

Chauvin Guides International Moby Grape Route Description

Rack- Two #3 and two #3 1/2 Friends for Reppy's Crack. A 3 1/2 Friend could also be useful on the pitch below the Finger of Fate. If doing the original start, even bigger cams could be useful. Two ropes would be very handy in the event of a retreat.

Moby Grape is a spectacular line up one of the tallest sections of Cannon Cliff. Superb climbing coupled with outstanding views and situations throughout it's entire length make this perhaps the best climb of its grade in the state. For the most part the rock is all solid, however care should be taken on all of the ledges not to knock anything off on climbers below. This is a big climb in an alpine setting which requires that climbers attempting it should be pretty solid in their climbing, anchoring, rope handling, rappelling, and route finding skills. Climbers should be prepared for the rapid changes in weather for which this cliff is known for.

Approach- Because I-93, which runs through the notch, is a limited access highway, you must get onto the southbound lane (which may mean driving to the north end of the notch and turning around) so that you can park at the parking lot for Profile Lake which is that the very north end of the cliff. To approach Moby Grape, hike south from the parking lot along the paved bicycle path until just past the huge boulder with a sign describing how it got there. You'll come to a widening of the path where a faint trail leads off into the woods on your right. This trail is usually marked by a small cairn. Follow the trail up through the woods. It becomes pretty steep and blocky. Exit the woods on to the talus slopes following cairns up and eventually somewhat to the left aiming for the highest section of talus jutting up into the trees. In the trees follow the trail first right and then back up to the left until you come out at the base of the cliff right below Union Jack and Vertigo. Head uphill to the left on the trail at the base of the cliff. Shortly, the trail descends back down and around to the base of the Conn Buttress and the start of Moby Grape.

Pitch 1- There are two starts for Moby Grape, the original start around the left corner of the buttress and the striking Reppy's Crack running up the right side of the face of the buttress. We'll describe both but highly recommend Reppy's Crack as it is arguably the best crack climb in the whole area. It's a long, full-on jam crack more reminiscent of Yosemite than New England. **Original start-** Layback the wide overlap on the left side of the buttress (you might want some large cams here). Go up about 80 feet to a small belay stance (5.8). From the stance continue up the crack to where it's possible to traverse right around the outside corner onto to face of the buttress. Continue up to a flat ledge on the top of the buttress where there is a bolted anchor (5.8). A long rope will allow you to get all way to this anchor in one pitch. With a 50m rope it's also possible to bypass the first belay and set up an anchor on the face of the buttress below the good ledge with the bolts. **Reppy's Crack-** Jam this amazing crack up to a small pod. The crux of the crack is getting above the pod to where the crack narrows again. Where the main part of the crack ends there are a bunch of rappel slings that can be backed up to make an anchor (100 ft. 5.8). From the slings, angle up to the right along the very edge of the buttress until it's possible to climb easily up big grooves and blocks to the left that lead to the good ledge with the bolted anchor. You pass another set of rappel slings to your left along the way (80 ft 5.7). With long ropes these first two pitches are often combined into one. So, from either start you wind up at the bolted anchor in one or two pitches. For the sake of this description will call the bolted anchor the end of pitch 1.

Pitch 2- 90ft, 4th class From the anchor scramble up and to the left avoiding the steepest rock until it's possible to climb a left facing inside corner to another excellent ledge at the base of steeper rock. The crux of the climb, the obvious triangular roof, should be directly above you.

Pitch 3- 100ft, 5.8 Climb up the shallow right facing corner above the belay then head left to where it's possible to climb a right leaning finger crack. Step right from the crack to where you can gain the sloping ledge below the triangular roof. Climb the roof (awkward) and follow the crack above to a good belay ledge. It's possible to belay a little to the left of where you gain the ledge at two pins that should be backed up or all the way to the right in the corner which is where the next pitch goes. Watch your gear if you use this second anchor as there are some questionable blocks here. It's possible to avoid the triangular roof by climbing a crack leading from the previous belay to the right of the roof. It's a little run out but easier climbing.

Pitch 4- 125ft, 5.8 Climb the corner at the right hand edge of the ledge trending right to a right-slanting corner which you follow to its top. Now angle up to the left, then up to belay at one of two good ledges. The lower one allows for less of a traverse on the next pitch but, the climbing is a little harder. From the higher one, a straight traverse to the right is required (a step down is even made) but, the climbing is a little easier.

Pitch 5- 5.8 From either belay head right to a scary looking thin flake that points to the left. A couple of thin moves allow you to reach this flake which allows you to reach a big sloping ledge at the base of the Finger of Fate, which looks like a big shark's fin. You can either chimney this on it's left side or hand traverse along the top of it from the right side. Either way is spectacular but most people would agree that coming in from the right is easier, especially if you are wearing a pack. This would not be a good place to fall, but the climbing is not difficult. From the top of the Finger, climb up delicately over a short slab to an inside corner which will lead to a big long ledge and a belay.

Pitch 6- From here there are a couple of options. It's possible to head to the right hand edge of the ledge where you can climb up the Conn Dike, which is an easy gully (but loose), to the next big ledge. Or, you can walk well to the left to where it's possible to make steep boulder moves (5.7 or 5.8) up to a crack. Follow easy climbing and cracks up above to the next big grassy ledge.

Pitch 7- If you used the first option described in pitch 6 move a ways to the left to where it is possible to scramble up easy, brushy rock then through some trees to where it is possible to climb a chimney at the base of a broken buttress. If you used the second option described in pitch 6 you'll have to walk about 100 feet to the right to where you can scramble up to this.

Pitch 8- 5.7 Climb the chimney, and then steep rock above until the cracks end and you are faced with a short section of smooth slab. Climb this and trend left aiming for the left hand side of a steep section of rock. Follow a good crack just to the left of the steeper rock up and right to a blocky belay stance. The chimney at the start of this pitch can be avoided by climbing on the outside of the buttress.

Pitch 9- 5.6 Above the belay make a few steep moves up into a corner, climb the corner and then scramble easily to the boulders at the top of the climb.

Descent- Walk to the north along the very edge of the cliff following small climber's trails. At one point you will go through thick brush that looks impenetrable, but actually has a couple of trails going through it. Aim for what looks like an old building foundation (actually an old heli-pad). From here, follow the trail down and then back to the north until you can scramble steeply down rock to the top of the Old Man. This spot is marked by all the engineering that is in place to keep the Old Man from falling apart. Continue along the edge of the cliff to the north onto an obvious trail that will take you all the way to the bottom. Turn right on the trail you intersect in the notch. You are now at the north end of Profile Lake. Follow the trail along the lake's west bank to where it's possible to cross back over to the parking lot.