

Welsh Grit Selected Area Guides

Craig y Beudy

An Interim Guide to Climbing

By Dave Williams and Mark Davies

"An authentic and delightfully positioned Rhinog Grit crag, located in Coed y Brenin, with easy access from the A470; just the place to get away from it all."



Mark Davies enjoying
Sick Tune Daddy, S 4b
© DON SARGEANT



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The Rhinogydd

The **Rhinogydd** are a range of mountains located in Central Snowdonia, south of the Afon Dwyryd, east of Harlech, west of the A470 and north of the Afon Mawddach. *Rhinogydd* is the Welsh plural form of *Rhinog*, which means 'threshold'. It is thought that the use of Rhinogydd derives from the names of two of the higher peaks in the range, namely **Rhinog Fawr** and **Rhinog Fach**.

The Rhinogydd are notably rocky towards the central and northern end of the range, especially around Rhinog Fawr, Rhinog Fach and Moel Ysgyfarnogod. This area is littered with boulders, outcrops and large cliffs, all composed of perfect gritstone. The southern end of the range around Y Llethr and Diffwys has a softer, more rounded character, but this does not mean that there is an absence of climbable rock.

Steep Stone's Rhinogydd series of Interim Climbing and Bouldering Guides

For the rock climber, the Rhinogydd is arguably one of Wales' greatest yet least-known treasures.

Work is ongoing on **Steep Stone's** new **Welsh Grit** guidebook, which will detail the very best of over 1800 single and multi-pitch climbs and boulder problems. The Climbers' Club *Meirionnydd* 2002 guidebook did the area no favours. Poorly written and edited, totally lacking in inspiration, its overly complex and consequently confusing description of the area and its climbing has done little to motivate any real interest. As a result, a whole generation of climbers may now be unaware, or at least unsure, of the Rhinogydd's climbing potential.

Steep Stone's *Welsh Grit* aims to right this wrong. While work on the new guide steadily progresses, Steep Stone will also produce a short series of definitive interim guidebooks with the aim of encouraging climbers to take a serious look at what the Rhinogydd has to offer. Building on the success of **Steep Stone's** 2018 **Central Wales - Elenydd** guidebook, these well-researched, free-to-download PDF interim guides will provide easy to follow access notes, together with accurate route descriptions and photo-topos.

The Welsh Grit Selected Area Interim Guide Series

Cefn Cam

Cwm Mynach

Craig y Fotty

Craig y Ffridd

Craig y Beudy

Carreg yr Ogof

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Rhinog Grit extends well to the east of the A470, forming the elongated hill of **Craig y Penmaen** (419m) between Trawsfynydd and Coed y Brenin forest. While most of the climbing is located on its southern end on **Craig y Beudy**'s numerous outcrops, a single route has been recorded on **Cerrig Penmaen**, situated on Craig y Penmaen's north western flank.

Cerrig Penmaen *Craggs of the Rocky Hill*

Cerrig Penmaen rises in tiers, with several horizontal bands of rock of varying height, separated by deep, heavily vegetated ledges. However the area to the right of the right hand stone wall is more continuous and one minor route has been recorded here. A few other equally insignificant lines exist; perhaps some more could be unearthed with some determined cleaning but, overall, this is an underwhelming and entirely missable crag for the trad climber. On the other hand, adventurous boulderers who are keen to explore may have a much more rewarding experience. Far more definitive information will be available in Terry Taylor's upcoming *Meirionnydd/Mid Wales Bouldering Guide*.

Access/ Approach:

If you must, then access may be gained by leaving the A470 at Bronaber and going east through Trawsfynydd Holiday Village. Once over the brow of the hill, turn right by a former army sentry post onto a dead end road. Just before a small chapel on the left, turn right onto a road which follows the line of the old *Sarn Helen* Roman road. More recently used as a turnpike, this road is now classified as an unsurfaced council road and so it can be legally driven. Its slowly degrading tarmac surface is passable with care in a car and there is a conveniently situated hard, grassy parking area on the right (a former gun emplacement dating from the time when this area served as an army artillery range) at OS Ref. SH 72373 30309 (★)



The sole recorded climb can be reached in a few minutes' walk from the road as it starts just right of where the right-hand stone wall abuts the crag at OS Ref. SH 72372 30177.



