

# "GIBRALTER ROCK BOULDERING GUIDE"

by Luke Buxton

To get to Gibraltar Rock area from Dartmouth, take Main st. (becoming highway 107) North East out of the city. Drive till you come to the end of the highway (about 25 minutes). Take a right on Marine Drive (highway 7) into Musquodoboit. Take a left onto highway 357 right before the RCMP building. Continue on the 357 for about 15 minutes towards Meaghers Grant until you see a small sign for Gibraltar Rock Loop trail on the right. There is a gravel parking spot and a large hand painted map of the trail system next to the gate. The Rail trail runs all the way back to Skull Rock and Musquodoboit.

Gibraltar Rock bouldering is unique to most of the climbing in Halifax area, as it is in the thick of some pretty lush forest (for Nova Scotia) with lots of bright green moss blanketing almost everything on the forest floor. This means more scrubbing sometimes, but the atmosphere more than makes up for it. With the canopy of trees overhead, you may have to brush off the tops of climbs a little. As well, there is still plenty of room for development in these areas, so bring a brush or two.

This Bouldering guide represents only a fraction of the rocks that have been discovered by many in the Musquodoboit area, and as time permits, I would eventually like to document more bouldering areas around Skull Rock, Three Towers, and other Rail Trail clusters. If you would like to add a new climb to this guide, or have any questions, e-mail me at [lukebuxton@hotmail.com](mailto:lukebuxton@hotmail.com)

As always, climb at your own risk, be respectful, and keep the woods clean!





