

Wonderland

E1, 1278m ***

Welcome to Wonderland. The route traverses the Boulder Ruckle at Swanage in 67 pitches. The climbing is of high quality and is a massive amount of fun. As most people won't want to do 67 pitches in a day we have split the route into twelve sections. Each section starts up a well known and easy to find route, and finishes up a reasonably well travelled top out. Hence each can be viewed as an independent route and climbed in this way. As each section can be reached without abseiling as far as the base, it also means there are now twelve long routes to do when the waves cover the boulders. The strong will no doubt climb the route in far fewer than twelve visits, others will want to bag it Munro-style, over many visits. The route awaits a one-day ascent.

Considering the length of the route, the difficulty of the climbing is surprisingly consistent, with no killer pitches and no scrambling. The individual pitches weigh in at:

5a, 5a, 4c, 4c, 5a, 5a, 5a, 4a, 5a, 5a, 4c, 4a, 4a, 4a, 4b, 4b, 4c, 4b, 4b, 4c, 4c, 4b, 4b, 4b, 4b, 5a, 5a, 5a, 5a, 4c, 5a, 4a, 4c, 5a, 4b, 5a, 5a, 4c, 5a, 5a, 4c, 4b, 5a, 5b, 4b, 4a, 4c, 5b, 5b, 4c, 5a, 5b, 5b, 5b, 3a, 5c, 5a, 4a, 5b, 5a, 5a, 5b, 4a, 4a, 4b, 5a, 4a.

Swanage has a reputation for tough grading. We have taken a more relaxed view and hopefully this will ensure everyone has a good time.



The Ruckle

The Boulder Ruckle is the premier cliff at Swanage. It is formed of limestone and is around 40m high. Measured in a straight line, the cliff is 1km long. The base is protected from the sea for most of its length by car- to house-sized boulders, meaning that the bottom of most routes can be accessed in calm seas even at high tide, however if a sea is running the base can quickly become impassable.

The rock is relatively soft, which means polish is never a problem and that the wind and water have found it easy to erode it into a wonderful variety of mainly large holds. In many ways the climbing is similar to that found at indoor climbing walls: large holds on a vertical or slightly overhanging wall. The climbing in the Ruckle is truly stunning, and given its easy access it should be far more popular.

Unfortunately, soft rock can snap, which, together with most of the escape routes being VS or above, means the Ruckle is a poor place for the novice climber. In places the upper few metres of the cliff is formed of loose blocks meaning that that unless you are well versed with such climbing it is best to exit the Ruckle via a well frequented route, and unstarred routes should be left to the locals. Luckily there are numerous well-travelled brilliant routes from VS to E3 that will feel similar to the classics of Southern Pembroke, but on bigger holds.

The most prominent feature of the cliff is the mid-height fault line. This consists of a band of very soft rock that has been eroded to form a break that runs the length of the cliff. Most of the routes in the Ruckle use the break as a mid-height belay. In some places one can walk or crawl along the break, in others the lower lip gives a line of jugs. Unfortunately the softer nature of the rock in the break means holds can snap in the unfrequented areas and protection can be difficult to arrange, so *Wonderland* tries to avoid it.

Because of the highly eroded nature of the rock together with the presence of numerous flint bands it is well worth carrying large wires and hexes as well as cams: A hex or large wire is more likely to hold in complex rock or at the back of a deep void.



The History

The Ruckle already had a traverse before we put up *Wonderland*: the *Girdle Traverse* (1070m, given E1 but rumoured to be XS) climbed by Crewe and Winkworth in 1969. This follows the fault-line with only the odd deviation when the climbing becomes too difficult. As far as we can ascertain this has only been repeated once, by Hounsome and Gumn in 1978. Crewe and Winkworth climbed West to East, Hounsome and Gumn East to West. Unfortunately several parts of the route have since fallen into the sea. It might seem strange that a route of this length, only two hours from London, has had only two ascents. However, as we quickly found out when we tried to make the third ascent, much of the fault-line is no place for the sane. With the exception of the loose summit blocks it provides the worst rock on the cliff, and although the *Girdle Traverse* provides a lot of adventure, the climbing is highly repetitive.

Having climbed in the Ruckle a reasonable amount, David was convinced that there must be an alternative traverse on the solid rock either side of the fault and that one would climb a large variety of interesting features.



The Route

Wonderland runs from the Cattle Troughs all the way to Subluminal, which makes it longer than the *Girdle Traverse*. The route was climbed without walking the base first to identify the best line. We simply started at one end and headed East following our noses. With hindsight this might have been a mistake. We ended up being forced occasionally onto the fault-line, or into taking detours when there was probably a better option we couldn't see. So, we would like to encourage the adventurous to find better options that give better climbing at about the same grade, particularly where we have strayed onto the fault.

Most of the pitches are rather short and many can be linked, although drag might be a problem. The twelve sections are between 5 and 10

pitches, so they should be easily climbable in a day, and many parties will do two or more sections in a day.

The climbing is mainly 4c or 5a. So most climbers should be able to enjoy most, or all, of the route. The small number of harder sections can mostly either be aided or French-Freed (i.e. just rest on the runners). Being a traverse, there is the need to protect the second as well as the leader, i.e. to place protection after harder moves as well as before, and as the rock can occasionally be suspect there is the need to place a lot of runners in case one fails. This, together with the need to set complex belays means a larger than average rack will be useful. The numerous deep corners mean long extenders are recommended. In a few places there is the need to abseil diagonally or tension traverse. This is all part of the fun, but may require you to sacrifice the odd bit of kit. This is another reason to carry a set or hexes, as they are cheaper than cams. Depending on the abilities of the second, it may prove wise to also sacrifice a piece at other times so they can stay safe. This is particularly so when heading towards corners, where a fall could easily lead to injury: sometimes it can be best if the better climber goes second.

The fault-line, although bumpy, is frequently large enough to bivvi on. However, this is possibly against the rules of Durlston Country Park so the thoughts of the local BMC representative should be sort. It would also be a very good idea to ensure the coast guard and the police are not unnecessarily called out by the presence of abseil lines and head torches at unexpected hours, for example if you are trying to do the route in under twenty-four hours, i.e. *Wonderland In A Day*, or WIAD.

