

A Climbers Guide to

# Inis Oirthir

By

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## Inishsirrer

Inishsirrer (Inis Oirthir) is an uninhabited island found 600 metres off the Glashagh Lower coast in Gaoth Dobhair. The island is about 2 kilometre in length and about 300 metres wide at its widest point. The island has the ruined remains of 10 or so buildings and is grazed by a flock of sheep. At the south east end of the island, nearest mainland Donegal is a large freshwater lake which attracts a huge amount of migrating birds and it is not unusual to be in the company of hundreds of Barnacle Geese as you arrive on the island.

Access to the island is by sea with the easiest and shortest crossing being from the beach at the road end in Glashagh Lower. (Grid Ref B799296) The sea passage is about 600 metres and is sheltered most of the way by the tidal skerries en route. It is a sandy beach exit off Gaoth Dobhair and there is an old pier and slip for an even easier landing at the south east tip on the island.

Inishsirrer's nearest neighbour is the summer only inhabited [Inishmeane](#)

The island is very low lying with all the climbing based on the sea cliffs around Poll na Uan at the sea ward end of the island. It is an outstanding walk across the island from the slipway at the south end to the lighthouse to Poll na Uan at the north end of the island.



Map of North end of Inis Oirthir

## Fallen Block Wall

As you arrive at the north end of the island head to the wee lighthouse and the crags are all laid out in the amphitheatre of Poll na Uan in front of you. Standing looking out with the lighthouse behind you the fallen Block wall is out left and has a huge rock fall scar on it's left side.

Access is by abseil at low to mid tide, the base of the wall is dry at high tide all but the large fallen blocks are covered.

1: Rising Tide HS 4b 20m \*\*\*

Climb the crack coming out the left side of the fallen block recess at the base of the crag

*I. Miller, L. Murdiffe 15/05/19*

2: From the Ashes HS 4b 20m \*\*\*

Climb the very obvious right leaning full crag height fault line, starting in the fallen block recess at sea level.

*I. Miller, L. Murdiffe 16/05/19*

3: Salt Foam Traverse HS 4b 20m \*

Climb the cracks to the right of the blanker section of wall

*I. Miller, L. Murdiffe 17/04/17*

4: Bunny Foo Foo S 4a 18m

Start as for Salt Foam Traverse after a couple of vertical moves continue up the slightly right trending deep vertical cracks above.

*I. Miller 14/06/20*



**Fallen Block Wall**

### **The Slab**

Next over and behind The Fallen Block Wall is The Slab, another wall of perfect granite with just enough cracks, positive holds and good gear to provide a collection of excellent routes.

Access is by abseil down the face or by a very nice little scramble in from the right overlooking Tor na Faoileog.

1: Ingot V. Diff 12m

Climb the full crag height crack to the left of the slab

*I. Miller 15/05/19*

2: Dementor V. Diff 12m

Climb the slightly right trending overlap immediately to the left of the slab

*I. Miller, L. Murdiffe 16/05/19*

3: Death Eater VS 4b 12m \*

Climb the first crack line up the left side of the slab with tiny gear and excellent climbing

*I. Miller L. Murdiffe 16/05/19*



4: World's End VS 4b 12m \*

Climb the crack up the centre of the slab until it runs out,  
*I. Miller L. Murdoff 16/05/19*

5: Spaceman S 4a 13m \*

Climb "The Bulk" to gain the deep cracks running out left, follow these cracks across the face.  
*I. Miller L. Murdoff 16/05/19*



**The Slab**

6: The Bulk V. Diff 12m

Climb the left facing corner and crack direct up the wall right of the slab  
*L. Murdoff, I. Miller 16/05/19*

7: The Bump V. Diff 12m

From the tidal ledge climb a bulge to gain the wide crack, follow this to the top.  
*D. & O. Aherne 20/07/2022*

### **Tor na Faoileog**

A short swim from the base of The Slab takes you onto the small island, Tor na Faoileog (Rock of the Seagulls) On this island facing mainland Inishsirr is a perfect slab of immaculate granite. It is quite unusual in that every hold on the slab is a perfect good positive hold. It would be possible to climb the face anywhere at about severe. I used Central route as a down climb all listed routes were climbed on 20/06/20 as freesolos'

1: The Arete S 4a 10m

In the channel about 25m back from The Slab climb the obvious pillar/Arete from sea level on perfect rock and surging sea racing through the channel.