TO  
MEAGHERS  
GRANT

P

Barbarian Area

Maasy  
Boulder

High Rise  
Area

GIBRALTER ROCK

Delivery Boy  
Area

Lost Stones  
Area

GIBRALTER  
ROCK  
LOOP  
TRAIL 1.3 km

HIGHWAY 357

THE RAIL TRAIL 14.5 km

NORTH  
GRANITE  
RIDGE  
TRAIL

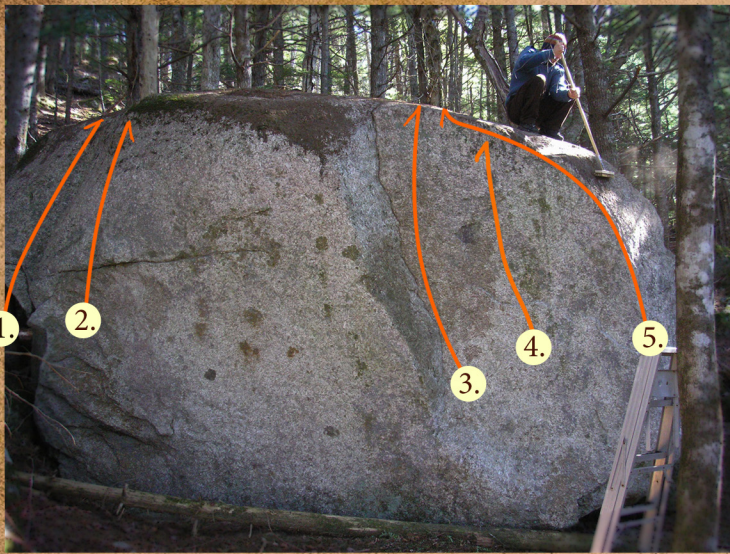
MUSQUODOBOIT RIVER

Written, illustrated and designed by  
Luke Buxton

Special thanks to  
Mark Maas  
Chris Eager  
Todd Foster  
and Dan Freeman

TO  
MUSQUODOBOIT





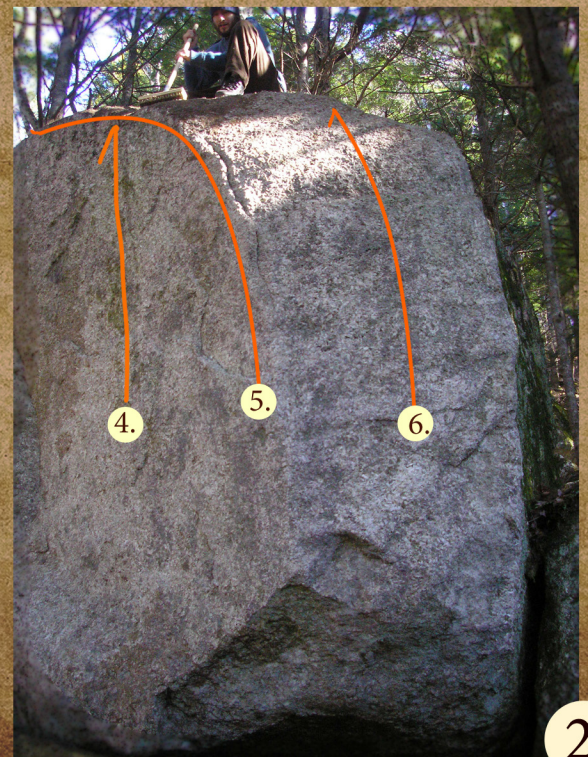
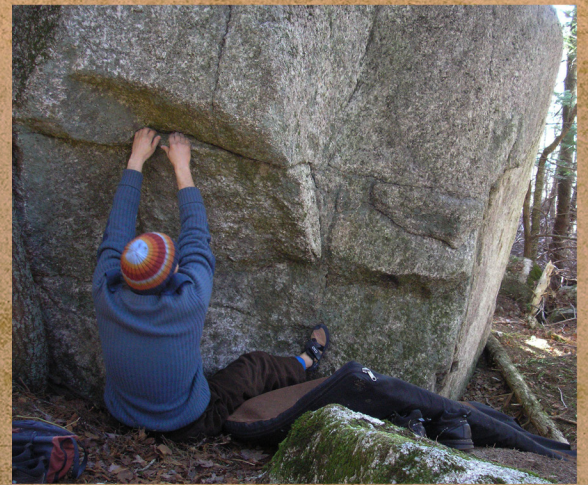
# "THE MAASY BOULDER"

Literally a 30 second walk from the parking lot, this large gem has 6 nice lines on it so far, 5 of which have been sent. The first boulder we came upon, it has a nice open flat landing all around, and is right on the beginning of the Gibraltar Rock Loop trail. If you can't find this boulder, you should just give up going outside all together.



1. "Pioneer" V1 (SDS)  
Start sitting low with hands matched on juggy shelf, making your way right and up into the scoop to top out.
2. PROJECT.  
Decent crimpers on the face right of the scoop would be a great start for a burley ascent up the very slopy and bare arete.
3. "Unearthed" V5  
Wicked and unique problem following the thin, slightly overhanging dihedral, using crimps, a double gaston, and even a dynamic finish to the slopy top! Would love to see this go static.
4. "Sir Richard Pump-a-lot" V4  
Fun variation. Grab crimps, paste feet and fire to top!
5. "Linus's Arete" V1  
Nice high stepping arete! The mantle at the top is a bit tricky and committing.
- 6 "Fruit of the Loom" V2  
Climb up the pillar straight on, using both sides and nice shelves.

Maasy on the start of "Pioneer".  
Mark Maas helped make this very 'mossy' boulder climbable with many hours of scrubbing invested.



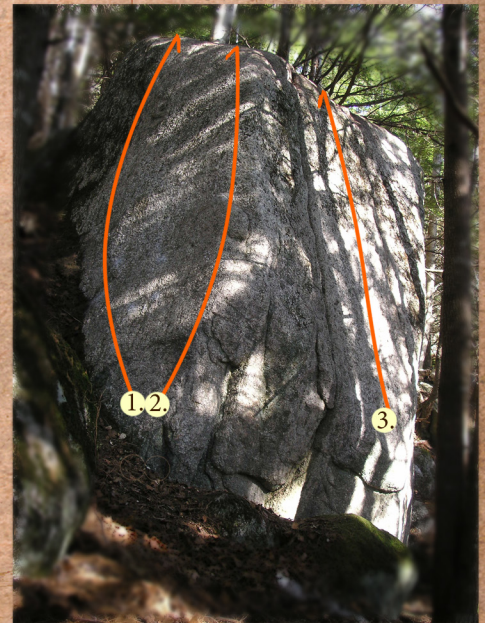


# "HIGH RISE AREA"

From the parking lot, walk along the main rail trail for about 400m until you see the first piece of orange flagging tape on a birch tree to your left. Head into the woods here, go uphill for a minute till you see the "Grasshopper" boulder. Keep going up the hill, and slightly to the right to find the mammoth menhir of a boulder, the "High Rise" boulder. If you go right of here for a few seconds, you'll soon find a cute little alcove of boulders chock full of warm-ups and quality V0's that make up the rest of the "High Rise" area.



