

the talus until you arrive at the low point on the cliff—the arête where the two walls meet [585164,4822494](#), about 15 min from the East Nose.

### 11 Caterpillar Chimney 5.5 G 60'

The approach and this route are exercises in self torment.

**Start:** Roughly in the center of the southeast-facing wall at a 16'-wide chimney that runs the full height of the cliff.

**P1 5.5 G:** Climb up the outside edge of the chimney. The crux is the move around an overhang formed by a block leaning across the chimney opening to a stance on the right. At its top, step right onto a block, then up a slab to the top. 60'  
FA Oct 28, 2013, Jay Harrison (solo)

## HUCKLEBERRY MOUNTAIN

**Location** South of Johnsburg, accessed from NY 8

**Summary** Many moderates mixed with a selection of quality 5.10s and 5.11s; many of the moderate routes are grown in.



Huckleberry is a series of broken bands of cliffs on the south and west slopes of Huckleberry Mountain. It is a frustrating area with mystifying topography and very few clean features with which to identify routes. Many parties visit the cliff only to turn away unable to find any routes. Persistence pays off, as there are some high-quality routes here.

The approach to Huckleberry involves hiking over Crane Mountain to the Paint Mine Ruins Trail, a poorly marked, overgrown tote road in the valley high above Paintbed Brook between Crane Mountain and Huckleberry Mountain. Once on the trail, on the opposite side of the valley, you can glimpse the cliffs through the trees. It is possible to head up just about anywhere, but locating yourself at the cliff base would be difficult. First-time visitors are encouraged to follow the directions to the Main Cliff and begin explorations there, as this has the most distinguishable features on the cliff, such as the Great Dihedral and the Hard Guy Wall. Due to the difficulty in finding routes, the starts are especially descriptive in this section.

The leftmost section of rock is the North End, followed by the Boneyard to its right. These cliffs face west and are often very dirty and nondescript, but there are a few notable routes here, namely **Mr. Toad's Wild Ride**. Further right is the Corner Cliff, where the cliff line makes a bend to face southwest. Moving to the right, the next notable area is the Main Cliff, which begins with the Great Dihedral and extends southeast to the Hard Guy Wall; the Main Cliff holds the highest concentration of quality routes. High above the Main Cliff is the White Slab, a wide slab and perhaps the most intriguing feature when you view Huckleberry from a

6 Richard E. Tucker, "Huckleberry Mountain" (typescript, Adirondack Research Library, Niskayuna, N.Y., Jul 18, 2002).

distance. As you move southeast from the Main Cliff, there are several smaller walls—No-Name; Last Wall; and, up by the ruins, the Factory Slabs. There are just a few climbs on these last walls, and nothing especially noteworthy.

A forest fire in 2003 affected areas of vegetation in the vicinity of the cliffs, most notably around the No-Name Wall and the Last Wall.

The route descriptions in this section were adapted from Dick Tucker's meticulous notes, with his permission.<sup>6</sup> Contributions were also made by Jay Harrison and his unpublished guide, "Cabin Country Rock."

