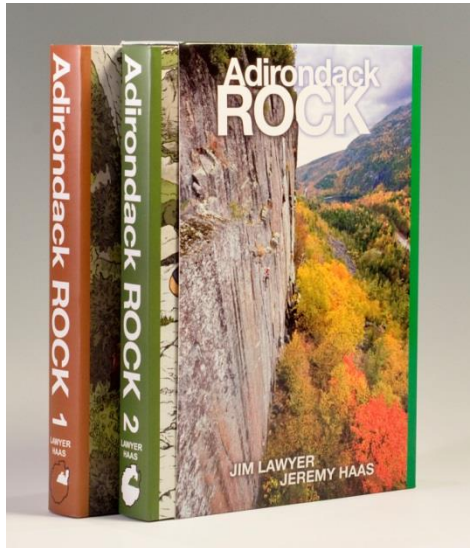




SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2014

## Review: New Edition Of 'Adirondack Rock' Superb

by [Phil Brown](#)



The second edition of *Adirondack Rock* is out. If that doesn't seem like a big deal, you must not be a climber.

Local climbers have been eagerly awaiting the second edition, and it's now evident that their eagerness was justified: although the first edition, published in 2008, is an excellent guidebook, the new one is a major improvement.

Most important, it contains 1,240 new climbing routes and adds a number of cliffs not found in the first edition, including Sugarloaf Mountain (acquired by the state this year), Shelving Rock on the east side of Lake George (72 routes), and Silver Lake and Potter mountains (a combined 150 routes). In addition, the new guidebook documents more than 200 new routes at Crane Mountain, largely the work of Jay Harrison and his cohorts.

All told, *Adirondack Rock* describes about 3,100 routes (with more than 4,000 pitches) on 320 cliffs scattered around the Adirondack Park. As Tad Welch, one of the region's most prolific climbers, notes in the foreword: "That's over 65 miles of climbing, in case you're wondering."

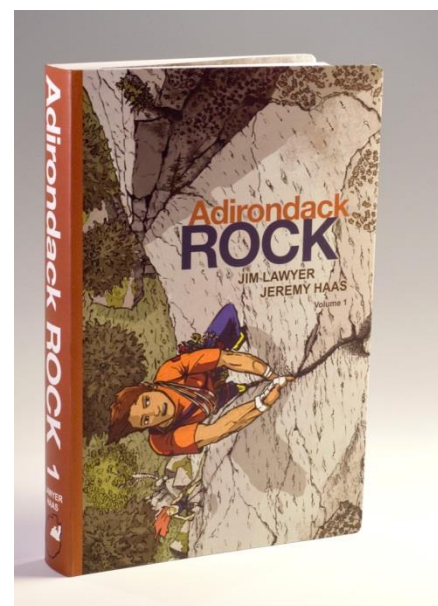
Besides descriptions of 4,000 pitches, you'll find 320 climbing photos, 175 aerial photos, 135 cliff diagrams, 104 approach maps, a chronology of Adirondack climbing, several appendices, and lots more.

That's a bunch of material to squeeze into a guidebook, and so the authors—Jim Lawyer and Jeremy Haas—split it into two volumes. The first covers the Park's most well-known climbing areas, such as Keene Valley, Poke-o-Moonshine, Wilmington Notch, and the High Peaks. The second volume covers everything else.

The volumes come in a slipcase with a gorgeous photo of a climber on the vertigo-inducing Spider's Web, with Chapel Pond and fall colors in the background. The covers of the books themselves are adorned with illustrations of climbers—a man on volume one, a woman on volume two. The authors refer to the volumes as "The Boy Book" and "The Girl Book."

Another big change is the use of full color throughout the books. This not only makes the photos more eye-catching, but it also makes the cliff diagrams and approach maps easier to grasp. Various colors are also used to mark the page edges to demarcate one climbing region from another. For example, green for Lake Champlain, pink for Chapel Pond Pass, and orange for Keene. This makes it easy to flip to the region you're interested in.

The indices are another welcome change. One index lists the climbs (and other subjects) alphabetically; a second one lists them by grade



of difficulty. The latter also ranks them by the quality of the climbing (ranging from no stars to five stars). Thus, you can easily find the best climbs at your grade.

Another cool feature is an appendix where cliffs are grouped under various categories: Canoe Approach Crag, Toprope Areas, Mountaintop Destinations, Slab Climbing Areas, Areas with Good Cracks, Areas to Visit When It's Hot, Areas to Visit in Light Rain, and so on.

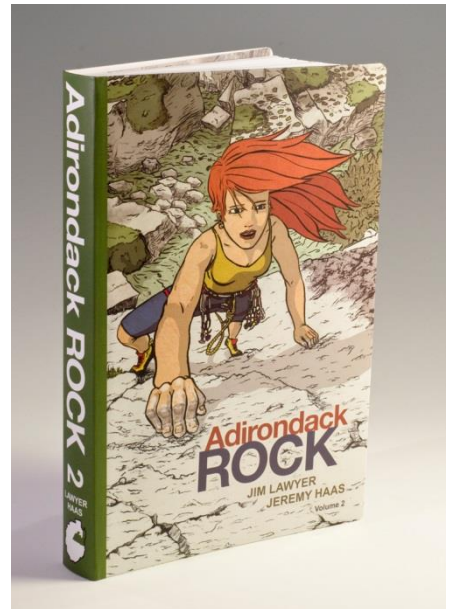
Missing from the second edition are descriptions of bouldering areas. That's because another climber is preparing a separate bouldering guidebook.

The first Adirondack climbing guidebook was published by Trudy Healy in 1967. It was a small staple-bound booklet that described about 70 routes. Tom Rosecrans produced a larger guidebook in the 1970s. Don Mellor wrote a much larger book that served climbers well for several decades, until the first edition of *Adirondack Rock*. Now Lawyer and Haas have outdone themselves.

Some might gripe that the new books contain too much information. Is it really necessary to describe *every* known route in the Adirondacks? Should the route descriptions be so detailed? Some climbers, after all, enjoy figuring out a route on their own.

But these are cavils. My guess is most climbers will welcome all the beta they can get.

The second edition sells for \$40. It is available at the [Adirondack Rock website](#) and in stores.



## Phil Brown

Since 1999, Phil Brown has been Editor of the nonprofit Adirondack Explorer, the regional bimonthly with a focus on outdoor recreation and environmental issues, the same topics he writes about here at Adirondack Almanack.

Phil is also an energetic outdoorsman whose job and personal interests often find him hiking, canoeing, rock climbing, trail running, and backcountry skiing.

He is the author of *Adirondack Paddling: 60 Great Flatwater Adventures*, which he co-published with the Adirondack Mountain Club, and the editor of *Bob Marshall in the Adirondacks*, an anthology of Marshall's writings.

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