One of the ideas behind doing the route was to give as many people as possible as much fun as possible. So, although David climbed the whole thing, he was joined by a cast of other characters, most of whom had never climbed at Swanage and never done a new route. Some were on a sea cliff for the first time and climbing very close to their limit. The

youngest was 12, the oldest nearly 70. The route is a testament to their strength of character.

Another reason for climbing the route was that people often ask how they can train for longer routes in the mountains given that most of the routes in the country are so short. This is a problem especially if you live in the South. Well, now you have an answer – get on *Wonderland*.

The final reason was that because of the tide and waves it is often not possible to reach many of the routes in the Ruckle many days of the year. This means people are wary of making the drive in case they can't get to the routes. This, together with the dangerous state of the less travelled top outs, suggests that finding a way of never getting too near the sea and only topping out once a day via a well travelled exit would be useful. Hence a traverse made a lot of sense.

The route was finished on 21st of August 2015. The climbers were: Scott Borden; Pete Callaghan; David, Theo and Helen Coley; Stuart Fox, Tom Mullier, Darren Russell, Tim Reynolds, Derek Ryden and Jamie Trump. The twelve sections roughly align with how the first ascent was completed.

David tried to keep reasonable notes but there will be errors, so please send him any corrections or comments (d.a.coley@bath.ac.uk). A second opinion on the pitch grades would be very welcome. So others can access these in a timely fashion, it would be even better if comments were also put into the logbook area of ukclimbing.com. The text in yellow highlights is in need of input from someone with exact local knowledge – please help with this if you can. And if anyone has a complete set of photos of the cliff we can use to form a topo of the route, or a boat we could use to take a set, please let David know.



The Sections

Although it will be more pleasing to complete the route in the correct order, this is not necessary and being a bit more flexible will allow you to avoid issues with the seasonal bird ban, or possibly tick off the easier, or more staired, bits first. Some people might want to simply treat the sections as independent climbs to be done as they fancy. ([R] implies the section includes climbing covered by the seasonal bird ban, see below.)

The Frog-Footman, E1 **, 117m, 5 pitches. Runs from the start of *Mr Ruckle* to *Apex Corner*.

The Caterpillar, HVS *, 155m, 8 pitches. From *Apex Corner* to the *Ramp*.

The White Rabbit, VS **, 155m, 7 pitches. From *The Ramp* to *Bottomless Buttress*.

The Red Queen [R], HVS **, 14.6m 8 pitches. From *Bottomless Buttress* to *Jo*.

Seven [R], E1 *, 15.6m 7 pitches (unsurprisingly). From *Jo* to *Grim Reaper*.

Alice * 13.0m in 8 pitches. From *Grim Reaper* to *Sinbad*.

The Knave of Hearts, E1 *, 9.8m, 5 pitches. From *Buccaneer* to *Finale Groove*.

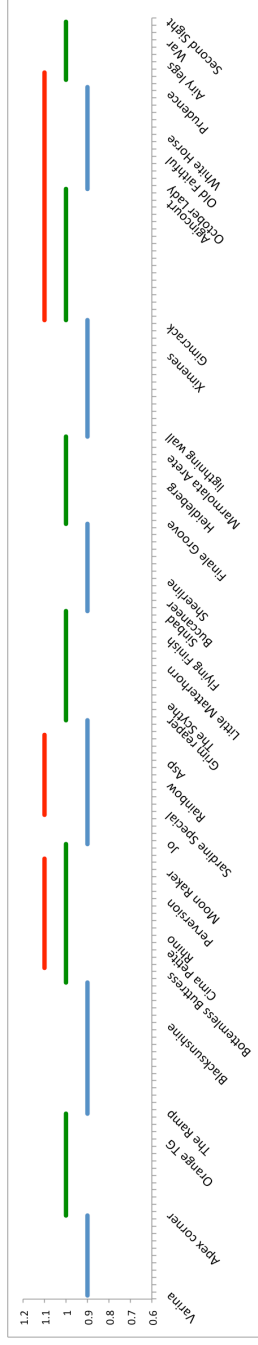
The Cheshire Cat, HVS(A1) or E1 ***, 15.5m, 9 pitches. From *Finale Groove* to *Lightning Wall*. This is one of the longer sections, but is easily escapable at various points via well-trodden quality VS and HVS routes.

The Mock Turtle, E1 **, 11.2m, 5 pitches. From *Lightning Wall* to *Gimcrack*. This has the most sustained climbing, but the hard bits are well travelled.

The Pigeon [R], HVS **, 16.2m, 10 pitches. From *Gimcrack* to *October Lady*

The Duck [R], E1 ***, 11.2m 6 pitches. From *October Lady* to *Dublin Packet*.

The Mad Hatter [R, in part], HVS **, 12.5m, 6 pitches. From *Dublin Packet* to *Second Sight*.



Wonderland (to scale). Red lines = seasonal bird restrictions; Green and Blue = the twelve sections this guide splits the route into.



The Weather

The Ruckle is the warmest and sunniest crag in the UK. We have no data to support this, so you will just have to believe us. However we climbed the route mostly in winter and the photos show the conditions we found. The cliff faces south and hence gets all the sun going. If the wind is from the north you will be sheltered, if it is from the south the height and length of the cliff together with the fact that it starts right out of the sea seems to mean that there is a zone of still air near the wall. It is a much more pleasant place to be in winter than most of Portland for example and as long as you are half sensible with the weather and top out before dark you are unlikely to be cold on the route.



Camping, Pubs etc.

There are numerous cafes and pubs in Swanage together with fish and chips and all the normal attractions of a small seaside town. The beach is great for families. Corfe Castle a good, but expensive, place to visit and there are numerous walks around the coast and further inland.

THE pub to head for is the Square and Compass at Worth Matravers, which serves pasties and pints, and has escaped any sense of modernity. There is a café at the castle at Durlston Country Park car park.

Tom's field in Langton Matravers is probably the most popular camp ground but isn't open year round. Out of season there is Ulwell Cottage Caravan Park (which takes tents), or the Walker's barn at Tom's field, or for a bit of luxury try the Swanage Auberge. The pub in Langton Matravers does a greater range of food than the Square and Compass.