The tall and intimidating "High Rise" boulder. The most striking line, "Rising Higher", taunting you to try it!!

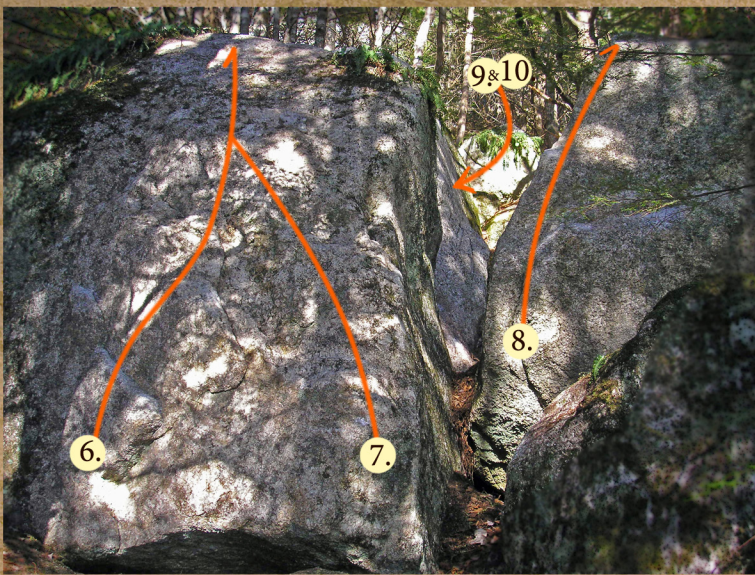


Scrubbing away at the picture perfect twin cracks of "High Rise".

## "High Rise" Boulder

1. "Derailed" V2  
On the far left of the High Rise boulder, start up slab crimps and edges, staying low and bearing left till you can climb the thin crack to the top. Arete is out!
2. "Rail Gun" V0  
Same start, but climb slab straight up, using the arete all you want.
3. "High Rise" V2  
Climb the awesome vertical parallel cracks. Highball...
4. "Rising Higher" V4  
This stunning finger crack has been said by a few climbers to be one of the nicest lines in Nova Scotia! Scary landing.
5. "Pseudo-Staircase" V0  
Nice easy climb up shelves on the right side.





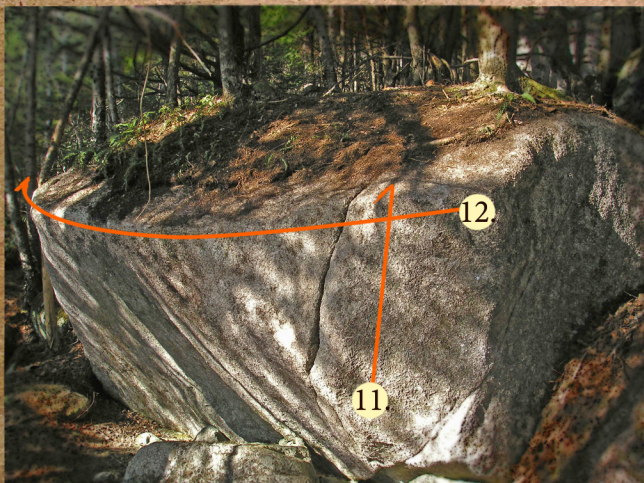
The "Novice Nook" above and right. A nice cluster of warm-ups and a perfect flat-landing area to bring beginners!

