

BLUE LAKE CRAG CLIMBING GUIDE



**Blue Lake Crag established April 2006 to present,
By
Glenn McDonald and Evan McDonald**

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Cover photo: Evan McDonald on Wasabi Direct

BLUE LAKE CRAG

Introduction

Blue Lake is a popular summer recreation area with a Provincial Park located on the lake as well as numerous cottages. To reach Blue Lake from Winnipeg, take the Trans Canada Highway east approximately 285km, or 3 hours to the small community of Vermilion Bay, Ontario. Once you reach Vermilion Bay turn left onto highway 647 and head to Blue Lake, following the "Blue Lake Provincial Park" signs. The Blue Lake Crag is located at the west side of Blue Lake, about 12 km northwest of Vermilion Bay. Once at the lake there are two ways of accessing the rocks. The first is to launch your boat at the Blue Lake Provincial Park (\$8.00 for a day pass – 2007) and head across the lake to what's locally known as the "Diving Rocks" located in a small bay. The Blue Lake Crag is the inland portion of the Diving Rock face. Once in the bay, head to shore at the north end and the rocks are just meters away. The second way to access the rocks is to take the highway approximately 2.5km past Blue Lake Provincial Park, watching for a "Helmrich Road" sign on the right. About 50m past Helmrich Road look to the left bush line for a trail going into the bush, it's near a sign that reads "Provincial Park Boundary". From the highway this 1km walking/bike trail will take you right to the base of the Lakeside Face. Be advised that in early spring or after heavy rains portions of the trail may be wet and muddy, so dress appropriately and bring your bug spray.

The Blue Lake Crag consists of five areas; Lakeside Face, Maiden Face, Boulder Face Prequel, Boulder Face, and Boulder Extension. The top of each climb listed have two bolted anchors to facilitate easy top-roping. Many are also rappel anchors to make for an easy descent at the end of the day. Access to the top of the cliff can be done using the Chain Link Walk-up, the Cave Route, or the MBP Walk-Up/Exit Route. See the end of this guide for beta on these walk-up/exit routes.

Lakeside Face

Show Me The Money 5.10b, 18m (60')**

This route starts right at the waters edge. Once on the rock, climb straight up to the first bolt, then follow the bolts up the left trending crack to the broad shelf above. Walk left to the back of the shelf and follow the bolts to the anchors above. This route can also be sport climbed.

Glenn McDonald, Evan McDonald – May 5, 2007

Direct Deposit 5.10a, 18m (60')*

This route is a variation of Show Me The Money following the same route to the broad shelf. Once on the broad shelf move right and follow the three bolts to the anchors. This route can be sport climbed.

Glenn McDonald, Evan McDonald – May 18, 2008

Over Exposed 5.7, 19m (63')

This route shares the same start as Show Me The Money. From the start begin with the vertical holds and continue to face climb straight up to the anchors.

Stacie Harrington – May 21, 2006

Mince Meat 5.8, 20m (65')

Start off a sloping triangular block on the ground about 1m inland from the waters edge. Follow route straight up to the left of the bolts. This route can also be sport climbed.

Evan McDonald, Glenn McDonald – April 14, 2006



Left: Jeff Burdeney on Predator

Predator 5.8, 19m (63')

This climb starts 5.5m to the right of Mince Meat. Follow the left leading crack up to and past the diagonal flake. Face climb staying to the right of the bolts on Mince Meat. The crux is the last 4m face climb directly below the bolts (above the ledge).

Evan McDonald – May 13, 2006

Predator Direct 5.10b, 19m (63')*

Start as per Predator staying on the face and following the bolts to the top. Thin climbing with good rest between all the crux points. This route can also be sport climbed.

Evan McDonald, Dave Harrington – June 2, 2007

The X-Files 5.10d, 19m (63')**

Start 1m to the right of Predator and work through the depression and up to the right of the small juniper. At the juniper is a small horizontal crack that allows a rest. From here go straight up through the blank looking face to the left of the big juniper above. Step around the big juniper to the right and follow the crack/right arête to the top.

