The Sangki System (Sumatera Barat, Indonesia)

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The Sangki system is developed in the impressive cone-karst of Gunung Seribu (Indonesia: Sumatera Barat). The underground Sangki river crosses the limestone range from northeast to southwest. From its sink, the river can be followed on about 6 km in large galleries interrupted by several boulder zones (Ngalau Surat, total development more than 6.5 km). The passage continues downstream, but retreat was decided because of Mulu Foot desease. The Sangki river resurges among a boulder choke which cannot be entered. However, a little higher in the massif, Ngalau Ikan Sangki gives another access to the river. This fine river cave, unfortunately littered with plastic bags left by swiftlet nest collectors, was followed 1 km downstream and about 3 km upstream. At this point, we were at a few hundred metres from the extreme downstream point of Ngalau Surat, but connection was not made by lack of time. Ngalau Sopan Kijang is a third, large fossil cave which joins the Sangki river 2 km from Ngalau Ikan Sangki entrance. At last, Ngalau Puangan Hilir, a stream sink several kilometres north of the Sangki resurgence, has been explored on 1.3 km to a choke. It probably corresponds to the large inlet which arrives a few hundred metres of the downstream terminus of Ngalau Surat. The four parts of the system develop altogether 12.3 km, and their connection would make it one of the largest subterranean system in Indonesia. The Sangki system is also interesting for its subterranean fauna, now the best known of Sumatra. Several troglobitic species and a few stygobitic ones have been discovered, as listed in this paper.