Great Craic 9m D

Climb the shallow groove, or better, the deep slabby crack immediately to the right of the wall, rising between two flat blocks and emerging on a wide ledge. Two rock spikes make good anchors. Descend by initially climbing up to the next heather ledge and then traversing left.

FA S Ball, A Ball 15.8.14

The best of Craig y Penmaen's climbing is on the far more substantial **Craig y Beudy**, located on the very southern end of the hill overlooking Coed y Brenin and the Afon Gain valley. The unsurfaced council road actually connects both climbing areas and is easily walkable, but between Cerrig Penmaen and Craig y Beudy it is impassable for cars and even SUVs as it is badly washed-out and is therefore only suitable for hard core 4x4s. Seemingly, the state of this old turnpike road was little different in the past. In 1834, a correspondent for the Caernarfon and Denbigh Herald described it as '*disgraceful and dangerous*', adding '*in every yard of it there is a rut deep enough for the grave of a child and to ensure breakdowns, the space between is filled up with lumps of stone each as large as cannon balls or Swedish turnips*'. You have been warned.

Craig y Beudy *The Cowshed Crag*

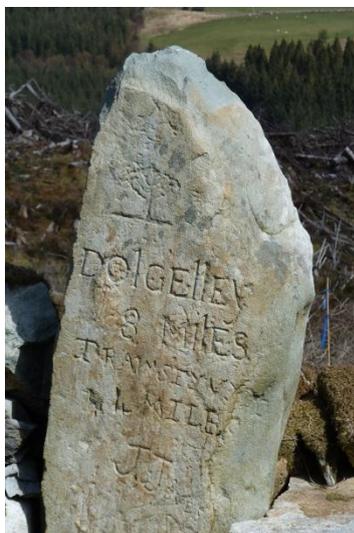
OS Ref. SH 72470 29184

Overview:	A small and delightfully isolated crag, yet easily accessible, with excellent rock and a short walk-in. Worth visiting for the two good Severs, but otherwise most climbs suffer from a surfeit of surface vegetation.
<i>Altitude:</i>	280 metres
<i>Approach:</i>	AG1 : Straightforward walking on a rough track/ path, but usually wet in places. Wellingtons may prove useful
<i>Approach time:</i>	15 minutes
<i>Aspect:</i>	South east
<i>Drying:</i>	Very quick drying in good conditions, with minimal seepage, but greasiness can be an issue in damp conditions
<i>Summer sun:</i>	Yes
<i>Winter sun:</i>	Yes
<i>Access Land:</i>	Yes
<i>Grade Range:</i>	D – E1

Craig y Beudy is comprised of a collection of small and relatively scattered gritstone outcrops, the biggest of which reaches around 15 metres in height. Being primarily south facing, the crag gets all the sun that is going and has excellent views. It is named after the now ruined cowshed located below the crag which, together with the fine old Penmaen farm house, was destroyed by the Forestry Commission in the 1980s in what can only be considered to be an act of wanton vandalism. Curiously omitted from previous guidebooks and 're-discovered' in 2016, Craig y Beudy is known to have been frequented by local climbers from at least 1968-1970, and probably even earlier. An ancient peg found at the top of *Myotis* (now removed) is indicative of this early exploration.



Access/ Approach



Turn off the A470 Dolgellau to Trawsfynydd road at OS Ref. SH 715 293, virtually opposite Caeau Cochion. Follow the narrow tarmac road to its end at Bwlch y Ffordd. Turn sharp left onto an unsurfaced council road (an ORPA, which can be legally driven). Pass through a gate and after a few hundred metres a small parking bay is reached on the right just beyond a metal tank (OS Ref. SH 72232 29058). The crag is now directly in view. The road now becomes totally impassable for most vehicles, so walk up past an old milestone in the wall, dating from the time the road was a turnpike, to a gap in the wall before a left-hand bend. From here a feint, boggy and overgrown path leads across to a second, equally feint path which winds down to the main crag.

Three hundred metres north of the main crag on the west side of the hill and fairly close to the ORPA is a small, easy- angled, pebble-dashed, white slab featuring two rather insignificant climbs.

