



BONAIRE CAVES & KARST TOUR GUIDE COURSE

Bonaire – Caribbean Netherlands

Four-day course (morning/afternoon classes) 29 h classes
One-day forum

Dates: 7th, 8th, 13th, 14th, 21st June 2019

Maximum student capacity: 12

Instructors: Fernando Simal, Hans Voerman, Jafet M. Nassar, John Cicilia, Quirijn Coolen, Tamanaé Vargas Salazar and George “Kultura” Thode.

Forum facilitator: Elsmarie Beukenboom

The Island of Bonaire is rich in sinkholes and caves, many of them still unexplored. These natural beauties are, on one hand, invaluable reservoirs of natural resources, ecological interactions and ecosystem services; and on the other hand, a treasure of local traditions and cultural values. Contrasting with this privileged condition, caves and karst on the island are under constant threat, due to anthropogenic impacts (pollution, structural damage, rock extraction, vandalism, and disturbance of bat colonies, among others) and lack of protective legislation. They represent a natural and cultural resource in need of protection and a management plan for their sustainable use.

The aim of this course is to offer comprehensive training on cave tour guidance to tour operators with a license to operate as such on the Island of Bonaire. Topics include the caves and karst system of Bonaire, basic notions about their associated flora, fauna and ecology, caves and sinkholes in the Bonerian culture, cave guiding, cave safety, first aid, and a closing forum, in which the most relevant topics concerning the management of the new Bonaire Caves and Karst Park will be addressed. At the end of the course, students will be prepared to provide cave guidance under safe conditions, optimizing the use of caves as a recreational resource, and contributing to preserve their integrity and biodiversity. The Caribbean Speleological Society (CARIBSS) will grant certification as caves and karst tour guides upon full completion of the course. A key outcome of this training and forum will be the establishment of the Bonaire Cave Tour Guides Network, which will work in cooperation with the Public Entity Bonaire (OLB) to organize and coordinate the management of caves as recreational sites on the island and to generate the legal framework for their sustainable use and protection.

COURSE PROGRAM

Caves & Karst Course - Friday 7th, June 2019

Time	Description	Instructor
08:00 – 08:30	Welcome and introduction	Fernando Simal
08:30 – 10:00	Nature in the Bonaire Caves & Karst Nature Reserve	Jafet M. Nassar
10:00 – 10:15	Coffee break	
10:15 – 11:15	Caves and karst in the Bonerian culture	George “Kultura” Thode
11:15 – 12:15	Speleothems in Bonerian caves	Hans Voerman
12:15 – 12:30	Question & Answer Session	
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch break (lunch not provided)	
13:30 – 15:00	Caves and Karst of Bonaire	Fernando Simal
15:00 – 15:15	Coffee break	
15:30 – 18:30	Hiking trails of the Bonaire C & K Park (field trip)	Several instructors

Caves & Karst Course - Saturday 8th, June 2019

Time	Description	Instructor
08:00 – 10:00	Guiding people inside caves	Hans Voerman
10:00 – 10:30	Coffee break	
10:30 – 12:00	Cave safety	John Cicilia
12:00 – 12:15	Question & Answer Session	
12:15 – 15:00	Lunch break (lunch not provided)	
15:00 – 20:00	Caves at Bonaire C & K Park and bat fauna (field trip)	Several instructors

Caves & Karst Course – Thursday 13th, June 2019

Time	Description	Instructor
08:00 – 12:00	First Aid (EHBO)*	John Cicilia
12:00 – 12:30	Lunch break (lunch not provided)	
12:30 – 16:30	First Aid (EHBO)*	John Cicilia

* Students showing proof of First Aid certification previously obtained are not required to take the First Aid training module.

Caves & Kars Course – Friday 14th, June 2019

Time	Description	Instructor
09:00 – 12:00	Cave tours safety (practice)	Hans Voerman/ Fundashon Mariadal/ Fire Department
Water and beverages will be provided		

Bonaire Caves & Karst Nature Reserve Forum – Friday 21st, June 2019

Time	Description	Facilitator
08:00 – 08:30	Welcome and introduction	Fernando Simal
08:30 – 10:00	Forum – Part I	Elsmarie Beukenboom
10:00 – 10:15	Coffee break & discussion	
10:15 – 12:00	Forum – Part II	Elsmarie Beukenboom
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch provided	
13:00 – 15:00	Forum – Part III	Elsmarie Beukenboom
15:00 – 15:15	Coffee break & discussion	
15:15 – 16:00	Conclusions / Agreement	Fernando Simal/Jafet Nassar
16:00	Forum closing	

Certification

CARIBSS certification as *Caves & Karst Tour Guide* will be granted to participants upon completion of the course (100% attendance), approval of the First Aid module and signed commitment to create the Bonaire Cave Tour Guides Network.

Important notice: This certification is not linked to the current legislation of the Island Territory of Bonaire.

Application and course fee

Interested parties need to complete the application form provided and submit it by email to jafet.nassar@gmail.com before May 15th, 2019. Fully completed applications received will go through a selection process. Selected applicants will be informed to proceed with full payment of the registration fee. Proof of payment must be received before May 31st, 2019. The cost of the course is US\$ 325.00. Course fee includes one personal 2019 CARIBSS membership. A 100.00 US\$ discount will be applied to the registration fee with proof of valid First Aid certification (submitted as an attachment together with the application).