



AAC Publications

Little Sandy Valley, Lower Sandy Buttress (Point 11,427'), Pricker Buttress; Point 11,720', Wyoming State Bird

Wyoming, Wind River Range

In July 2014, Ben Rosenberg and I traveled to the Little Sandy Valley with no fixed plans other than to do some exploring. In part due to laziness and in part due to the attractiveness of walls low in the valley, we did not make it very far.

We first climbed Pricker Buttress (1,500', 7 pitches, IV 5.9 R) up the right side of Lower Sandy Buttress (a.k.a. Point 11,427'). The route began by ambling up the lower slabs via fun, easy crack and face climbing. Then a long scramble up ledge-filled terrain brought us to the rightmost crack line on the upper east face. We followed the crack to the right-hand skyline, where a couple of easier pitches led to the summit. The highlight of the route was a pricker-bush-filled offwidth leading to the ridge. Overall, the rock on the Lower Sandy Buttress was more reminiscent of the Tetons' metamorphic rock than the granite of the Wind Rivers. [Editor's note: It's likely this route climbs just right of the East Face (Beckey-Stevenson, AAJ 1968).]

We spent the second day climbing Wyoming State Bird (1,200', 8 pitches, IV 5.10+ R) on the east buttress of Point 11,720'. The route followed a very obtuse, sometimes vegetated dihedral about 300' right of Symbiosis (Duncan-Keith-McCarthy, 1993). After the dihedral ended on the east face, we traversed right into another dihedral system around the other side of the northeast arête and followed that to the summit. This route was surprisingly sustained and entertaining.

The most remarkable part of the experience was the lack of people. After three days in the valley, the only footprints we saw on the trail out were the same ones we'd left on the hike in.

Benjamin Collett

Images



The Little Sandy Valley as viewed from the hike in.



The line of Pricker Buttress on Point 11,427'.



Leading up the first pitch of Pricker Buttress on Point 11,427'.



The line of Wyoming State Bird on the east buttress of Point 11,720'.



The east face of Point 11,720'—what guidebook author Joe Kelsey calls one of the best walls in the Wind River Range. The classic line Gold Dihedrals (Chouinard-Herbert-Krisjansons, 1971) takes the center-right corner system.



The first pitch of Wyoming State Bird.

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