### HISTORY

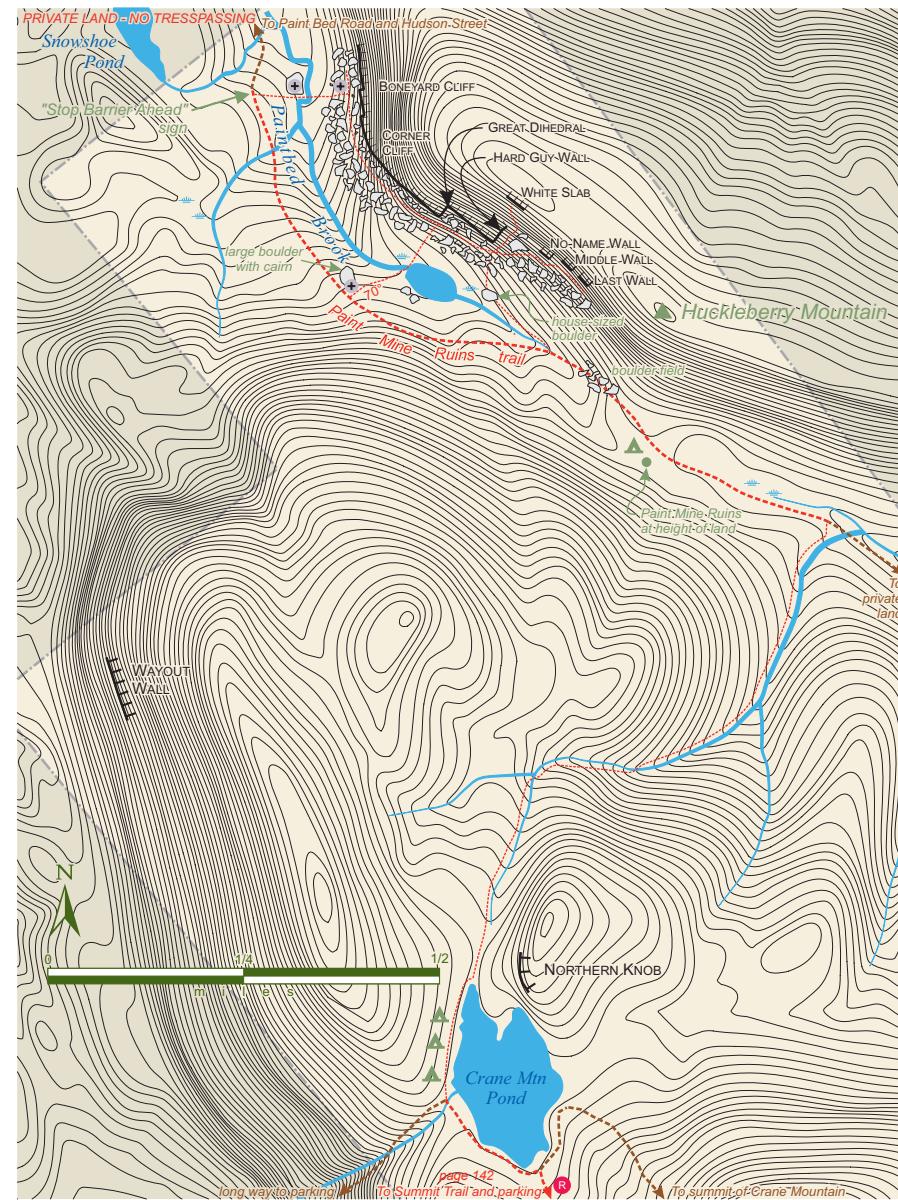
The earliest reported climbing at Huckleberry was initiated by Dick Tucker, once again inspired by a photo in Barbara McMartin's 1986 guidebook and from a view of the White Slab from a rocky crag on Crane Mountain. Tucker recruited Hobey Walker, Jim Bender, and Jeremy Munson to make a reconnaissance in 1990 to find the White Slab and ended up thrashing around, finally climbing several routes on the Last Wall as a consolation prize. This initial visit sparked several years of rapid development, with Tucker being the main motivation behind the great majority of the routes. Another significant contributor was Walker, a local who had climbed in the Adirondacks since he was 12 years old. Walker was a design and production engineer for Summit Research (then later started Epic Software) in Schenectady and a talented climber. He returned with various partners, most notably Dave Furman; together they put in most of the difficult lines, including the beautiful **Insomnia** and the routes on the Hard Guy Wall. At around the same time, and by coincidence, Tad Welch visited the cliff and, with his cousin Bill Widrig, established several memorable lines. Eventually development ceased when Furman left for Colorado and Tucker developed elbow tendonitis from too much scrubbing, but it picked back up again in 1996 with the indefatigable Jay Harrison picking off more moderate lines, often with a still-recovering Tucker.

### DIRECTIONS (MAPS PAGES 142 AND 215)

The traditional (and easy) approach from Hudson Street is closed to the public. Climbers now must approach from the Crane Mountain Trailhead, the only public approach to Huckleberry Mountain.

Park as for Crane Mountain (directions page 144). From the parking area (0 min), hike up the summit hiking trail (map page 142) to the intersection with the trail to Crane Mountain Pond (30 min). Turn left and follow the trail marked with red discs to the shore of the pond (45 min). Turn left and follow a hiking trail clockwise around the pond (map page 142). The trail crosses the pond's outlet and turns left [0522883,4822775](#); leave the trail and continue along the shore on a good herd path past several excellent campsites.

Bushwhack to the end of a long narrow bay at the northwest end of the pond to a moss-covered streambed (1 hr). Follow the streambed downhill and north



to a junction with a larger stream that enters from the left (1hr 20 min) [0583101,4823186](#). Continue east downstream past another stream junction that enters from the right (south) at which point the stream swings back toward the north. When the stream begins to level out and swings back to the east, leave the streambed and go north across level woods for 100 yards to a wide, double-track path, the Paint Mine Ruins Trail (2 hr) [0583666,4823748](#).

Turn left and hike the trail, which is unreliablely marked, past a marsh on the right and over the height of land between Crane and Huckleberry Mountains. At 2 hr 15 min the trail passes through a boulderfield. Directions to the various cliffs are described relative to this boulderfield.