

## **Expeditions with the Speleoclub Berlin to Vietnam 2013 + 2013/14**

**Michael Laumanns - Speleoclub Berlin**

Beside a brief overview of the main caving areas in Vietnam two areas are described in detail in this presentation: the Dong Nai volcanic field in southern Vietnam as well as the province of Ninh Binh in northern Vietnam. Both areas have been targeted in 2013 and 2014 by the Speleoclub Berlin and international expeditions with participants from Berlin.

Fourty caves in volcanic rocks, mainly lava tube caves, were surveyed during two expeditions to Dong Nai. This includes the new longest lava tube cave of SE Asia (Hang Doi 1 Km 122, at 437 m). The cave is separated from its 122 m long southern segment (Hang Doi 2 Km 122) by a roof collapse. If regarded to be one single cave, the underground system would be 549 m long. Altogether the expeditions mapped 2.8 km of underground passages. The volcanic caves have an important biodiversity.

The landscape in Ninh Binh province has one of the most scenic tropical karst morphologies in the world and attracts up to 1 million visitors per year. The region is also famous for its cultural heritage in terms of archaeological importance and the many places of religious significance. This unique combination makes the Trang An-Tam Coc/Bich Dong landscape one of the most stunning places to see on Earth. An application to become UNESCO World Heritage Site has recently been made.

The results of an expedition of the Speleoclub Berlin in March 2013 and of an international

expedition with one participant from Berlin at fall 2013 are presented. Fifty-eight caves with a total of about 11.5 km of passages were surveyed during both projects. The results were recently published together with information yielded by previous explorers in the series "Berliner Höhlenkundliche Berichte (BHB)", representing 99 caves with a total 13.6 km of mapped cave passages.