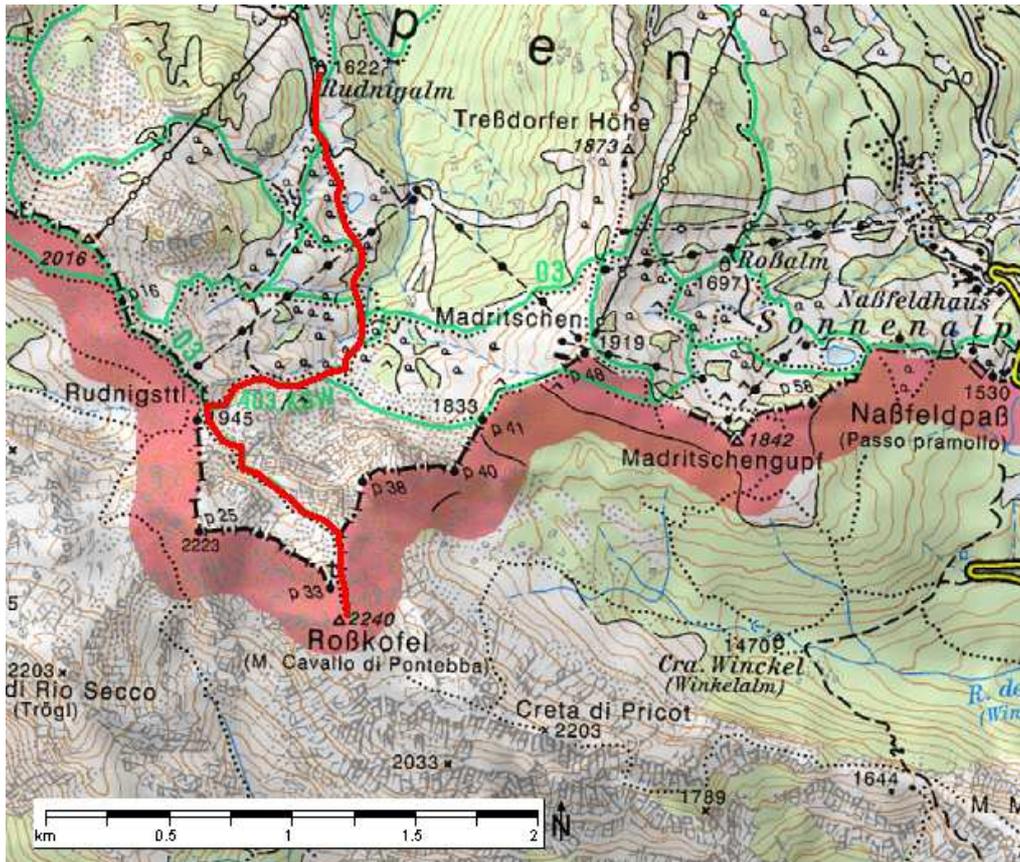


Geotope 31: Roßkofel – The Hole in the Mountain



Red marking: Hiking route according to advance description; green tracks: hiking trails; ©BEV: Federal Office for Calibration and Measurement, 2005.

Access:

The summit of Roßkofel can be either reached from Naßfeld crossing mountain Madritschen or from Rudnig Alm via Rudnig Sattel. The trail to the top is color-marked. Entrance to the cave is only recommended for speleologists!

Description of the Geotope



Entrance to the cave in 2,130 m altitude close to border rock p-26.

Viewed from Naßfeld the mountain Roßkofel resembles a huge loaf of bread. However, it has an interesting geology. First of all, it is his “cap” of Upper Carboniferous strata (formed approx. 330 m.y. BP) which unconformably overlies very fossiliferous Devonian limestones. Solitary and colonial corals, brachiopods, crinoids, calcareous algae and stromatoporoids occur

quite abundantly. The whole limestone complex was folded during the

Variscan Orogeny to a huge north-vergent back-folding.

Close to the so-called snowfinch depression which separates the main massif of Roßkofel from a smaller peak to the northwest, close to the border rock p-26 at an altitude of 2130 m the entrance to the Klondike-Cave is isolated. This cave represents the most extended of all known cave systems in the Roßkofel massif. It extends to a depth of 1,453 m and forms differently sized halls, tunnels and dewatering systems. During winter warm air escapes from the cave like a stack effect suggesting a connection with open fissures on the southern side of Roßkofel.

The flow conditions in the cave vary depending on time of the year and weather conditions. The most impressive underground river system is named “Yukon”, a karstic river in the lower part of the cave (for more details see Geotope no. 70).



View to the mouth of the cave.