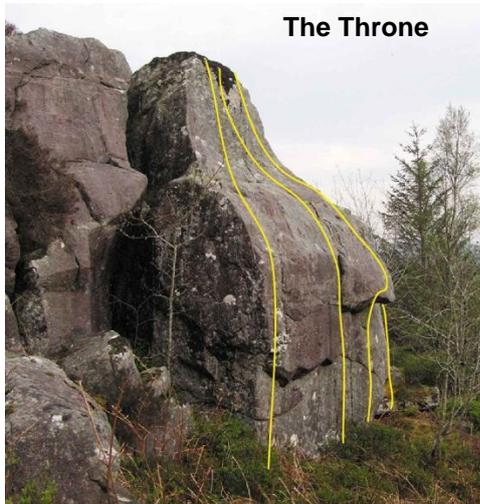
Pebble Dash Slab 7m VD †

Take the centre of the slab via a pebble scoop and thin seam above.
M S Davies 7.5.16

Romans Go Home 7m S 4a †

The crackline just right of centre.
M S Davies 7.5.16

CRAIG Y BEUDY MAIN CRAG



There is an easy descent gully on the left side of the **Main Crag**. Just left of this is a jumble of boulders and faces, one of which is quite appealing and has a good landing; this is **The Throne**. There are four problems here; **Left Arête**, **Central Line**, **Big Flake** and **Right Arête**. All are around *f4+*, give or take a little bit. (FA M S Davies 7.5.16)

Just right of the descent gully there is a three-tier slab.



1. Sick Tune Daddy 15m S 4b

Start just right of some ivy. Climb a small groove and take as direct a line as possible up the tiered slabs above.

FA M S Davies 5.5.16

To the right, the cliff becomes far more substantial, with tree belays set well back from the edge. The crag's two best routes are found here.

2. Gain Groove 15m S 4b ★

The obvious clean groove in the left side of the main face gives good, mainly VD, climbing with a couple of tricky but very well-protected, half-height, crux moves.

FRA C Heath, K Davies 20.3.16

3. East Of Eden 15m S 4a ★

A better and more balanced route than its near neighbour. From the same start as *Gain Groove* follow a ramp rightwards, slightly bold, to a ledge below a sapling. Then take the fine flake crack up the slabby wall above. Two alternative finishes up short, steep cracks, gained by moving right below the sapling, are quite inferior and best ignored.

FRA K Davies, C Heath 17.4.16



4. A Line Made by Climbing 6m E1 5b

The petite but perfect seamed slab on the right is started from a clean foot ledge a short way up the gully and is just about protectable. Rock up rightwards onto a small foothold using an eye-shaped feature and make tenuous, awkward moves directly up the cracks to a rounded finish.

FA M S Davies, D Sargeant 5.5.16



5. Mitosis 10m VS 5a ★ †

Start directly below a hanging arête on a large boulder. From the boulder make tricky moves up and right to a ledge (as for *Myotis*). Move back left onto the short hanging arête and climb this direct.
FA M S Davies 7.5.16

6. Myotis 10m HS 4b/c

From the large boulder make tricky moves up and right to a sloping ledge, then take the awkward groove to a large ledge. Either finish here or continue up the short slab behind.
FRA C Heath, K Davies 17.4.16

7. Arrow and Flake 10m HS 4c

Six metres right of *Myotis* is an outwardly leaning, semi-detached flake which gives an entertaining climb, especially for spectators. The initial aim is to gain a standing position on top of the flake, which some manage straight away while others are unceremoniously repulsed. If successful, an awkward move then follows (crux) to gain the ledge above. Continue leftwards more easily up the remaining slabs to a ledge. Either finish here, or continue up the short slabby arête above.
FA K Davies, C Heath 17.4.16

Down and right is small wall.