Glenn McDonald, Evan McDonald – October 21, 2007

The Vegas Incident 5.10d, 19m (63')***

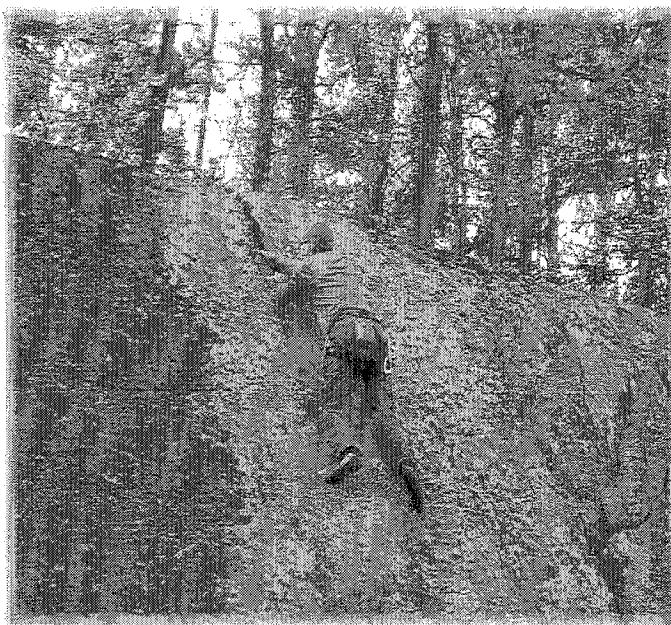
Start 2m to the right of X-Files, go up through the left trending crack and scoops until you are below and right of the small juniper. Move right, stepping out on to the blank looking face and pull through tiny crimps to the horizontal crack above. More small crimps above the horizontal crack will take you to the right of the big juniper. Step behind the juniper and finish on the same crack/right arête as X-Files.

Glenn McDonald, Evan McDonald – June 2, 2007

Blair Witch Project 5.10b, 19m (63')**

This face climb starts 13m inland from the waters edge; just left of the noticeable upper hand crack (Wasabi). To start, face climb to the left of the bolts to the small left leading ramp, below the small vertical crack, approximately 2-3m to the left of Wasabi. The crux is the slightly overhanging area just above the left leading ramp which needs to be overcome in order gain the upper crack. This route can also be sport climbed.

Glenn McDonald – May 20, 2006



Above: Glenn McDonald on Blair Witch

Wasabi Direct 5.10a, 19m (62')

This route is an alternate more difficult start to Wasabi. This variation shares the same start as Blair Witch Project, following that route to the left of the bolts to the small left leading ramp. Once on the ramp, go right and head straight up following the larger noticeable hand crack to the top.

Dave Harrington – May 21, 2006

Wasabi 5.8, 18m (60')

This route starts as an off-width crack about 5m to the right of Wasabi Direct (18m from the waters edge). Climb the off-width or the left arête to the small ramp about 5m up. Once on the ramp, head straight up following the noticeable hand crack to the top.

Glenn McDonald – April 21, 2006

Casino Royale, 5.11a, 18m (59')**

Start 1m to the right of Wasabi, go up the right hand inside corner to the first slopping ledge. The hand crack above can be jammed or lie-backed to the second ledge. Step out to the left onto the near vertical face and follow the left trending crack until you can traverse to the right to access the small near vertical crack. Follow this crack until easier large cracks lead to the anchors above. A great climb that will use a variety of techniques.

Dallas Markall, Glenn McDonald, Evan McDonald – May 18, 2008

Freddy Kruger 5.10b, 17m (57')**

Start 4m to the right of Casino Royale below vertical face that ends in a small roof. Follow the small crack and shallow right facing corner up to a horizontal crack then move right. Lay back up to the small roof and work through to gain the bigger ledge above (to the right of a small birch tree). Follow the small crack and thin face holds to the anchors above. A great climb, but often wet.

Evan McDonald, Glenn McDonald – August 12, 2007

Maiden Face

Access the Maiden Face from the right of Freddy Kruger, following along the base of the cliff, first rising up the trail and then down. Maiden Face starts just right of the black water streaked lines at the start of the Chain Link Walk-up.

The Trooper 5.10d, 19m (62')

Starts the same as Phantom Of The Opera, below the bolted face, and climbs the tallest part of the crag. Climb up the large block that is split in the middle, go to the left and gain the ledge above. Walk to the back of the ledge (behind the birch trees) and face climb the pockets and small cracks straight up to the anchors. The second half of the climb is slightly overhanging.

Evan McDonald, Glenn McDonald – April 21, 2006

Phantom Of The Opera 5.10a, 23m (76')

A sport climb that shares its start with The Trooper. Climb the bolt line until the split block, then step to the right and out on to the upper right hand face, following the bolts to the rap anchors. *Bonus: Phantom Extension* - Above the rap anchors, walk up and step across the crevasse to the left and clip the first bolt. Follow the right hand traverse, along the bolts, to the finger crack that will lead you to the anchors. One of the longest climbs at Blue Lake.