### "Novice Nook"

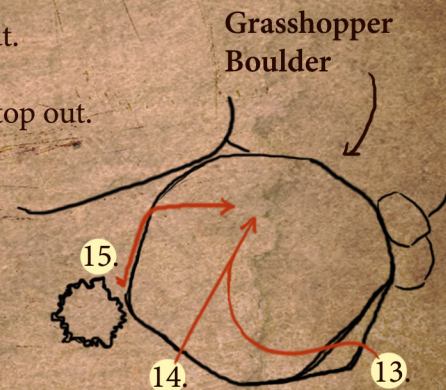
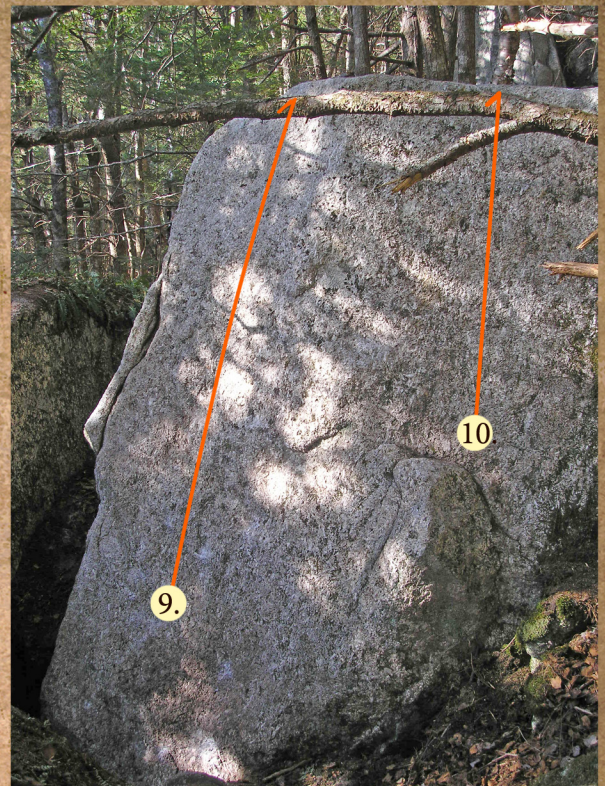
6. "Gizmo 1" V0 (SDS)  
Start with hands on big rails and climb straight up nice features.
7. "Gizmo 2" V0 (SDS)  
Start the same face but on the far right jug instead, finishing up the same as #1.
8. "D.I.K. PowerHits!" V4 (SDS)  
Climb the short arete starting sitting, with decent sidepulls and crimpers, but poor feet.
9. "Foot Fetish" V2  
Beautiful slab line! Really nice moves straight up the slab without using the arete on the left. Climbing the slab with the arete is a fun V0 variation.
10. "Fuck Fish." V0 (SDS)  
Weird little problem. Sit start using the big juggy shelf, manteling it to get to the top. Kinda lame.

### "Cocktail Slapfest" Boulder:

11. "Deviant" V5 (SDS)  
Climb this mini prow from the ground up using the cracks and pinch. Burly top out.
12. "Cocktail Slapfest" V6  
Slap your way across the boulder from right to left wrapping around the far side to top out. Easier than getting in a barfight in Terrence Bay main.



"Cocktail Slapfest" boulder... Sissier than a "Barfight".