8. Seasons in the Sun 8m HVS 4c †

The centre of the unprotected wall, with a tricky move to gain a jug at half height and an easier finish. Great rock, but a poor landing.
FA M S Davies 5.5.16

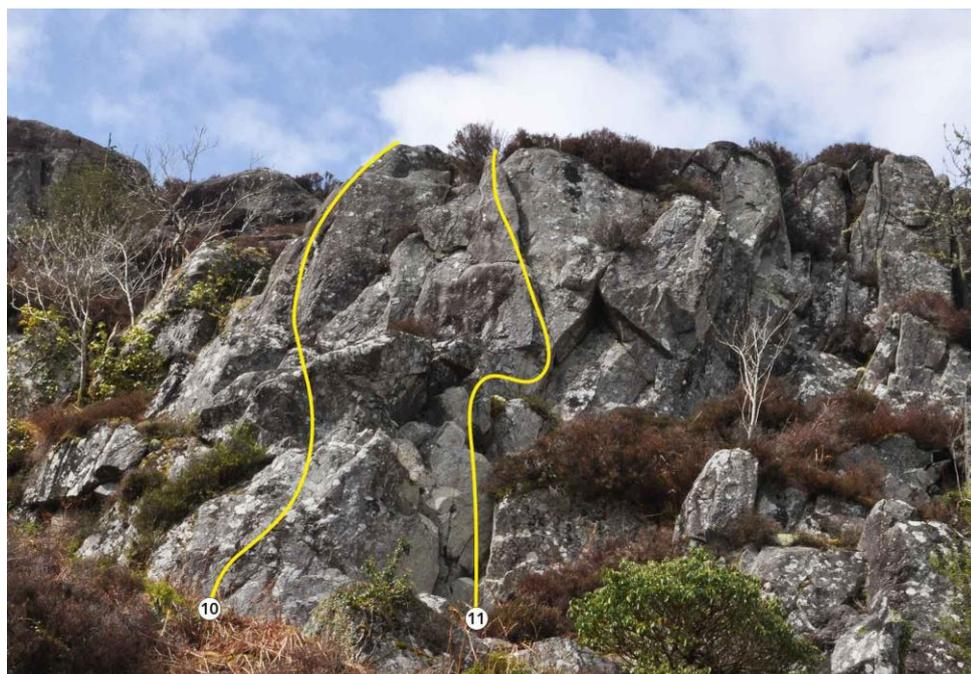
9. Flaketastic 6m VD †

The cracked wall just right; a flake extravaganza.
FA D Sargeant 5.5.16

A short distance down and right again is a small jumbled up buttress.

10. Free Wifi 10m S 4a †

Climb a small slab and surmount an overhang to gain a ledge. Step left and climb the neat rib to the top.
FA M S Davies 5.5.16



11. Wifi is innocent 10m HS 4b †

Climb a steep blocky groove to gain a ledge on the right. Follow the slightly tricky crackline to the top.
FA M S Davies 5.5.16

Lower down and further right again is a small wall behind a tree.



