kind of speleothem on top of the first one! Also, maybe you have better eyes than we do; maybe you can spot some speleothems that we can't see, or vice versa.

Perhaps you missed some of the answers above, but if you even *tried* this Speleothem Challenge, you can become a candidate for president of the National Speleological Society, the NSS!!