Bird Bans

There is a nesting season restriction in three areas:

1. Between *The Dead Can't Judge* and *St. Elmo's Fire*.
2. Between *Relax* and *Swing* and *The Cat skinner*.
3. Between *Gimcrack* and *Airy Legs*.

Pitches affected are marked with an [R] in the route description. Only 4 or the 12 sections are within restricted areas, plus a few metres of the final section. In 2015 the restriction ran from 1st April to the 31st July, but it is worth checking the BMC website to see if these have changed.



Access

Swanage is two hours from the M25 or Bristol, just over three hours from Birmingham and can be reached in under 24 hours from Yosemite. Trains run to Wareham, from where it is possible to get a bus to Swanage. Hopefully someone will give you a lift up the hill to Durlston Country Park, otherwise it's a half hour walk.

From the car park (pay and display; £5 in 2015) at Durlston Country Park (signed from the town centre), head southwest along the tarmacked path towards the lighthouse. Pick up the coast path and head West (i.e. right when looking out to sea). Note, as you turned away from the lighthouse you passed a stone wall. This wall and the ones running parallel to it make useful markers.

When finishing a section, walk up the slope to the fence and count the number of fence posts to the nearest stone wall. This will then allow you to abseil back to where you left off next time you visit and therefore

avoid any issues with tides or waves. If abseiling to the traverse line rather than the base of the routes, it is important to put a knot in the end of the rope if it doesn't go all the way to the base, not just for your protection, but for others who might use your rope during the day. The following are the access points recommended in the Climber's Club guidebook.

The Frog-Footman – follow the coast path until 150m past the 4th stone wall (and about 40m before the fifth stone wall. Cross the fence at a small stile. Abseil from a stake about 20m to the East to reach a ledge system well above the water.

The Caterpillar – Abseil from the large galvanised stake (with a somewhat mangled top) 50m west of the 4th stone wall.

The White Rabbit – abseil down *The Ramp*. This is found by walking to you reach the 4th stone wall then back tracking East about 25m to twin stakes (one scaffold pole and one polished stainless steel rod).

[R] **The Red Queen** – as for the White Rabbit.

[R] **Seven** – From the third stone wall follow a small path down to the abseil stake.

Alice – Same as *Seven*.

The Knave of Hearts – Same as *Seven*.

The Cheshire Cat – Same as *Seven*; however if the sea is calm it is also possible to use the Marmolata Buttress abseil.

The Mock Turtle – About 70m west of the 2nd stone wall lies a prominent buttress sticking out from the cliff line. This is Marmolata Buttress. Abseil eastwards from twin stakes on top of the buttress.

[R] **The Pigeon** – Same as *The Mock Turtle*, however low tide and very calm seas are needed to reach the base of the route. Alternatively abseil from just west (needs number of metres west) of the second stone wall (down *Gimcrack*) to meet the traverse just below the main fault.

[R] **The Duck** – Descend from the stake below the seventeenth fencepost west of the first stone wall. This is the line of *Old Faithful*.

[R, part of] **The Mad Hatter** – As for *The Duck*. Low tide and very calm seas are needed to progress along the bottom of the cliff, so it maybe easier to abseil down the line of *Dublin Packet* (which is *m East of *Old Faithful*).

The following are the locations of the stakes at the finish of each section and therefore the start of the next. If climbing in sections, it is generally easier to start at the base and to use the normal abseil points mention above, however those given below should help you get back on the traverse if the sea makes the base impassable. Note: be careful if abseiling from these stakes as they may pass loose blocks, as some are not the normal Ruckle abseil lines. Where the cliff is steep, you might have to place the odd piece to keep the rope (and you) near the rock face. The second person down can remove these.

Mid height start of The Caterpillar – Abseil down the line of *Apex Corner*. Use the large galvanised stake with the mangled top 50m west of the 4th stone wall. Belay when you reach *.

Mid height start of The White Rabbit – abseil down *The Ramp*. This is found by walking to you reach the 4th stone wall then backtracking about 25m to twin stakes (one scaffold pole and one polished stainless steel rod). Abseil Westwards (i.e. leftwards when facing in) diagonally down the line of *The Ramp*. Belay when you reach a large block sitting on a large ledge 10m from the base.

[R] *Mid height start of The Red Queen* – Abseil from the * stake * fence posts east/west from the * stone wall. This will take you to the fault line belay on *Bottomless Buttress*.

[R] *Mid height start of Seven* – Abseil from the * stake * fence posts east/west from the * stone wall. This will take you to the fault line belay on *Jo* – can this be reached or are the overhangs too big?

Mid height start of Alice – * no idea

Mid height start of The Knave of Hearts – Abseil from the * stake * fence posts east/west from the * stone wall. This will take you to the fault line belay on *Sinbad*.

Mid height start of The Cheshire Cat – Abseil from the * stake West of Marmolata Buttress down the top pitch of *Finale Groove* to belay on the fault line.

Mid height start of The Mock Turtle – The area beneath the start of the route stays dry unless the waves are considerable. About 70m past the 2nd stone wall lies a prominent buttress sticking out from the cliff line. This is Marmolata Buttress. Abseil Eastwards from twin stakes on top of the buttress to the base of the cliff. If this area is flooded then it is possible to reach *Wonderland* by abseiling from the * stake East of Marmolata Buttress to reach a belay 5m or so up the first pitch of *Lightning Wall*. However the route is not very far up the cliff at this point, and stays low for the whole section, so check the waves are not reaching the route before you descend.

[R] *Mid height start of The Pigeon* – Descend from the * stake west? of the second stone wall. This is the line of *Grimcrack*. Belay at the fault. You will then need to climb down the large corner below the fault (use the ab rope as a backup for the second) and cross the short wall on the right to reach *Wonderland* at the crack of *Quasimodo*.

[R] *Mid height start of The Duck* – Descend from the stake * fence posts West of the first stone wall. Head left (looking in) once you pass the big roof to reach the large comfortable stance on the fault. Or if you have already climbed *October Lady*, and don't want to do it again, only rap down to a point just above the roof.