Glenn McDonald, Evan McDonald – July 7, 2007

Aces High 5.10d, 17m (55')

Start 4m to the right of Phantom Of The Opera. Climb through easy cracks to the ramp-like ledge and up the sharp pinnacle just below the large roof. Work through the roof at the point of least resistance, and gain small crimp holds above. Small holds will lead you to the anchors above.

Glenn McDonald – September 14, 2007

Heaven Can Wait 5.9, 9m (30')

Start the same as Aces High, once on the ramp-like ledge walk inland up the ramp to the first obvious crack. Work the crack to the top. A great climb to lay-back.

Kyla Sawchuck, Evan McDonald, Glenn McDonald – June 8, 2008

Boulder Face Prequel

From the lake follow the walking/bike trail - that comes in from the highway- inland about 35m. Then take the trail marked with small fallen trees into base of cliff. Boulder Face and Prequel start below the prominent overhanging nose that makes The Great Escape. Boulder Face Prequel is left of The Great Escape, and Boulder Face is to the right of The Great Escape.

Problem Child 5.10c, 13m (42')

Start 9m to the left of The Great Escape. Work through easy ledges that lead to the right of a large rounded rock, work to the top of the rock. From here step right to the thin vertical cracks above (crux) and gain the next ledge. Go to the left on this ledge and work the easy hand crack to finish the climb. To access the top, go through the crevasse to the left of The Joker, and behind The Great Escape (The Cave Route). Follow the crevasse to the second opening to the left as this will take you to the top of Problem Child.

Glenn McDonald – August 12, 2007



Left: Meagan Burdeney on Flip The Burd

Flip The Burd 5.6, 12m (39')

Start 4m to the left of The Great Escape in a right facing inside corner. Climb the cracks to the to the right of the overhanging birch tree. From behind the tree climb up through the "V" to the anchors. Access to the top is the same as Problem Child.

Meagan Burdeney, Jeff Burdeney, Tara McDonald – July 21, 2007

Spy vs Spy 5.9, 8m (27')

A sport climb that starts 2m to the left of The Great Escape. Climb large ledges, following the bolts to the bottom of the large overhang to the right. Clip the first bolt above the overhang and step out to the right, following the bolts to the top. A short bolted climb, but exciting to step above the over-hang. If you wish to top-rope this climb the safest access is to rappel down to the anchors from the top of The Great Escape.

Glenn McDonald, Evan McDonald – July 21, 2007

Boulder Face

The Great Escape 5.10a, 12m (40')**

Start below the large overhanging nose, and work the finger/hand crack to the start of the roof. Follow the horizontal crack and break out to the right (crux), then follow the crack to the upper face. Face climb to the right, then head straight up to the anchors. Access to these anchors is a little tricky, as you need to scramble up the back side (from the bottom of The Joker). There are two additional bolts near the top that will allow you to clip in on your way up. A quick draw to your belay loop on the first bolt works great letting you reach up and daisy chain into the top bolt. From here you can easily reach the face bolts to rig your top rope.

Evan McDonald, Glenn McDonald – June 24, 2006

The Joker 5.9, 13m (43')*

This climb starts behind an outer flake at the base of the walk up to the top of The Great Escape. Follow finger cracks to a left leading, slightly overhanging narrow hand crack. Glenn McDonald, Evan McDonald – June 24, 2006

Full Metal Jacket 5.10a, 11m (37')**

Start 3 m right of The Joker. Follow the small finger crack – under cling to a right leading hand crack. Continue to the base of the prominent block and work the finger crack (crux) to the left of the block to the finish.

Glenn McDonald – May 22, 2006

Smack In The Crack 5.9, 13m (43')

This climb is a nasty off-width 2m right of Full Metal Jacket. Follow the crack up (crux) to a ledge on right side, and then push right on the arête to the finish at the anchors.

Alternate route 1: stay to the left after reaching the ledge, and finish on top of the obvious block. The top of this block offers a great view to top belay either side of this route or Full Metal Jacket.

Alternate route 2: face climb to the right of the off-width to the top.

Glenn McDonald, Evan McDonald – May 7, 2006

No Fixed Address 5.10d, 13m (43')

Starts 2m to the right of Smack In The Crack. Face climb through small ledges and pockets, following a shallow right hand corner up the face.

Dallas Markall – June 22, 2008

Splitting Headache Left 5.8, Right 5.7, 13m (43')

Crack climbs that share a 5.7 hand and undercling finger crack at the start. The right side route follows the dihedral finger crack to the finish. The left side route follows the left leading finger crack to a hand/fist crack. Start off the boulder about two feet from the face and step onto the face to start.