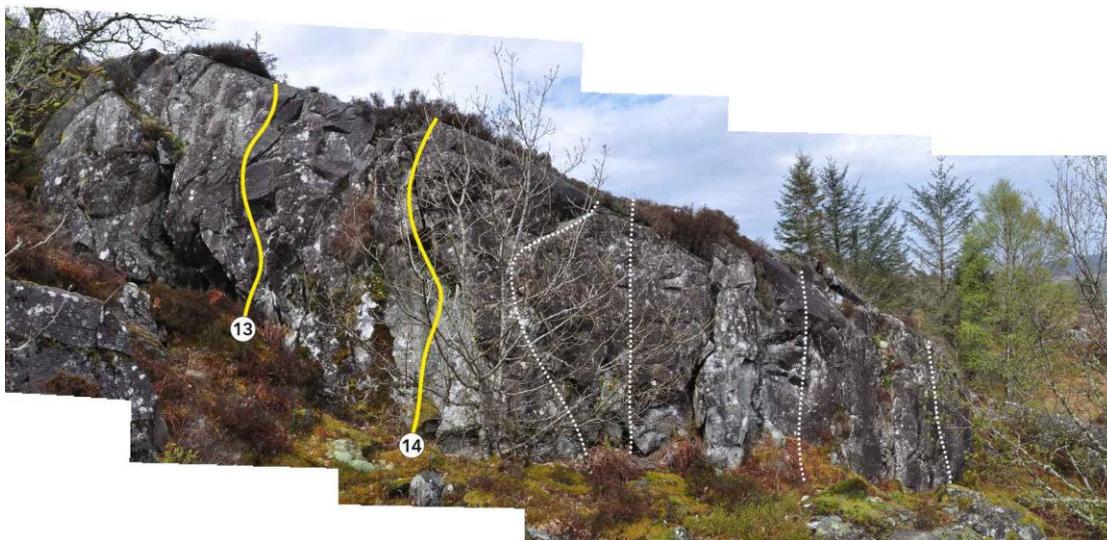
12. Branches 6m S 4a †

Follow a ramp up left to where a wide flake crack cuts across rightwards. With gear in the crack step left and climb a neat little groove. Climbing the rightward flake crack to the top is VD.
FA M S Davies 5.5.16

BACK WALL

OS Ref. 72525 29212

Set back and partially hidden from view up and behind the right end of the crag is long low wall of good rock offering a couple of micro-routes to the left of a centrally located small tree.



13. Barefoot Beauty 6m VS 4c

Towards the left end of the wall and about 5 metres left of the tree there is a small cave. Start right of this and pull up and left to reach a thin right slanting crack. Move up this and finish direct.

FA M S Davies 7.5.16

14. Beeching Cuts 6m VS 5a

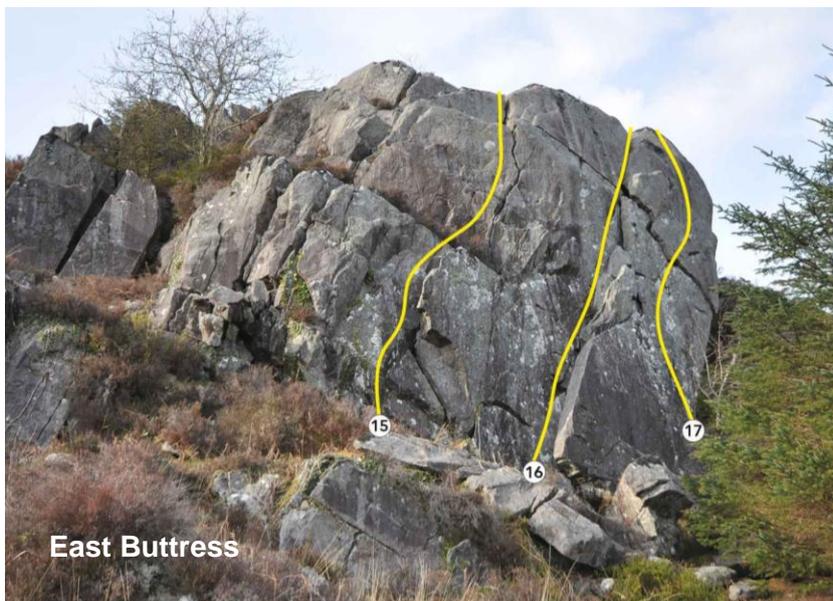
The obvious steep hand crack immediately left of the tree.

FA M S Davies 7.5.16

EAST BUTTRESS

OS Ref. SH 72578 29377

Two hundred metres north of the main crag on the east side of the hill, amongst various boulders and micro-walls, is a slightly bigger, easy-angled buttress composed of good, clean rock. A direct approach to this buttress from Back Wall will involve some inevitable bog wallowing. Best to seek out a faint but drier path just right of the marshy ground which leads up to the buttress' right hand side.



15. Nothing Lost, Nothing Gained 10m VD

A worthwhile, varied and well-protected route. Gain an awkward V-groove and move up to a heather ledge. Take the crack above with a stiff little move near the top.

FA M S Davies 5.5.16

16. Caddy on the Loose 10m D

The obvious left to right rising crack/rampline feature is quite nice.

FA D Sargeant 5.5.16

17. Sky Frame 8m VS 5a 

Ignoring its escapability, this little climb has some good technical moves which may test the 'vertically challenged' if the 'proper' line is followed. From a little corner on the right behind a sapling, move up and right onto the slab and reach a diagonal break (protection). Using a flake hold on the left, move right with some difficulty onto the upper slab, with a huge reach for a good jug, before finishing easily.

FA M S Davies 5.5.16