[R, part of] *Mid height start of The Mad Hatter* – Abseil down the line of *Dublin Packet* to the main fault line. Use the stake *m East of the first stone wall.



- Hex size 7 and 9. Or a full set of hexes in case you have to leave some.
- Cams 0.3 to 4, consider taking doubles of 0.5 to 2 (Camalot sizes) if you are climbing close to your limit or plan on combining pitches. A size 5 is occasionally useful/comforting.
- Twenty 60cm sling draws, or other long extenders.
- Two 120cm slings.
- 6 spare carabiners for setting the belays.
- Some abseil tat and a knife might be useful for replacing any lower-off points or in case you have to escape by leaving gear.
- Many of the belays are hanging, so the use of direct belaying of the second using a cordelette might be beneficial.
- 50m double ropes.
- Headtorches.
- The leader may find a nutkey useful for digging out some placements.

The Rack

A large rack is recommended—for one, you will have a minimum of three pieces in the belays at each end of the rope. Large wires and hexes are sometimes essential for belays because the rock in the cracks is often highly uneven and may include bands of flint.

At several points there is the need to climb downwards. Consider threading a chockstone to protect the second, but you might need to leave a piece, and a hex or large wire will be cheaper than a cam. However, the leader placing numerous pieces on the descent can normally protect such moments.

- 50m abseil rope.
- Wires 1-14, with doubles of 4 to 8. Offsets work well sometimes. If you don't own large wires, hexes of equivalent size would be fine.



Guidebooks

The Climber's Club guide to Swanage (2014) is pocket sized and contains a continuous topo to the cliff and hence all the possible escape routes. The Rockfax guide (2012) contains topos to much of the cliff, has larger photos but is harder to carry.



Accidents and Escape

Phone 999 and ask for the coastguard. However there is normally no mobile phone reception on the cliff and often none at the top. (You might be able to pick up a French phone company.)

Being able to return to your abseil rope and quickly ascend it can be useful. Although prusiks work, mechanical ascenders will be quicker, and can be left on the end of the abseil rope in case you need them. Stack the abseil rope at the base so that the tide can't reach it. On much of the climb simply abseiling from the route to the boulders if you get stuck should allow you to return to your abseil rope. However on some parts of the route you will be climbing above water and you will not easily be able to get out without getting wet. Climbing up the nearest easy route can often be the best solution; hence it makes sense to carry a guide book if you don't know the cliff well.

The following sections are harder to escape from. The cliff top above *The Frog Footman* is loose, however the traverse of *Paradise Street* might allow you to return to Cattle Troughs unless the sea is running. Much of the time *The Ramp* cannot be reached from the boulders underneath the *Caterpillar*, i.e. from the West. *The Ramp* is an easy climb, but loose and not advisable without a fixed rope. Hence *Due Care and Attention* (HS) is a better option. The cliff top above *Seven* and *Alice* is loose. It is also impossibly loose above the *Pigeon*, which is also above water not boulders unless the sea is very calm.

The Pigeon briefly gets to within the 5m of the water, so needs to be avoided in rough seas. *Alice* also gets to within a 5m of the sea, but is reasonably well protected by boulders. If there is a very heavy sea, the whole of the Ruckle needs to be avoided.



The Characters

The following notes are adapted from material found at <http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/alice/characters.html>. Rumour has it that these characters have a strong resemblance to those involved in the first

ascent; there also describe each of the sections reasonably well. The name *Wonderland* was chosen by Theo Coley, in part because 2015 saw the 150th anniversary of the publishing of Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, but also because the Ruckle on a sunny day is truly a land of wonder. So throw yourself down the rabbit hole.

Alice - The seven-year-old protagonist of the story. Alice thinks that the world is orderly although she has an insatiable curiosity. Wonderland challenges her perceptions of the world.

The White Rabbit - A manic and timid creature that leads Alice deep into Wonderland.

The Queen of Hearts - Severe and domineering, continually screaming for her subjects to be beheaded.

The Cheshire Cat - A perpetually grinning cat who appears and disappears at will and who displays a detached, clearheaded logic.

The Caterpillar - The Caterpillar is often found sitting on a mushroom, smokes a hookah, and treats Alice with contempt.

The Mad Hatter - A small, impolite hatter who lives in perpetual tea-time. The Mad Hatter enjoys frustrating Alice.

The Mock Turtle - The Mock Turtle is friendly but is exceedingly sentimental and self-absorbed.

The Knave of Hearts - An attendant to the Queen. The Knave has been accused of stealing the Queen's tarts.

The Duck - A woodland creature who participates in the Caucus race. A Caucus race has no rules; all of the participants run haphazardly around in no particular direction, and everyone wins.

The Pigeon - A Wonderland creature who believes Alice is a serpent. The pigeon thinks Alice is after her eggs.

Seven - A gardener who is fearful and fumbling, especially in the presence of the Queen.

The Frog-Footman - The Duchess's footman who is accustomed to the fact that nothing makes sense in Wonderland.

Wonderland

E1 *** 1278m

We have only numbered the pitches on the traverse itself. For those not doing the route in one go, we have placed the descriptions of the entrance and exit pitches of each section in **boxes**. Wonderland itself has 67 pitches and is 1278m (4193ft) long, however if you complete the route using the twelve suggested sections and start from the base each time (much as the first actionists did) you will have climbed 1625m (5331ft) in 84 pitches. Better climbers will no doubt combine many of the pitches and will be able to do the route in far fewer pitches.

To reach the start of *Wonderland* follow the coast path until 150m past the 4th stone wall (and about 40m before the fifth stone wall. Cross the fence at a small stile (little more than some battens covering the wire and which might get removed by the landowner). Abseil from twin stakes to reach a ledge system well above the water. The route starts up the Arete to the East.

The Frog Footman

E1 **

Pitches 1 to 3 follow *Mr Ruckle*.

1. 20m E1 5a. Slightly serious for both leader and second, so take all the protection possibilities going. Climb the arête (*Varina*) East of the abseil line for 6m, then traverse right, then slightly down to a belay at a cracked prow.
2. 30m HVS 5a. Climb down and across to a thread, past a sling placement on a knob, continue via a slight scoop to belay right of a cracked pillar.
3. 27m VS 4c. Follow the obvious horizontal weakness past several old threads to belay in the corner.

