

Creag Dhubh na Caillich Dry Tooling Miniguide

Ali Rose

Rock Type: Hornfels

Map Ref: NN 1542 7634

Crag Base: 170m

Aspect: North-North-West

Parking: NN 1449 7641

Approach Time: 20 min



Map data: © [OpenStreetMap](#), [SRTM](#) | Map style: © [OpenTopoMap](#) (CC-BY-SA)

A Hornfels outcrop above Torlundy, which is 20 mins walk from the Ben Nevis North Face Car Park. Several routes were climbed here by Brian McDermott and Gary Latter before the crag was abandoned to moss and the forest. The crag was used for dry tooling quietly for years before being developed by local climbers as a bolted dry tooling venue in 2020 with the first ascensionists permission. The rock is high quality and while its full of cracks the crag is almost never dry due to the north-facing aspect, the moss banks above and the forest. The crag required extensive cleaning and can be pretty muddy around the base. Old waterproofs and gardening gloves are standard!

Note: Some of the routes have been done as Sport climbs. See: <https://www.smc.org.uk/climbs/newroutes/crag/5134>

Approach: Park at the North Face car park (NN 1449 7641). Follow the track towards Ben Nevis but when its footpath turns right (signposted Allt a' Mhuilinn), head uphill direct to the puggy line on old mountain bike trails. Cross the puggy line and continue up the trail to the upper forestry track. Follow the track east for 600m to cairns on the right below a narrow fire break (the bottom of this is at NN 153 764), then follow this up to the crag. Go left for Main Wall then The Lost World, right for Black Magic Slab and Barefoot Slab.

The Lost World Left-Hand

The first two routes are on a sector to the left of The Lost World.

Moss Botherers Anonymous 15m D6 ★★★

Ali Rose, Nathan Adam 4 Nov 2020

The left-hand line. Climb awkwardly up the wall to reach the crack of Jungleland. Step left and follow hooks up the wall to a final pull onto the ledge. The hooks are better than they look from the ground.

Jungleland 15m D5+ ★★★

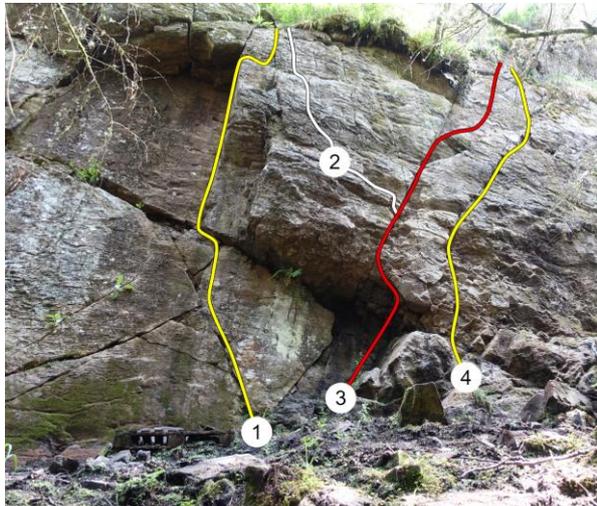
Nathan Adam, Ali Rose 4 Nov 2020

The right-hand line on this face. Climb the short awkward groove until it is possible to hook the hollow flake (which may have disappeared) and step left into the crack-line. Follow the crack up and right across the wall. Steeper than it looks.

The Lost World

Map Ref: NN 1538 7644

The crag to the left of Main Wall, the obvious feature is the left facing corner on the left side (Eastern Travellers).



- 1 Eastern Travellers 12m D4+ ★★★
- 2 Heathens 12m D6 ★★
- 3 The Frogsquat 11m D5+
- 4 A Bridge Too Far 10m D5 ★★

Photo: Colin Moody

Eastern Travellers 12m D4+ ★★★

Scott Brooks, Kris Hill

Follow the left facing corner before pulling out from under the roof. A good intro to the steeper routes.

Heathens 12m D6 ★★

Ali Rose, Blair Fyffe, Al Docherty, Matthew Rowbottom, Caspar McKeever 14 Nov 2020

'A person regarded as lacking culture or moral principles.' The line right of the corner. Pull steeply through the overlap (good hooks leading right) before making tenuous moves up and left across the wall to the lower-off of Eastern Travellers.

The Frogsquat 11m D5+

Ali Rose, Caspar McKeever 7 Oct 2021

The left-hand of the two cracks. Climb to the second bolt of Heathens before continuing rightwards up the crack. Awkward at the top and worth climbing Bridge too far first and hanging a long quickdraw on the bolt at the top of the crack.

A Bridge Too Far 10m D5 ★

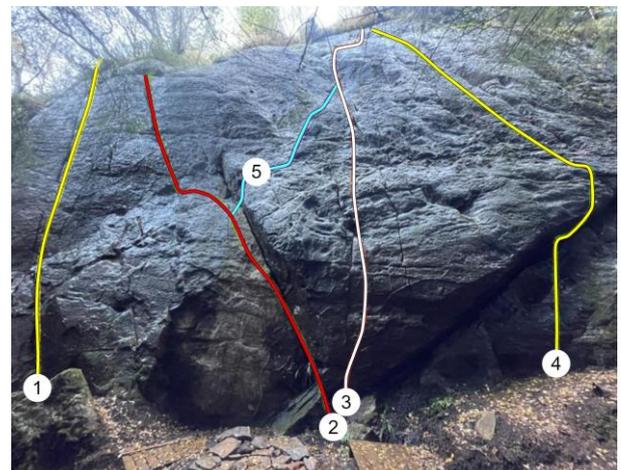
Caspar McKeever, Ali Rose 6 Oct 2021

The right-hand of the two leaning cracks, stepping out right at the top to the lower-off of The Frogsquat.

