

Word Search

The walls of the "Gouffre de Padirac" are covered with magnificent rock sculptures. They gradually formed after drops of water, having passed through the ground, left in their wake traces of a mineral called calcite.

Unusual sculptures

1 What scientific name have these rock sculptures been given? Circle the words from the following list on the grid. Place the leftover letters on the dotted line to discover the mystery word.

lake – river – cave – chasm – water – cavity – bats – rock – soil – vault

R	I	V	E	R	C	S
O	C	H	A	S	M	O
N	W	A	T	E	R	I
C	A	V	I	T	Y	L
B	V	A	U	L	T	L
A	R	O	C	K	C	A
T	R	E	T	I	O	K
S	N	S	C	A	V	E

2 To find out what these two natural sculptures are called, decipher these messages using the code.

A = ☆ C = △ S = ○
 I = ● G = ♥ L = □
 T = ■ M = ☾ E = ▲

○ ■ ☆ □ ☆ △ ■ ● ■ ▲

○ ■ ☆ □ ☆ ♥ ☾ ● ■ ▲



Answers: 1. Concretion. 2. A stalactite and a stalagmite (stalactites "go down" and stalagmites "go up").



Riddles

Once you have descended into the "Gouffre de Padirac", you come to a network of underground galleries... 338 feet below ground! You travel on foot on the dry areas, or by boat on the "Rivière Plane".

1 Which explorer discovered Padirac's subterranean river over 100 years ago? Cross out every other letter to find out (start with the first).

XÉBDYOEULAZRSD-

 QATLDFORMEPD

 YMTAFRGTHEKLR



2 How did the "Gouffre de Padirac" form? Find out by putting these stages in the right order.



- 1 • **A** Still flowing down, the water carved underground chambers and galleries.
- 2 • **B** The vault caved in above an underground chamber, forming a chasm.
- 3 • **C** As it formed, the Pyrenees mountain range folded and cracked the calcareous soil.
- 4 • **D** Over time, rainwater seeped through the widening cracks.

Answers: 1. Édouard-Alfred Martel. 2. In their right order, the stages are as follows: 1C; 2D; 3A; 4B.

Observation

After having crossed the Padirac river by boat, you head for the "Lac de la Pluie"! This lake is named after the thousands of drops that fall from the vault onto that area. A huge rock sculpture towers above them. This is Padirac's emblem.

The "Lac de la Pluie"

1 What are these characters saying? Solve these rebuses to find out.



Answers: 1. "Here you can see the Grande Pendeloque!" (H - ear - U - can - see - THE GRANDE - pen - D - lock). "Its shape is awe-inspiring!" (It - ss - sh! - ope - i - zz - oar - n - spre - ring). 2. The rabbit.

2

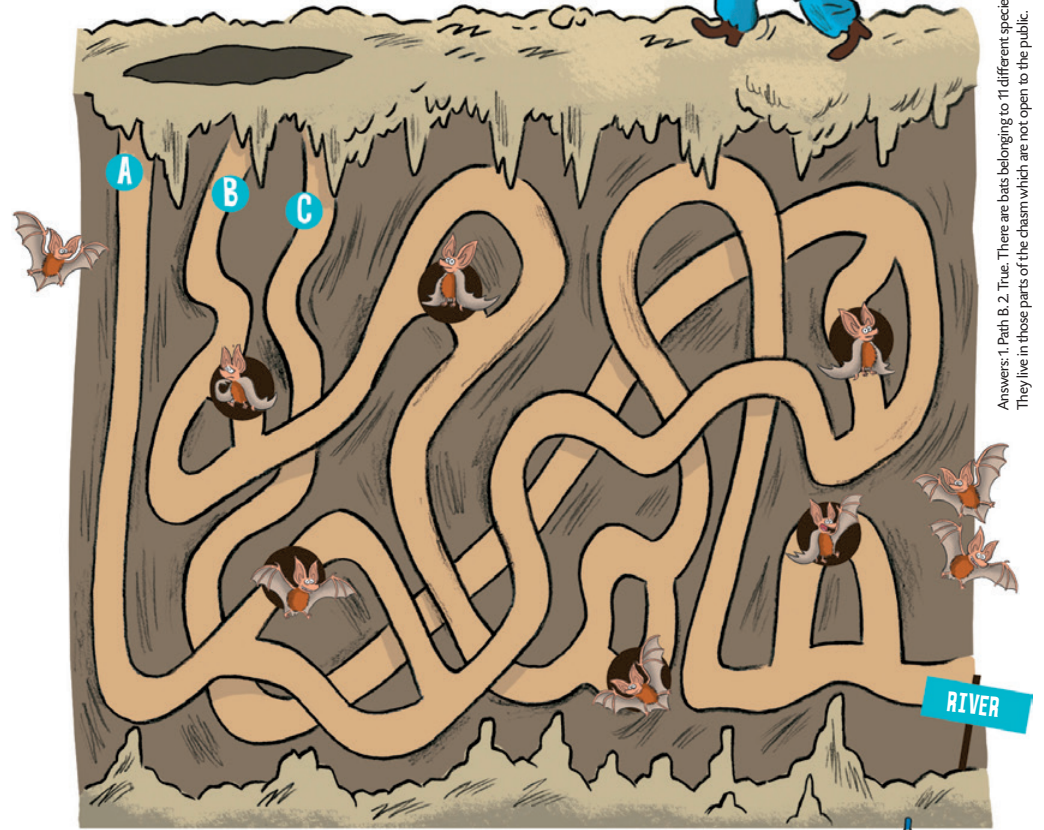
Find which element does not belong to this picture!

Maze

What animals live in Padirac? Bats and other lesser-known species: the niphargus (a blind shrimp) and the Bythinella padiraci (a tiny snail).

The inhabitants of Padirac

1 Which path must you follow to reach the subterranean river while avoiding all the bats?



Answers: 1. Path B. 2. True. There are bats belonging to 11 different species. They live in those parts of the chasm which are not open to the public.

2 True or false? Nearly 3 000 bats live down the "Gouffre de Padirac".

T F