4. 30m HVS 4c. Climb the corner for about 5m then head right under a small blocky roof to the slab above the *Lean Machine* wall. Cross the slab (easy but with poor protection and snappy rock) to belay at the large corner (*Apex Corner*).

Exit: 10m VS 4b. Climb diagonally right with care to avoid the snappy runnel, finding good rock and the top via the finish of *Charge of the Wild Horsemen*.



The Caterpillar

HVS *

Unless you plan to exit the Ruckle by climbing *Ocean Boulevard* (E3 5b, but well protected) or *Bottemless Buttress* (HS, but only possible to get to if there are no waves), it is best to pre-place a rope down *The Ramp* so you can pull out at the end of the climb (assuming you are not continuing onto the next section of *Wonderland*). The stakes for this are found by walking to you reach the 4th stone wall then

backtracking about 25m to twin stakes (one scaffold pole and one polished stainless steel rod). The Caterpillar isn't one of the better sections of Wonderland, but it does cross a series of slabs—which is unusual for the Ruckle and it covers ground few have ever visited. It also crosses the spectacular overhanging wall of Ocean Boulevard at a surprising easy grade by using a lower out.

30m HVS 5a. The first pitch of Apex Corner. Climb the large corner right of the *Lean Machine wall* for about 8m. Head right across the slab and turn the arete (good cam in a pocket just before the arete and a wire at your feet on the arete.) Continue on another slab to belay on the left side of a pillar. Large hex and other anchors.

5. 20m HVS 5a. Descend the corner (leaving protection for the second) until a few metres below the main fault. Head right across the slab and turn the arete (good cam in a pocket just before the arete and a wire at your feet on the arete.) Continue on another slab to belay on the left side of a pillar. Large hex and other anchors.
6. 15m HVS 5a. Make a tough move around the pillar and continue across the slabs to the large corner (of *High Noon*).
7. 20m HVS 5a. Descend the corner (peg on right wall to back rope the second) and cross the wall on the right on small but good hand holds to a final steep move to clip an in-situ thread that lies above a steep corner. Descend the corner (*I've got the Spirit*) leaving protection, to step onto the boulders (or just lower of if you trust the thread). This point is well above the high tide level and protected from small seas.
8. 10m S 4a. Step right 5m to belay above the drop off. Climb the wall above the drop off then the slab on the right to belay in the corner. (This belay is needed to avoid rope drag).
9. 15m HVS 5a (possibly E1 5a for the second if a back rope is not used). A good pitch. Reverse the corner (yet again leaving

protection) to below an in-situ thread. Head right on underclings to reach the next slab. Cross this to a multi-peg, wire and cam belay.

10. 25m VS 5a. Layback easily up the obvious crack on the right to just below the main fault. Step down slightly then across to clip a thin in-situ thread. Climb up to another thread above the main fault. Lower off the two threads (one on each rope – check the quality of the threads and back them up if needed) and swing around the arete. Lower down the overhanging wall about 12m placing gear to keep you in contact with the rock in the large crack of *Barracuda*. Stop when you see a line of good holds heading off right. Traverse along these using tension from the rope 3m to reach a belay on the next crack (Ocean Boulevard). (If you can't find the holds or lose contact with the rock, just lower to the boulders.)
11. 20m VS 4c. Take the rising line of holds rightwards all the way to *The Ramp* to belay at the large block that sits on the even larger ledge.

Variation: *Derek's Way*. 40m E3 5b **. The lower out described above can be avoided by simply following the main fault line after clipping the two threads. The fault is much more solid here than elsewhere and protection can be found as you cross the many routes on the wall. Just keep going along the fault hoping your arms don't give out. Steep down 3m when you reach a large crack (*The Last Hurrah of the Golden Horde*). This is just before the fault starts to get dusty. Follow an easy rightwards flake traverse for 3m to the large ledge with the large block on it.

Exit: If you have brought your muscles with you, finish up *Ocean Boulevard* (E3 5b, but well protected). If you have preplaced an abseil rope down *The Ramp*, climb *The Ramp* (HVS 4c and loose at the top) pulling out on the rope. Otherwise exit up *Due Care and Attention* (HS), also loose at

the top, but easier. Or much better and much safer, if the tide allows and if the date is outside the bird ban, walk right along the base and climb out on one of the many excellent routes in this part of the Ruckle, for example: Bottomless Buttress (HS*), Silhouette Arete (VS**), or Nasty Spider (E1*). Silhouette Arete is particularly recommend.



The White Rabbit

VS **

45m HS 4a. The long easy diagonal stepped line which you abseiled over is the *The Ramp*. Start as for *The Ramp* by climbing up to a large ledge with a large block sitting on it to join *Wonderland*. Cross the wall rightwards below the stepped line of *The Ramp* to a large flake system and climb right and up to meet the main break. Traverse the main break

until you can drop down to stand on a jammed boulder in the corner of *Jericho Grove*.

12. 35m HS 4a. From the block, cross the wall rightwards below the line of *The Ramp* to a large flake system and climb right and up to meet the main break. Traverse the main break until you can drop down to stand on a jammed boulder in the corner of *Jericho Grove*.
13. 7m S 4a. Remove anything from the back of your harness and drop down behind the boulder (the rabbit's hole) leaving protection for the second. The less slim will need to down-climb the outer West side of the boulder. Swing right and down to belay in a small corner below the widest part of the massive roof.
14. 40m HS 4a. Traverse right just above the main black flint bands. Belay after a slightly harder move at the base of a short layback and slab.
15. 10 m HS 4b. Up the layback to a belay on the main break just around the arête and at the top of the big corner.
16. 15m VS 4b. Descend the corner for 2m to reach the finger crack heading downwards across the wall. Follow this on underclings to belay in a small corner.
17. 15m VS 4c. Continue right around the arête, across the large corner (difficult) to cross the compact rock and continue right to the arête to belay on the cracks just before the next arete (the cracks of *Bottomless Buttress*).

23m HS 4a. (*Bottomless Buttress*) Climb up to the break. Launch up the jugs to the roof where it meets the arête and follow the corner to the top.