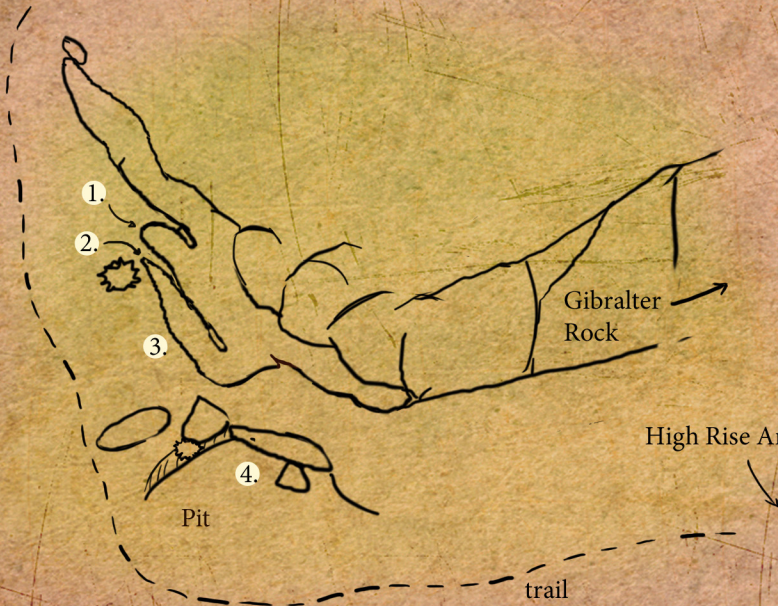
### "Grasshopper" Boulder

13. "Bamboozled" V2 (SDS)  
Starts low on shelf, below arete. Using contorted body position and a left hand on the slopy arete in front of you, make awkward moves to rock on to the slab and top it out up the slab.
14. "Young Grasshopper Slab" V0  
Easy slab climb up front.
15. "Eco-Terrorist" V3 (SDS)  
Start matched on the juggy arete, making your way left and up to perfect crimps until you can mantel up and top out the side slab on the grasshopper.



# "BARBARIAN AREA"

If you look uphill from "High Rise" boulder, you should see the cliffs of Gibraltar Rock poking through the trees... Seems like there are some semi-established routes on these walls, and they get even better and bigger towards the right. However, the Barbarian bouldering area makes up the far left (northwest) side of the beginning of the wall. Walk uphill till you hit a small trail at the base of the cliffs, and follow it back in the direction of the parking lot until you get to a nice little wall that cuts around uphill. This is the wall and boulders that make up "Barbarian area". The nicest tall wall in the bottom corner was so covered in moss and lichen, and seemingly so bare of holds we were initially dissapointed there was no climbs on the perfect small overhanging face. But early on in developing, we discovered a nice odd incut slopey two hand jug half way up the wall. We called it the "Barbarian Project". Big, burly, barbaric dyno anyone?



1. "Space Divided" V0 (SDS)  
Climb the prow/outside corner from the bottom jug using the ledges, crimps and right thin crack. The large crack on your left is obviously out and makes for the easy down climb.
2. "Dandelion" V0 (SDS)  
Climb the sharp arete.
3. "A Man Needs a Maid" V3  
Like Neil Young: Classic. Super Fun line up the crack system and left facing flakes. Nice lofty top out on good holds.
4. "Barbarian" PROJECT  
Start on the only decent hold on the blank face: a bizarre 'hole' on the left of the slightly overhanging wall. Using the juggy flake below for a foot, either dyno or use hidden crystals on the left to levitate up to the half decent hold toward the top.  
Where are the Barbarians at?

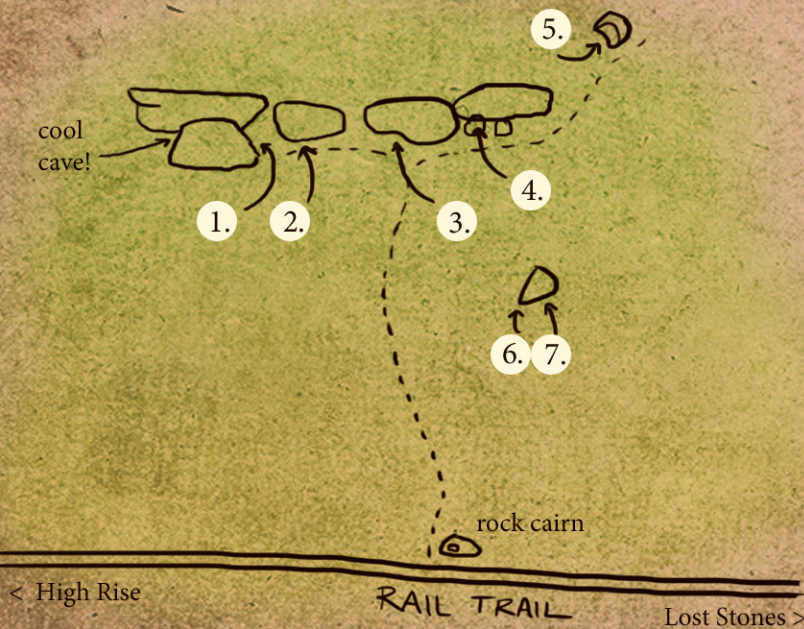


"A Man Needs a Maid" sees its 1st ascent. It was one of the only lines in the area that needed little cleaning... Rich cleaned it years ago but never returned for the ascent.