Either side of this arete are very nice open book corners, the one on the sea ward side goes at about V. Diff on huge holds and small ledges. To the right and starting on the large ledge about 4m above sea level climb the corner above at about severe

2: Outer Edge S 4a 10m

An excellent airy climb overlooking the channel to your left, start just below where the horizontal break ends and climb the edge of the slab.

3: Raging Flames S 4a 10m

Start at the first vertical crack line and follow a slightly left trending line on excellent scooped holds all the way to the top. It is possible to climb direct from the same start but the holds are not as good.

4: Central Fault Diff 10m

Climb the left facing corner in the centre of the face

5: Clean Sheet S 4a 10m

Next right climb up the centre of the slab on excellent but slightly smaller holds

6: R.E.M. S 4a 10m

Climb the wandering full crag height fault

7: Spotlight S 4a 10m

Climb the center of the slab starting just left of the mini left facing corner

8: Last Ferry Home S 4a 10m

Climb the big left facing corner at the right-hand end of the slab



**Tor na Faoileog**

## **Lighthouse Wall**

Directly below the mini lighthouse lives the Lighthouse Wall, abseil access is easiest. The first route is found just as the wall terminates and turns into the zawn running inland. Access is by abseil or downclimbing in the Jugfest area of the wall.



Donegal Triathlon - Kayak, litter pick and climb E1 5b 16m

3 meters left of the “Chipper Chimney” climb a series of mini corners up and left. The first corner gives the technical crux, and then a sloping ledge to gather yourself before heading towards the mildly pumpy exit moves.

*J. Doyle, D. Aherne 05/06/2022*

1: Chipper Chimney S 4a 15m \*\*

Climb the excellent full crag height chimney at the far left of the wall directly below the lighthouse.