The Red Queen

HVS **

[R] 20m HS 4b. Start as for Bottomless Buttress. Climb the corner for 5m then traverse rightwards along the easy line until the arête is reached. Climb up to belay below the main break at a sentry box.

18. [R] 18m HS 4b. Traverse rightwards along the easy line until the arête is reached. Climb up to belay below the main break at a sentry box.
19. [R] 15m HS 4b. Climb up to then traverse the main break on jugs (spectacular, but easy) to belay in the next corner (of *The Fin*) cross this to belay at the next corner (*Luke*).
20. [R] 25m VS 4c. Descend the large corner until level with the large roof on the left. Head right along the line of jugs, cross the corner, pull around and nose and belay in the next corner (of *The Earth's at Flash Point*).
21. [R] 25m VS 4c. Step down the arete on the right and pull onto the wall. Cross this on good holds and traverse under the small roof to belay in the next corner (of *Perversion*).

22. [R] 12m VS 4b. Cross the wall on the right on yet more big holds for about 4m. Then head diagonally up to the obvious crack (of *Midge*), climb this to the fault line.
23. [R] 20m HVS 4b. **check grade**. Follow the fault line across the corner of *Midge*. Continue around the arete to belay in the large corner (of *Snowdrop*).
24. [R] 10m HVS 4b. **check grade**. Continue along the faultline to belay in the corner (of *Thunderball*).

19m HVS 5a. The second pitch of *Jo*. Climb up then right to a bulge. Pull over this and finish up the corner.



Seven

E1 *

17m VS 4c. First pitch of *Jo*. Use the right wall of the cave, then pass the roof and continue up the corner to the fault line. Belay.

25. [R] 30m HVS 4b. **check grade**. Follow the faultline, past various small corners, occasionally stepping briefly down and back up to reach the small groove and belay of *Future Primitive*.

26. [R] 15m HVS 5a. **check grade**. Follow the faultline right into the large corner. Cross the wall above the faultline. Follow undercuts and step down to a ledge to belay on the fault line.
27. [R] 20m HVS 5a. Difficult rope work. Step down and follow the ledge right into the next corner. Reverse the corner then cross the wall (the lower you descended the easier) to follow a line at about 45 degrees to belay around an arete and just below the main fault line.
28. [R] 40m E1 5a. Descend the corner and cracks (of *Enos*) for about 8m to the roof line then head right along the narrow fault crossing various cracks and small corners. Cross a larger chockstone-filled corner (of *Hard Day's Night*) to make a few final pumpy moves to pull into the next corner (of *Ulysses*), taking great care with the large protruding block.
29. 18m E1 5a. Traverse right still following the thin break and about 10m above the boulders for around 10m to the next (shallow) corner (*Grim Reaper*). Take the easiest route to the main fault to a difficult to construct belay on the left.

36m E1 5a. *Grim Reaper*. On the last pitch don't stop at the fault line, but continue up cracks on the right to a difficult to construct a belay 3 metres above the fault. Traverse left and pull over the small bulge and climb up leaving the overhangs to your left. Pull up into the corner then traverse right, then up once more to the roofs and make a hand traverse right to easier terrain. Surmount the blocks to the top (protected by an in-situ iron stake).



Alice

E1 *

Wonderland gets to with a 5m of the sea on this section, but is reasonably well protected by boulders.

18m E1 5b. *Grim Reaper*. Start about 5m left of the arete of the massive corner (of *Sythe*). Climb to a small ledge with a bulge above protected by a poor peg at 6m. Pull over the bulge and follow the crackline to the fault; difficult to construct belay on the left.

30. 15m HVS 4c Follow the fault (protection in the roof of the fault) to the arete. Step around the arete using the large foot holds below the fault, then continue right to place a medium hex in the solid vertical crack above the fault and about midway between the arete and the corner. Either lower off the hex (backup pieces recommended) for 5m and swing into the massive corner (of

Scythe) at the height of a foot ledge, or continue right making difficult moves on the sandy break and descend the corner to the same small ledge. In-situ peg and size 4 and 5 (BD C4 sizes) cam belay backed up by small wires. The second will need to leave the medium hex in place to protect the descent and stop a possible factor 2 fall onto the belay.

31. 15m E1 5a. Traverse the orange wall to make a hard move around the arete (size 1 C4 on the far right) to much easier climbing on monster but friable hand and footholds. Belay on the left hand side of the detached pillar.
32. 15m HS 4a. Walk careful rightwards to the far side of the pillar and descend the corner (leaving protection for the second. Step right to belay a few meters above the boulders.
33. 15m HVS 4c (E1 4c for the second). This pitch feels rather artificial with much of it very close to the boulders: meaning a slip could lead to an ankle damaging ground fall, so consider using the variation. Step up and around the arete on the right and pull into the corner (large thread), pull across the corner and thread a small rock in the crack (to protect the second). Pull right on poor holds to descend diagonally right to large jugs just above the boulders. Follow the jug line horizontally (various threads) until you can climb up easily and continue very easily to the crack below the left hand end of the large roof (belay here, or if rope drag is not a problem continue onto the next pitch). **Variation (S, 4a)** At the end of the last pitch (i.e. the descent from the pillar) simply step down onto the boulders to belay then walk right about 10m to pull back onto the rockface and follow the next pitch without stopping.
34. 22m HVS 5a. Climb up to the large roof. Traverse right under the roof (past *Billy Pig*) to turn the corner and belay.
35. 10 m VS 4b. Climb up the corner then traverse right just below the main fault in an airy situation until the diagonal crack of *Sinbad* is reached. Climb the crack to belay on the main fault line here, or if finishing up *Buccaneer*, 6m to the right in the big corner.

20m HVS 5a. The second pitch of *Sinbad*. Pull onto the wall above the fault line to follow a crack and pass the bulge via its left hand side. Climb slabs then the exit corner finishing rightwards. Or much better, if you have the strength, finish up *Buccaneer*: (E2 5b, more physical than hard, and well protected). From a belay in the massive corner on the right, climb the corner to the roof and thread. Launch yourself left to gain a steep crack that is followed to an exit on the left.



