

## Project Update: February 2012

Seminars about speleogenesis of Georgian caves, biospeleology, palaeobiology, and the necessity for local cave conservation were conducted for public school pupils in the villages of Darkveti, Sveri and Zodi (Chiatura, Imereti region). During three organized excursions, 15 pupils from each school visited Khvedelidzeebisklde, Taroklde, Samertskhleklde, Kotiasklde and Kudurebisklde caves. Speleological, speleobiological and palaeontological investigation methods were demonstrated and pupils were encouraged to contribute to the investigations. During the excursions the hitherto unknown Kldistskali Cave was discovered and a preliminary survey was undertaken. Three collembolan species: *Folsomia ksenemani*, *Metaphorura affinis* and *Protaphorura sakatoi*, were recorded for the first time in Georgia, while *Laemostenus suramensis* (Carabidae) and *Leptothorax acervorum* (Formicidae) - for the first time from the caves. Palynological data of the caves modern sediments completely reflect peculiarities of the existed environmental conditions that will be of great significance to future studies of ancient cultural or natural layers preserved in the caves.



Top left: Entrance of Kldistskali Cave. Top right: Excursion in Khvedelidzeebisklde Cave. Bottom left: Excursion in Taroklde Cave. Bottom right: Seminar at Darkveti public school.

