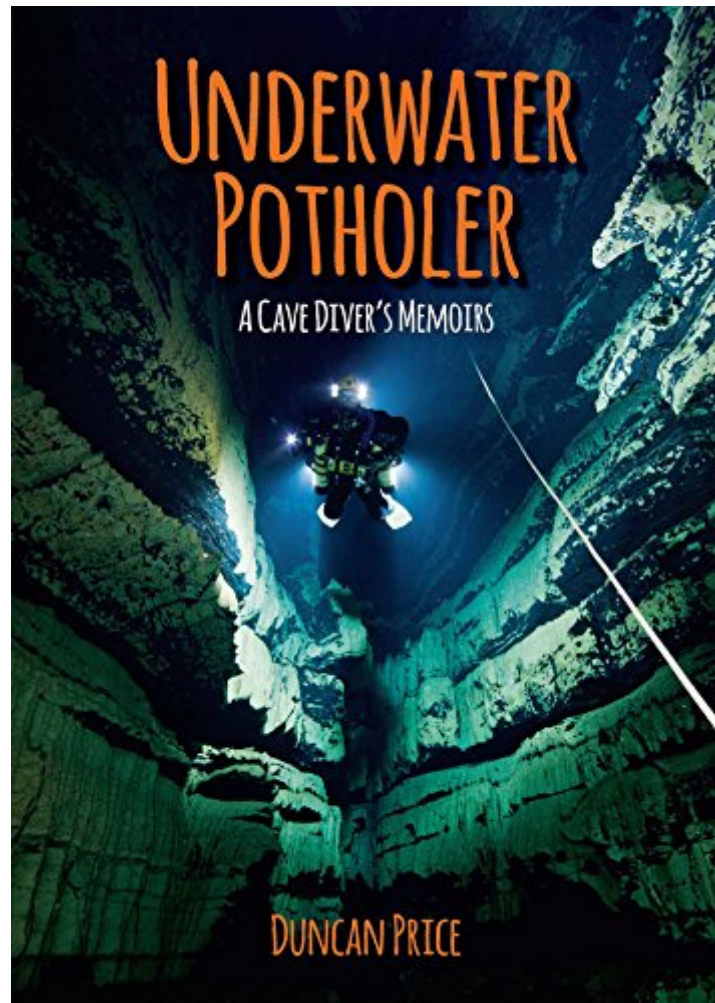




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Underwater Potholer: A Cave Diver's Memories (Whittles Dive)



Synopsis

Duncan's curiosity has got him into a lot of tight spots – quite literally! As a teenager, Duncan really wanted to be an astronaut but took to the exploration of inner space instead. Only a dozen men might have stood on the moon but Duncan has squeezed into many places that no one has ever been before, and some places that no one is ever likely to go again (probably for a very good reason). These memoirs recount the author's misadventures during his thirty-year involvement with caving and cave diving beginning with student antics in the caves of the Mendip Hills to a hair raising escape from deep beneath an English stately home. Along the way we are treated to a rollercoaster of emotions – from the joys of discovering new caves to the sadness of losing close friends. Duncan tells his tales without holding back, often making light of quite serious situations: cave-ins, serious illness and an embarrassing incident with a tick. There are tears and laughter, often at the same time: who else would perform an animal impression with a suspected metatarsal fracture? We dive beneath Welsh valleys, Yorkshire Dales and the Blue Ridge Mountains. There are shark attacks, unexploded bombs and secret nuclear research facilities. Technical concepts and jargon are explained clearly and concisely so the reader can follow Duncan into the depths. These stories are a treat for anyone interested in exploration, above or below ground, over or underwater. People often tell Duncan that he must be mad to go cave diving – read this and judge for yourself!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Underwater Potholer: A Cave Diver's Memoirs, by Duncan Price. Whittles Publishing, Scotland, 2015. ISBN 978-184995-158-6. 6.5 by 9.5 inches, 185 pages, softbound. £18.99, \$24.95. "Cave diving is dangerous—do not do it. Remember I told you so. Everything else I say is bollocks!" This book is a welcome addition to the small number of well-written cavers' memoirs in English, most of which have come from British cavers. Duncan Price has had a long and active career in cave diving, and he has worked with pretty much all of the other British cave divers I've ever heard of. Most of his diving has been sump diving in the UK, especially in the part of it where w is a vowel. But he has also laid new line in France and the US. Sometimes the blow-by-blows of some of his more complicated sump dives get a bit tedious, but there are flashes of understated humor or drama. Some cave maps can help with the geography, but they are all grouped together as pages XI–XIX, apparently as an afterthought. The sixteen unnumbered pages of color photos could have used a lot of adjustment. But these production problems do not detract seriously from enjoyment of the book. Besides sump diving, which often includes difficult dry caving to reach the sump, Price has done tri-mix diving, rebreather diving, and scooter diving, despite the fact that his only formal training certification is from the British Sub-Aqua Club for snorkeling. A lot of cave divers will be amused, or not, by a certain cavalier attitude about equipment. "One of my regulators started free-flowing on account of the cold water even before I'd set off; I hit it against a rock at the entrance until it stopped leaking and then headed into the cave." He did a dive using a home-made rebreather borrowed from Rick Stanton after receiving instruction in its use: breathe in, breathe out, add gas as required. Do not do it, but do read it. —Bill Mixon

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