



STINAPA INFORMATION

CAVE DWELLERS

You can find caves all over Bonaire, especially around the 'terraces' in the center of our island. If you drive from Playa to Rincon, either via the oceanfront tourist road or via the main road which is more inland, you will see a rocky landscape that consists of several horizontal layers. These so-called terraces were formed millions of years ago and are reminders of the oldest existence of our island. They were formed by erosion; dissolving of the limestone by rainwater that seeped through. The acid rainwater (because of the dissolved carbon-dioxide) slowly dissolved the limestone. You can still see how this erosion works when you go for a stroll in the mondi. It is what made the countless little pits in the rocky soil, leaving sharp points that will cut the soles of your shoes. The acid rainwater will stand in one of those indentations and will slowly make it bigger as the years go by. Caves are usually part of a larger network of corridors. Through the centuries corridors, often miles long, have been formed, parts of which sometimes have collapsed. So when we see the entrance of a cave, we only see a small part of it. It is important to know the location of these caves, especially when you have plans for construction. I once heard the story of a house that was being built yeas ago in Sabadeco. When they were going to dig the hole for the septic tank they hit a huge hollow area of a cave. Even part of the house was built on the roof of this cave. On Bonaire we have about two hundred caves, but only four are accessible to tourists. Those you can visit under the guidance of a trained guide. The other caves are left alone as not to disturb the bats that live there. Bats are nocturnal, they only leave their hiding places around dusk to go hunt for food. During the daytime they sleep - suspended upside down from the rock walls- in the dark caves. It is important to protect the living-space of the bats; they are indispensable for the delicate eco-system of the island. They make it possible that the Kadushi-cactus can reproduce. These cacti, which only flower at night, get visited by the bats for their sweet nectar. The bats pick up pollen that is transported unknowingly to the next Kadushi. Without the bats the Kadushi would slowly disappear from our landscape, and the Kadushi in turn is indispensable in our arid climate. Without the Kadushi many birds, reptiles and butterflies would have no food. Bats have another pleasant effect; they reduce the number of mosquitoes as each one will eat up to 500 mosquitoes every night. Without bats there would many more of these pesky insects on Bonaire.

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NOS TA BIBA DI NATURALESA



Traha huntu na un desaroyo duradero pa Boneiru