The Knave of Hearts

E1 *

18m HVS 4c. Start as for *Buccaneer*. Climb the corner crack for 8m to join the obvious hand traverse line. Follow this rightwards for 10m to belay just before the blocks jutting out from the wall,

- 36. 20m HVS 5a. Follow the fault line right to drop across the corner (of *Buccaneer*). Descend the corner for about 6m to join the obvious hand traverse line. Follow this rightwards for 10m to belay just before the blocks jutting out from the wall.
- 37. 20m E1 5a. Well protected. Climb rightwards across the block and swing down under the roof. Cross the corner and traverse easily under the roof and continue to the right hand end of the square cut prow. Transverse around the arete into the corner and continue rightwards to belay on a small arete.
- 38. 15m HVS 4c. Continue rightwards on the same line to swing around the large arete and belay on hex's in the large, dusty, twin cracks.
- 39. 25m E1 5a. Climb up to the main fault line and head right across the corner then along the fault line (dusty) to belay at *Finale Groove*.

20m HVS 4c. Climb the corner above (upper half of *Finale Groove*).



The Cheshire Cat

HVS(A1) or E1 ***

20m HVS 4b Start as for *Finale Groove*. Climb the groove for 10m to a chock stone. Traverse right for 5m to meet the roof. Traverse under this stepping down 3m before the arête to belay on the arête.

- 40. 17m HVS 5a. Head down the corner (i.e. reverse *Finale Groove*) from the main fault line for 7m to a chockstone. Traverse right for 5m to meet the roof. Traverse under this stepping down 3m before the arête to belay on the arête.
- 41. 24m HVS 4c. Climb the corner on the right for 2m and drop down right under the roof. Traverse right in a spectacular position for 10m and swing around the arête. Climb the easy corner to the main fault line. Traverse easily right along the fault for about 8m to reach the next arête.
- 42. 5m HS 4b. Descend the corner for about 5m until level with the large roof and belay to avoid rope drag.
- 43. 8m E1 5a (or HVS A1). Well protected. Traverse right under the roof to reach a spike (on *The Tool*) at the far end.

44. 12m E1 5b (or HVS A1). Well protected. Step down (possibly leaving a sling on the spike to protect the second) and follow the rising underclings to reach an alcove and an easy traverse onto the ledge of *Tatra*. Belay on the right at the large crack on the good foot ledge. The last two pitches can be combined if free climbing, or on aid if carrying 2 sets of 0.3 to 2.5 inch cams.
45. 6m VS 4b (hard). As for *Tatra*. Up the crack; wrap a sling around the jug; hand traverse right on good small footholds to step up at the arête and belay.
46. 15m HS 4a. Traverse right along the main fault-line on good jugs to cross the big corner. Climb up and right across the slab to meet *Director's Groove*. Belay.
47. 30m HVS 4c. Good rope work and plenty of 60cm and 120cm draws required. Descend the groove below the belay for about 8m (leaving plenty of runners to protect the second) to meet the obvious hand-traverse line. Follow this with the occasional step down to get around a hard bit to meet the groove of *Lightning Wall*. Step down 3m to a comfortable belay.

35m HVS 5a. *Lightning Wall*. Climb the groove to the fault line. Traverse right then pull over the bulge rightwards (crux) and traverse rightwards above the roof to the arete. Climb up to an old peg and finish up the large corner.

The Mock Turtle

E1 **

5m HS 4b. Start at a short steep wall 25m right of the *Marmolata* abseil line and below a groove (i.e. the start of *Lightning Wall*). Boulder up into the groove and belay.

48. 25m E1 5b. Step right around the arete and cross the corner to climb back up to re-join the thin hand traverse line which is

followed to a belay at a step-down and ledge (as for *The Adventures of Portland Bill*).

49. 17m E1 5b. Continue along the hand traverse to a spike belay on *Acapulco* (as for *The Adventures of Portland Bill*).
50. 30m VS 4c. Care needed to avoid rope drag. Traverse right around the corner (*check grade) and under the massive roof to meet *Ximenes*. Continue at the same level on big holds and pull around the arete into the big corner (of *Gimcrack*). Move delicately right (for about 4m) to the vertical crack (of *Quasimodo*). Step down to a belay.

32m VS 4b. Cross the wall leftwards back into the corner of *Gimcrack*. Climb to the fault and pull over the overhang (hard). Finish up the corner. Alternatively, faster, and at the same grade, on the previous pitch before you step around the arete to join *Gimcrack*, climb easily up to the faultline to belay as for *Gimcrack*. Then pull over the overhang and finish up the corner.

The Pigeon

HVS (one move of aid), or E1 **

Wonderland briefly gets to within the 3m of the water on this section, so needs to be avoided in rough seas.



10m HS 4b. Start at a low angle buttress that lies proud of the face just right of a large diamond-shaped roof (the start of *Gimcrack*). Climb the rib for 6m then head diagonally right to the base of a good crack. Belay. As this area is effected by the sea, an abseil approach down *Gimcrack* might be better: Abseil (where is the stake for this) to the fault line and then head down and right (facing in) to pull across to the belay on *Quasimodo*. You may need to place a runner to direct the abseil rope.

51. [R] 15m HVS 5a. From a good belay on *Quasimodo* 5m below the fault line. Traverse right for 2m then head diagonally up to stand

on a block just below the fault line. Head right and back down then across the wall to belay in a corner.