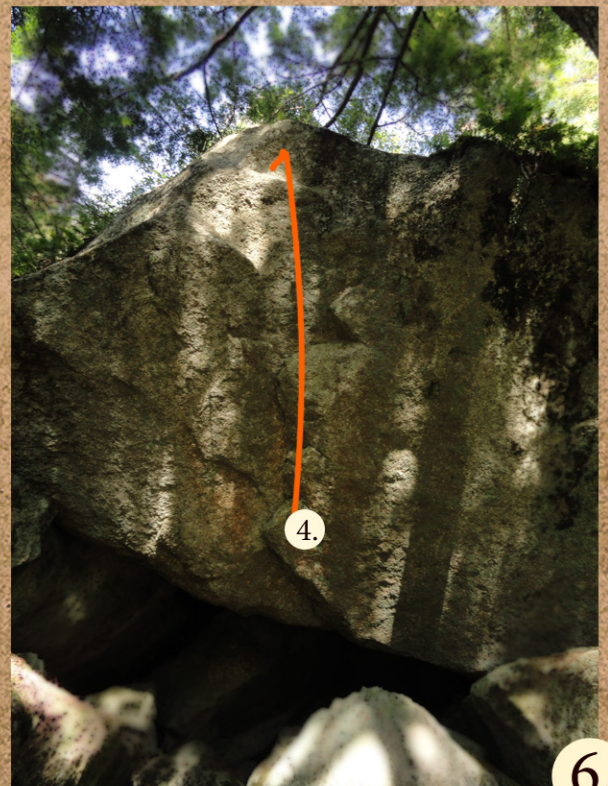
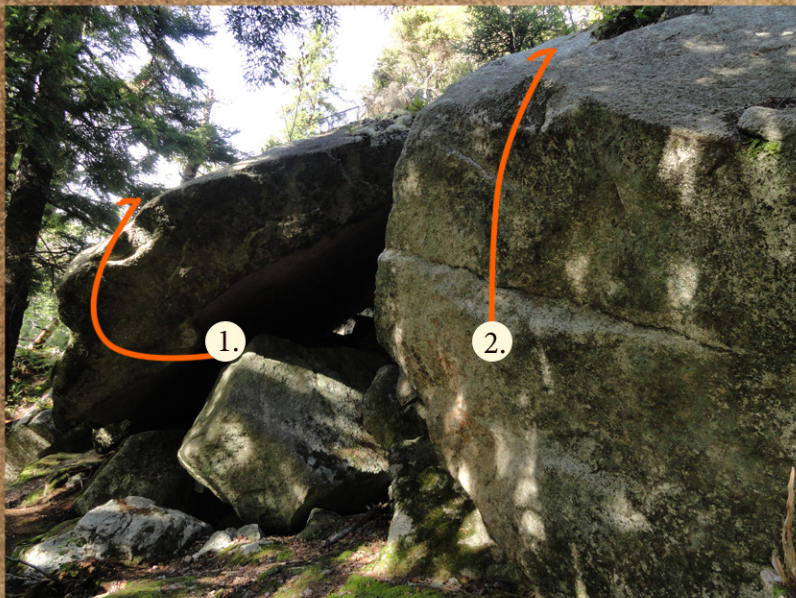


# "DELIVERY BOY" AREA

This is the original area discovered by Chris Eager in 2004, (although development didn't happen till 2006 and 2007) and was headed up by Chris Eager, Zig, Shawn White and crew. These are the most obvious sweet lines in the area, a nice cluster of large boulders, a ways under the center of Gibraltar rock. There is still a lot of room for development in this area, so bring a brush in case something catches your eye. To get there, hike the rail trail past the High Rise entrance for another minute or two till you see a little rock cairn and flagging tape. Enter the woods here, and go uphill till you see the wall of boulders. "Delivery Boy" is a unique problem and a must try!



1. "Delivery Boy" V8 (SDS) FA Ghislain Losier  
Starting in the cave on the slopy rail, make your way out to sidepulls/crimps and then good jugs on the lip to top out. One of the cruxes is not scraping your back along the rock behind you at the beginning.
2. "Cold Pizza" V5  
Climb the big rails up the middle of the boulder to find a committing and tricky T.O. A nice line!
3. The Roof PROJECT.  
Good luck on this one...
4. "Grand Theft" V8 (SDS) FA Ben Blakeney  
Awesome line. Make your way up the overhung wall on jagged crimpy rails.
5. "Pointy" V0 (SDS)  
Start sitting under the pointy rock found a little ways to the right and up from "Yammy" Climb it for a fun warm up! A fall could be awkward and bad...
6. "Another Arete" V3 (SDS)  
Start low on lip to the left of the arete, and traverse around the corner and up the high, sharp arete to T.O. at its highest point.
7. PROJECT.  
Right up the bare face under the arete...?