*I. Miller, L. Murdiffe 17/04/17*

2: Jugfest Diff 16m

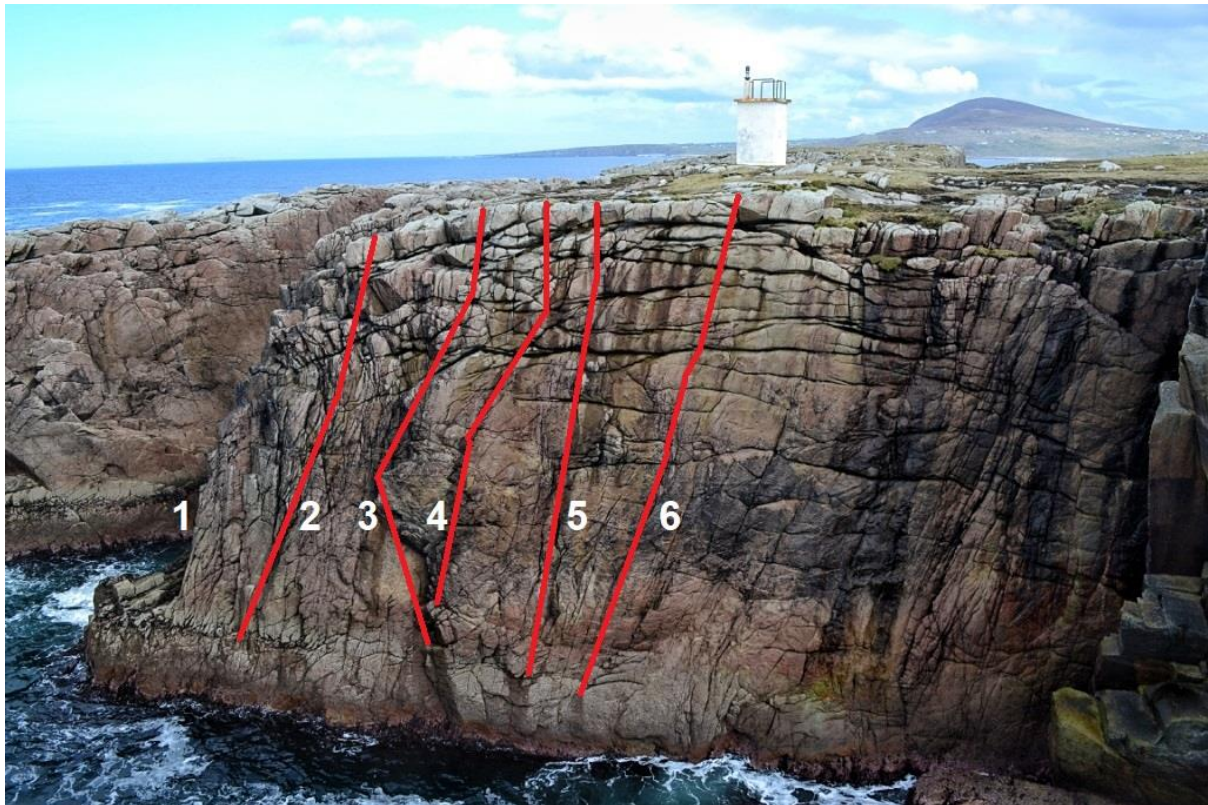
Just after the turns out of the zawn the first section can be pretty much climbed anyway at Diff / V.Diff price range on huge holds

*I. Miller 31/03/17*

3: Dobbies Corner V.Diff 16m

Climb the left facing corner

*I. Miller 31/03/17*



### **Lighthouse Wall**

4: Dobbies Wall S 17m

Start as for Dobbies Corner but climb out and up right and continue up through the steepening to the top.

*I. Miller 31/03/17*

5: Lighthouse Crack HS 4b 18m \*

Climb the full crag height crack

*I. Miller 31/03/17*

6: Impending Doom VS 4b 18m \*

Climb the last full crag height crack finishing directly below the lighthouse

*I. Miller 31/03/17*

Across the skinny zawn beside the lighthouse and facing out towards Tor na Faoileog, there lives a wall of slabby ground with several deep cracks running up and through this cliff. At the right hand end of this slabby wall nearest the lighthouse the wall steepens and turns 90° into the zawn. The following route takes the corner between this steep and slabby ground.

Honeymoon MS 10m

At the right hand of the ledge at sea level climb the faint crack on good holds. Steep at the start but easier ground after a few meters

*D. Aherne 30/07/21*

**Disclaimer**

This guidebook is intended for information purposes only, it is not an instruction manual. This free guidebook is for the use of experienced outdoor climbers to make their own judgement calls as to what is and where is safe to climb on any given day.

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained within this guidebook at the time of writing, it alas cannot be guaranteed to be completely accurate. Many of the routes, locations and even some of the islands in these guidebooks are seldom visited, with a considerable amount of the routes having only ever been climbed once before.

The west coast and islands of Donegal are very exposed to the Atlantic Ocean swells brought by the ever present trade winds. A good working knowledge of such nautical matters is essential to ensure safe practice whilst visiting and climbing on remote and very exposed sea cliffs and stacks.

Rock climbing is an activity with a very real danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities must employ appropriate levels of mountaineering / rock climbing guile and common sense. Participants must take personal responsibilities for their actions and involvement in these activities at all times.

In Ireland all land is owned by someone, the inclusion of a location in this book does not mean we have the right of access or the right to climb there. Please respect the rights of the landowner and we can continue to visit these beautiful places.