



AAC Publications

Nura Valley, Climbs and Attempts

Kyrgyzstan, Pamir, Eastern Zaalaisky Range

Returning along the line of peaks in the Nura basin traversed in 2025; all four peaks were in the 4,600-meter range. Photo by Joe Collinson

In July, Maria Koo, Lawrence Luscombe, and I from the U.K., with Orla O'Muire from Ireland, spent four weeks in the Nura Valley, which extends south from Nura village to the border with China. With little information available on the area other than Google Earth images, the trip was exploratory, and we did not have a clear objective before getting to the valley.

Traveling via Osh and Sary Tash, we hired horses to establish a base camp (39.53757°, 73.80524°) on July 3, allowing access to peaks west and north of Leibniz Peak. [This group of mountains is about 20 kilometers to the east of Kurumdy (6,613m) and other high summits of the central Zaalaisky Range. Climbers have accessed peaks from the western arm of the Nura Glacier, but on the eastern end, only Leibniz Peak (5,797m, 39.483054°, 73.87408°) is known to have been climbed; a German expedition reached the summit on September 12, 2009, via the north shoulder (D/TD 60°).]

On July 5, Koo and I enchainned four peaks with no previous recorded ascents that form a subrange north of the main divide: Peaks 4,570m, 4,580m, 4,650m, and 4,620m. (The first peak is at approximately 39.508892°, 73.819447°.) After ascending 1,000 meters up the northwest side of the first summit, the ridge traverse was on mixed ground with short cruxes of WI2 and easy rock. We reversed the route to descend.

We then established an advanced base camp by the glacier at 39.50169°, 73.84781°. While we were absent from this camp, two bags full of gear were stolen. The local horsemen felt that cross-border smugglers, who are known to operate in the area, were the likely culprits.

Despite this setback, we made two attempts at new routes in the area. On July 18, Koo and I attempted a 1,500-meter line on the north face of unclimbed Peak 5,680m (39.47746°, 73.84855°), due south of our camp, between Leibniz and Kypym-Top-Taz (Kurum-Tor-Tag, 5,766m).

The aesthetic line provided 900 meters of mainly 45°–50° ice climbing, but with a five-pitch crux of around 60° leading to a small plateau at approximately 5,100 meters. Above this, a 600-meter snow slope led toward the summit. However, the snow here was unstable and unsupportive, and we quickly decided to turn around.

Koo, Luscombe, and I also attempted unnamed Peak 4,780m (39.49836°, 73.87191°) on July 19 but turned around due to deteriorating weather.

This valley offers easy access to multiple big, unclimbed faces, but we would recommend teams go a little earlier to increase the chance of finding good ice and allow for exploring objectives lower in the valley, with the possibility of ski touring. [The expedition's complete report, with maps and many photos, can be downloaded [here](#).]

—Joe Collinson, U.K

Images



Hiking into the Nura Valley, with the imposing wall of Kypym-Top-Taz (Kurum-Tor-Tag, 5,766m) filling the view in the background.



Looking back over the foreground line of peaks in the Nura basin traversed in 2025; all four peaks are in the 4,600-meter range. Along the main divide in back are Kypym-Top-Taz (5,766m, left), flat-topped Peak 6,022m (Pik Eylera/Euler Peak on some maps), and the pyramid of Zarya Vostoka (6,349m) at far right.



Returning along the line of peaks in the Nura basin traversed in 2025; all four peaks were in the 4,600-meter range.



View across the eastern arm of the Nura Glacier to Leibniz Peak (5,797m) on the left, climbed by the north (left) shoulder in 2009, and unclimbed Peak 5,680m on the right. The broad ridge facing the camera was attempted in 2025, reaching a high point of about 5,100 meters.

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