#### More pictures of "Delivery Boy" Area...

top left: "Another Arete", and a crimpy face project for some French climber to do.

top right: "Pointy" is a good warm-up. short and sweet.

bottom: This is the roof project. Looks awesome, but under close inspection, I wonder how anyone was even getting off the ground... (if they were). Perhaps more scrubbing would reveal more crimps?





# THE "LOST STONES"

One of the last gems discovered in Gibraltar, this area was found by Lydia Buxton in an exploration hike around the area. All 5 climbs are worth the trip! There are a few other insignificant lines surrounding the boulder in the woods, including an easy slab up the hill which is kinda fun. But none compare to climbing on the Lost Stone!

## "Lost Stone" Boulder

### 1. "Drunk Without Drinking" V7

A very cool, very tricky face/slab climb. It took a while to figure out the whacky moves that start this problem. Start to the right of the tree on sidepull and crimps. Go straight up the slabby face on whatever you can find without dabbing the tree. Looks far easier than it is!

### 2. "A Stones Throw" V8 FA Adam Benjamin

One of the best lines in Gibraltar! Climb the obvious corner that starts five feet off the ground. Start with right hand crimping the seam, and left pinching the slopey corner. Jump to stab a foot on the loaf in front of you. A SDS on the crimpy rails below would be a mighty but possible project to extend this one.

### 3. "Stone Seeker" V4 (SDS)

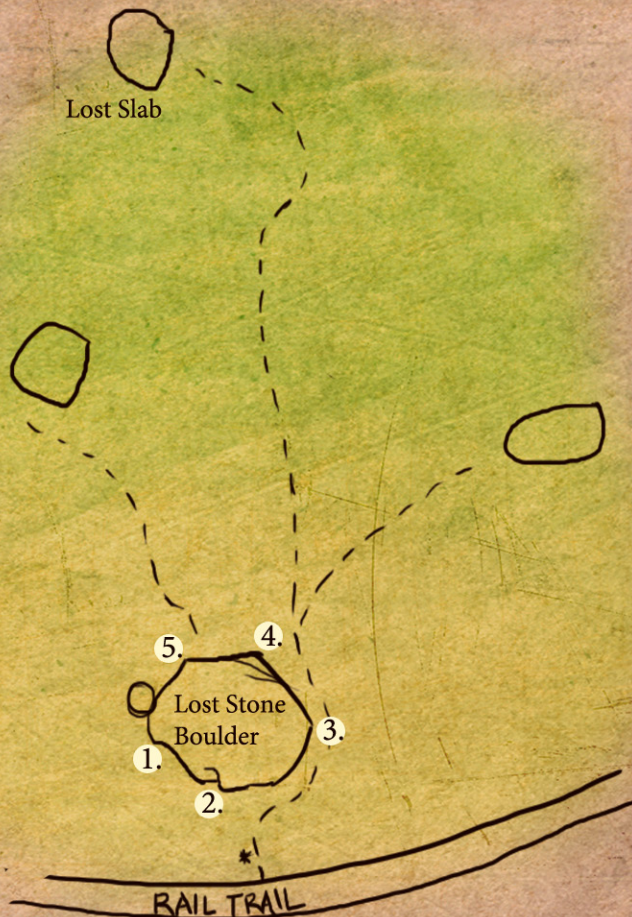
A fun lip traverse and the last climb I scrubbed in Gibraltar. Start real low on the right, traverse the steep arete lip to where it peaks.

### 4. "Fungi" V0 (SDS)

Start sitting on the lowest rail and climb up fun juggy rails.

### 5. "Vector Affair" V4 (SDS)

Begins on the cool jug under the lip far to the left of the tree, and traverses right on the slopey shelf till the point. Mantle the shelf (crux) to gain the easy top out. Fun!



The "Lost Stone" from three angles:

