

Thunder Dome climbing area (near Ravens Crag, just past CIC Slabs in NELSON)

General information:

After almost 20 years, initial development of the Thunder Dome area is complete in a quiet, natural setting in West Arm Provincial Park. Completion has been consistent with the Park Master Plan which recognizes climbing as an activity to be supported in this area. The Thunder Dome area stays shady and cool on hot days, usually getting a nice breeze up from the lake in the afternoons; but also has some sun on cool days.

Access / Approach

Drive or ride up Elwyn St, turn left on to Svoboda Rd, park at 200 meters (same as for CIC climbing area, park just before the narrow, winding road caution sign). [The small pullouts further along are mainly intended for vehicle passage on Svoboda Road and locals do not like people parking there – So, please just take the four minutes walk from CIC parking, thanks.]

Hike approximately 4 minutes on Svoboda Rd to the top of the first hill. Look for a blue ribbon on the right 3m past the bottom of “Hippy Killer” mountain bike trail. Hike approx. 3 minutes up bike trail and turn left at a cedar tree with another blue ribbon and follow an access route linking old game and human paths. Hike approx. 5 minutes to Thunder Dome.

The climbing is mainly on highly textured holds with a few friction slab moves. The new routes represent the largest concentration of easy climbs in the Kootenays. There are numerous holds. In a few places the climbs were intentionally placed close together, to maximize use of all the great features. We have used different coloured bolt hangers to help distinguish climbs in these “pinch points” - if you find yourself on the next climb over, don't worry, just mix and match and enjoy the great features!

First ascents were made in Summer 2015 by the Tres Jubilados (three retirees): Larry Bickerton, Mike Curran, and Hamish Mutch.

The first ascensionists used **no chalk** and request others to refrain as well.

You may wish to bring a small brush to sweep away any pine needles that may accumulate on the larger holds

Climbs are described from left to right on each section of rock, starting with the first section encountered after coming up the access route.



FRAGGLE ROCK (6 bolts except first climb is mixed, about 20m); difficulty ranges from 5.6 to 5.5 and generally get easier from left to right
Descent: Rappel or lower off anchors.

1. The Count - (mixed, 3 bolts, 3 or so cam placements)

Climb along the corner, below the overhanging wall, clipping two grey bolts and then using gear placements (small to medium cams) to the left of the fir tree, with a final grey bolt before the left anchor.

2. Bert & 3. Ernie (2 climbs that share a line of silver bolts). The left side (Bert) wanders a bit, left of the bolts. The right side (Ernie) sticks to right of the bolt-line. Shares anchor with "The Count"

4. Sesame Street (Grey bolts)

The easiest climb at the crag - can you do it with no hands? Shares anchor with "Magic Carpet"

5. Magic Carpet (Blue bolts)- After a bouldery slab start, enjoy the easy holds as you wind along the edge of the crag, clipping blue bolts to the right anchor.

5A. Aladdin's Grotto – There are a number of alternative starts to Magic Carpet on the right side of Fraggle Rock. These are short (2-3 moves) faces, blocks, ramps and slabs. Some are bolted (grey bolts), some allow gear placement. Eight have been done so far – how many more can you find?



JUBILADOS SLAB (the “middle zone” to the left of Fraggie Rock (7 bolts, about 22 m) - all climbs angle to the right in the bottom half, then are more vertical after the small "overlap" mid-cliff (except Vagabondo). The climbs generally are more difficult going from left to right. Difficulty ranges from 5.5 to 5.7. The first bolt on some climbs may seem high but there are very positive holds once you are off the ground.

Descent: Rappel or lower off anchors.

6. Vagabondo - Follow the crack/seam feature that angles up right to the third anchor from the left, has 4 yellow bolts then uses a bolt on each of the next 3 climbs.

7. Lighter Shade of Grey - follows the “lighter grey” bolts to the top, left anchor

8. Azul - follows the blue bolts, angling over at the top to the second anchor

9. Triple Scoop - follows the black bolts, same anchor as Azul

10. Rojo - follows the red bolts, climbing on left of the first four bolts, and then heading straight up to end at same anchor as Vagabondo (3rd anchor from the left)

11. No Más - follows the edge of the crag, using the first four red bolts of Rojo that are within reach on your left, then follows grey bolts to the far right anchor.



THUNDER DOME This area is just past Jubilados and has two single pitch climbs and two 2 pitch climbs on similar rock. Difficulty is about the same as the other areas (described from left to right): The right and left upper pitches feature the most challenging (~5.8) slab moves on the entire crag, but the cruxes are fairly short and well protected. It is like the “graduation cliff” for those who have been learning to climb on the easier climbs on Fraggie and Jubilados.

12. Visionary 2 Pitches. P1 mid 5’s. Climb 18 m past 4 bolts to belay station. P2 5.8 Climb overlap and then up past pine trees to top anchor (28m) 10 bolts. **Descent:** Rappel down **Enlightenment** to mid-station and then down **Rite of Passage**.

13. Enlightenment 2 pitches. P1. mid 5’s. From same belay stance as Visionary, climb up buttress past 5 bolts to mid-station at 20 m. P2. 5.8 Regain buttress and climb past 9 bolts to same upper anchor as Visionary. (28m). **Descent:** Rappel down **Enlightenment** to mid-station and then down **Rite of Passage**.

14. Passage mid 5’s Climb slab to top and then either climb onto buttress to mid-station (20 m) or veer right to the right anchor (17m). 5 bolts. Rappel or lower down **Rite of Passage**.

14A “secret passage variation” Climb between these two routes on the outer corner, clipping bolts that suit your line best. 5 bolts.

15. Rite of Passage mid 5’s. Climb the many ledges in the corner feature and then up steeper rock and some friction slab to the right anchor. 5 bolts, 17 m.

Note: 2 bolts protect a traverse that can be done between the two belay stations at the top of the first pitches of the two left climbs, the bolts are shown as **X**’s on the topo.