52. [R] 15m HVS 5b. Continue right at the level of, or above, the 6 inch flint band to a hanging belay.
53. [R] 10m HVS 5b. Swing round the arete and climb onto the slab. Belay in the middle of the slab.
54. [R] 25m HVS 5a (one move of aid) or E1 5b. Climb up to the fault and traverse this (threads and large cams in the fault with various small cams in the roof). Swing around the arete and pull across the short overhanging section on good jugs placing a wire at the most strenuous point to protect the second from swinging into the corner or to aid off (the second can remove this once in the corner). Place good gear in the corner as the rock is poor, although the climbing is easy, for the remaining 6m to the belay (pegs of unknown quality in the floor of the fault, good large wire at the back of the fault, good hex or large wire 1m to the right).
55. [R] 15m VDiff 3a. Using some tat, connect the pegs to the hex on the right and lower down the corner, then head easily across and down the wall (placing protection as you head across) belaying a few metres above the lip of a roof about 5m from the sea.
56. [R] 10m 5c, or 5a with tension from the rope. Relatively calm seas needed. Head diagonally downward to find underclings on the blunt arete. Follow these with difficulty around the overhanging arete to much easier climbing diagonally up to belay on a thread around a small pillar. Care is need to keep the second safe on this pitch.
57. [R] 20m HVS 5a. Traverse right to a large ledge and place good runners before the rock becomes compact. After a hard move right, continue traversing to follow good holds around the next arete. Step down to good foot holds and step across the small alcove. Climb the good hand crack for a couple of metres and belay. A high piece above the belay can be used to help protect the second as they follow final moves. (The hand crack is the left

hand side of a pillar of rock. A very large sling or cordelette can be placed over the top of this to form an alternative belay.)

58. [R] 20m S 4a. Climb up the crack to stand on the pinnacle. Head right on the fault to a commodious stance just left of the long roof at 8m.

22m E1 5b. Exit up the superb second pitch of *October Lady*: Climb the overhanging corner to the roof, traverse right on jams with very good projection and pull over the end of the roof by reaching for a flake jug. Follow the shallow groove above to the top.

The Duck

E1 ***

15m HVS 4c. Start up the first pitch of *October Lady*. About 25m left of the base of the *Old Faithful* abseil lies a projecting rib with a corner on its right. Climb up to the corner then follow it to a belay at the fault.

59. [R] 15m E1 5b. Climb the overhanging corner to the roof (as for the second pitch of *October Lady*), traverse right on jams with very good projection and pull over the end of the roof by reaching for a flake jug. Belay in the groove above.
60. [R] 30m VS 5a. Traverse right for about 20m to meet the crack of *Old Faithful*. Descend this, leaving lots of pro for the second and belay on the fault. (Variation VS 4b. The last two pitches can be avoided by simply continuing along the fault to *Old Faithful*. This will save time, but avoids the harder, and much better, climbing under the long roof.)
61. [R] 15m HVS 5a. Traverse rightwards along the main fault line for 10m until the void stops progress (possible belay on the arete). Climb down and into the cave until good jams and protection in the ceiling allow one to bridge across to the Duck's neck. After

sitting on the Duck's head to rest, pull rightwards into the corner to belay (on *Behemoth*).

62. [R] 25m E1 5b. Wild. Climb the big corner (2nd Pitch of *Behemoth*) for 5m, arrange protection and traverse right to clip a lone peg in the middle of the wall. Pull up the thin crack on the right and traverse right above the roof into the corner. Cross the arete. Romp up the perfect rising diagonal crack and place a sacrificial carabiner for the second on the thread at its end. Step down the crack below the thread for 2m and cross the ledges on the right to the crack of *Dublin Packet*. Ascend the crack to belay under the roof.

12m VS 4b. Finish up *Dublin Packet* by continuing straight up.

The Mad hatter

HVS **

25m HVS 5a. This is difficult to reach needing a low tide and a calm sea, so consider accessing *Wonderland* via abseil if the sea state is poor. However, the normal start is all part of the adventure. From the base from the *Old Faithful* ab line traverse boulders to reach the deep cleft/zawn (of *White Horse*). Cross the zawn wall, 5b moves. Start on a ledge. Drop down to a partly submerged rock, fall across onto the right side of the zawn. Traverse right to a small niche and climb a crack to the fault line, moving left at its top. Climb the deep groove above (hard to start), to the small roof. Belay. Alternatively, belay on the main fault, and climb the groove as part of the next pitch.

63. [R] 17m HS 4a. Traverse the easy slab on the right and continue rising slightly to just below the cliff top. Head diagonally down from the high point (the highest point on *Wonderland*) over rough

rock to pull surprisingly easily around into the corner (of *Let the Punka Burn*). Belay.

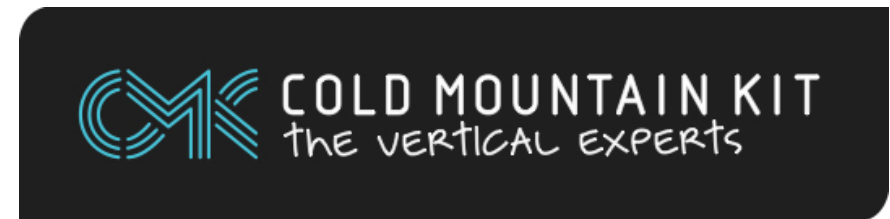
64. [R] 15m HS 4a. Cross ledges and step down and around a small roof to belay in the corner.

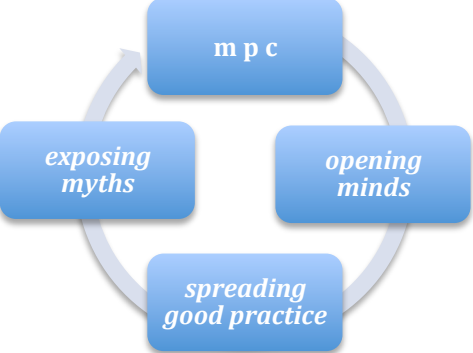


David Coley and Pete Callaghan, 2015

TOPO to Follow – once Pete has stitched the photos together

65. [R] 20m VS 4b. Head right then down to traverse at a height half way between the main fault and the roof above on glorious jugs for 10m then climb easily down to the main fault at the top of the first pitch of *Airy Legs*. Good belay.
66. 18m HVS 5a. Pull up into the corner and head off right on good holds. Just before the arete climb up (poor protection) and swing around into the corner (of *War*) to large wires or hexes. Climb down the corner leaving lots of protection for the second and belay on one of the most comfortable ledges on *Wonderland*.
67. 30m HS 4a. An excellent and fun pitch to finish on. Follow the, now solid, fault for 10m to the large crack. Climb this to the small roof and traverse right along monster jugs for about 10m to reach good runners in a flake crack. Climb the crack (*Second Sight*) to finally exit the Ruckle and a beer at the Square and Compass. Well done.





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