Main Wall

Map Ref: NN 1536 7643

The first wall reached by going left at the top of the firebreak.



- 1 An Rúnda 15m D7 ★★
- 2 "Tech 6" 17m D7 ★★★
- 3 Night Swimming 16m D5 ★
- 4 Firebreak 18m D6 ★
- 5 No Bolts for Old Men 16m D6 ★★★

An Rúnda 15m D7 ★★

Jamie Skelton, Morag Eagleson 20 Oct 2020

The vertical steep crack on the left side of the main wall.

Localised Effort 16m D8

Jamie Skelton, Morag Eagleson 5 Jun 2021

A training eliminate line climbing flared cracks in the wall between An Rúnda and "Tech 6". Climb An Rúnda to its third bolt and make a tenuous move right to gain the cracks. Follow these to the top, clipping An Rúnda bolts to the left.

"Tech 6" 17m D7 ★★★

Tom Weston, Rob Brown, Ali Rose, Nathan Adam, Scott Webster 27 Oct 2020

The double crack. Pull steeply up the first crack before stepping across to join the one to the left. The crux might be the move low down or it might be the pump.

"Tech 10" 18m D7 ★

Jamie Skelton, Morag Eagleson 5 Jun 2021

Follow "Tech 6" to the end of its first crack. Instead of trending left, continue up the steep wall above.

No Bolts for Old Men 16m D6 ★★★

Ali Rose, Huw Scott 5 Nov 2021

Climb the initial crack of "Tech 6" before pulling right (there's a good hook in the middle of the wall) to enter the final moves of Night Swimming.

Night Swimming 16m D5 ★

Al Docherty, Ali Rose 29 Oct 2020

The wall to the right of "Tech 6". Pull onto the wall and make tenuous moves up to gain a stepped ledge. Pull left then right to reach the anchor.

Firebreak 18m D6 ★

Jamie Skelton, Morag Eagleson 20 Oct 2020

The first route encountered going left after walking up the firebreak. Climb the obvious and awkward flared groove. Possibly climbed before.

The following two routes are on the right-hand part of the main wall.

Bring Da Muckus 20m D6+ ★★★

Ali Rose, Nathan Adam 5 Oct 2023

The left-hand line up the tallest bit of wall at the crag, just to the right at the top of the firebreak. Step onto the ledge and climb the series of cracks until a long reach can be made through the steepening. Balancy to finish.

Greatest Shower on Earth 20m D7 ★★

Ali Rose, Matthew Rowbottom 13 Oct 2023

The right-hand set of seams and cracks is awkward to start.

Black Magic Slab

Map Ref: NN 1520 7640

On the way up to Barefoot Slab; go right at the top of the firebreak.

What Lies Beneath 12m D6 ★

Ali Rose, Mark Chambers 5 Oct 2022

The left-hand line of bolts is harder than it looks. A couple of thin moves up the cracked slab into a torquy, steinpull-type awkward last move.

Black Magic 12m D5 ★★

Ali Rose, Rob Brown 15 Dec 2021

The thin crack up the steep slab.

Caillich Dubh 12m D5+ ★★★

Ali Rose, Mark Chambers 5 Oct 2022

The right-most line of bolts. Clip the first four bolts up the crack then step left and follow Black Magic to the chains.

Barefoot Slab

The upper slab can be reached by going right from the top of the firebreak, then up and back left above Black Magic Slab. The two rightmost routes, Indigenous Nomenclature and Training for the new Munroism, have an anchor/abseil station at 8m for practicing multi-pitching.



Starting up Barefoot Running

Barefoot Running 16m D4 ★

Tom Weston, Ali Rose, Scott Webster

Left of the ash tree is a smooth slab with a right-facing groove at the base. Start at the bottom of this. Climb the groove before pulling out left onto the slab, then follow this to the top.

There are two bolted rock climbs to the left of this route

The Hilary Step 16m D4 ★

Ali Rose, Scott Webster, Tom Weston

Start next to the ash tree. Pull up onto the obvious ledge before moving up right into a steep groove. Follow this to join the groove and crack cutting back left.

Indigenous Nomenclature 16m D4 ★★

Scott Webster, Tom Weston, Ali Rose

Start at the birch tree on the right. Climb cracks in the slab to gain the groove. Use the same lower off and last couple of bolts as The Hilary Step.

Training for the new Munroism 20m D4

Ali Rose, Rob Brown 23 Sep 2021

The right-most line with 10 bolts. Climb slabby bulges to the ledge (possible belay). Now clip a high bolt and pull out right around the bulge (hard to find a sidepull hook followed by drilled hook in the right-hand wall) before continuing up the open groove. It is possible to start this via Indigenous Nomenclature.



Entering the Groove on The Hilary Step.