Right - Glenn McDonald, Evan McDonald – May 7, 2006

Left – Evan McDonald – May 22, 2006

Boulder Extension

Just to the right of Splitting Headache and before MBP Walk-Up is a short bulged-out face.

I before E 5.10b, 14m (46')

Starts 2m to the right of Splitting Headache, following the small holds, pockets and cracks. Work up and through the slightly overhanging face, and finish just to the right of the Headache dihedral.

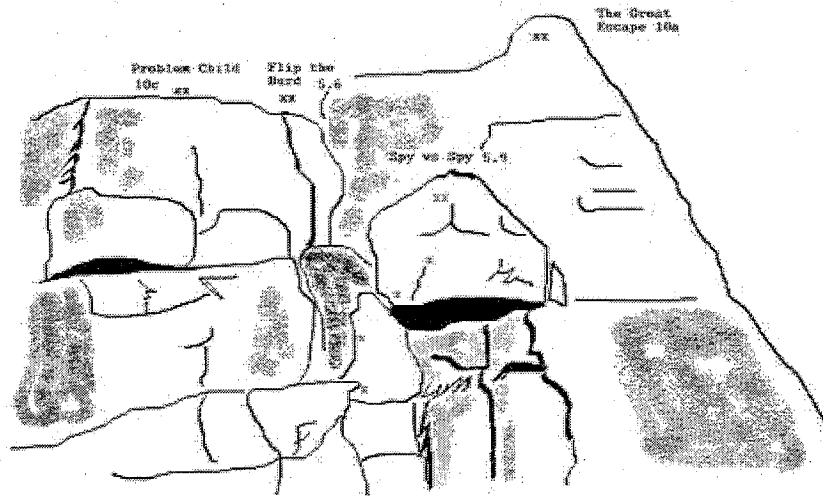
Evan McDonald, Glenn McDonald – April 14, 2006

Shinny Side Up 5.9, 14m (47')

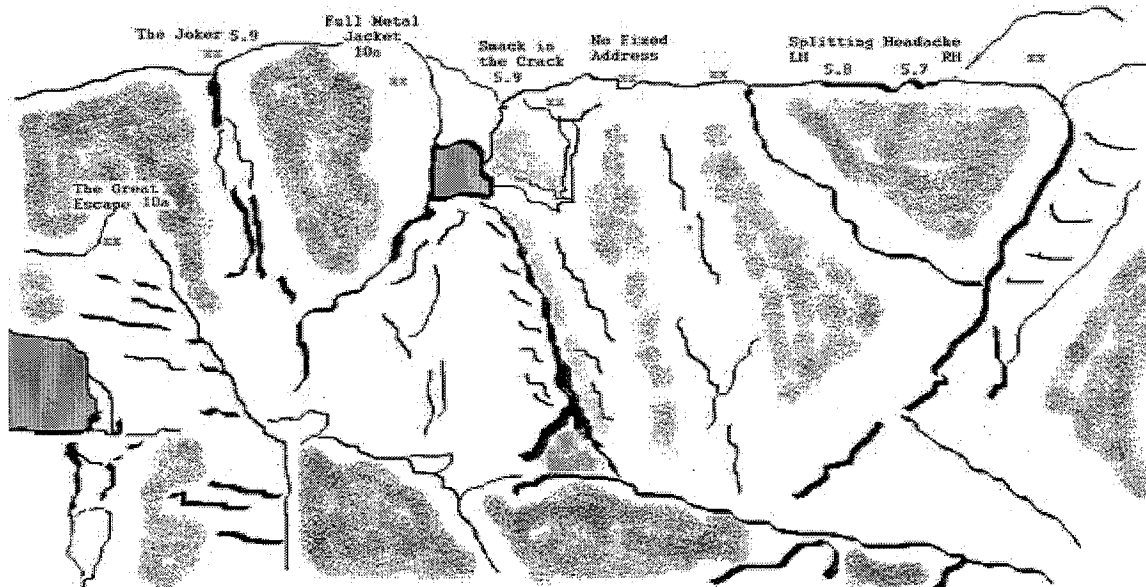
Starts 4m to the right of I Before E, starting up through a detached flake, and working to the left of the over hanging face above. After the angle eases, follow a left-trending crack system to the anchors.

Glenn McDonald, Evan McDonald – April 14, 2006

Boulder Face Prequel



Boulder Face



Boulder Face Extension

