



AAC Publications

Cerro Mono Verde, Northeast Couloir

Chile, Central Andes

Undoubtedly one of the strangest names in the toponymy of Chile's Central Andes is Cerro Mono Verde (4,524m, 33°0'40"S, 70°2'58"W), which means "green monkey." The peak is located approximately 70km northeast of Santiago and 40km south of Aconcagua in the Monos de Agua valley (named by local people for the extensive penitentes found here). The first ascent of the peak was made by Wolfgang Förster, Fernando Montenegro, and Sergio Montenegro in 1964 (aspect unknown). There are no other known ascents, though there have been unsuccessful attempts in recent years. Our team comprised Rodrigo Benavides, Bruce Swain, Héctor Teichelmann, Claudio Zuñiga, Gabriel Zuñiga, and me, and we chose a couloir on the northeast side of the mountain.

On November 16, 2017, we approached with mules. Once at the peak, Claudio and Gabriel decide to stay at the base, and only four of us would go to the summit. We decided to carry a single bivouac bag. The next day, we departed camp at 4 a.m., hiking past waterfalls and the destroyed Asava refuge. We chose the narrow, left-most couloir of three, thinking it would reach the summit directly. We started up this gully at 12:30 p.m. The weather worsened, and I decided to stay behind while Bruce, Rodrigo, and Tito continued to within 150m of the summit. The snow conditions were poor, and they returned to our bivouac at the base of the northeast face at 7:30 p.m. We spent a night in the snow and cold, though endured well.

The following week, Dario Alfaro, Rodrigo Benavides, and Bruce Swain returned to the mountain, armed with the knowledge from the first attempt. The team slept for a while at the old refuge, then left camp at 3:45 a.m. on November 26. They climbed the central couloir (to the right of their previous attempt), which was mostly nontechnical, and arrived on the summit by 11:15 a.m., with their GPS showing a height of 4,551m. They found a Fuji film canister at the summit, though time had erased the names of the first ascensionists. They were happy to have achieved the second known ascent by a probable new route (800m, 30-50°) and returned home that same day.

— Eduardo Rivera Zapata, Chile

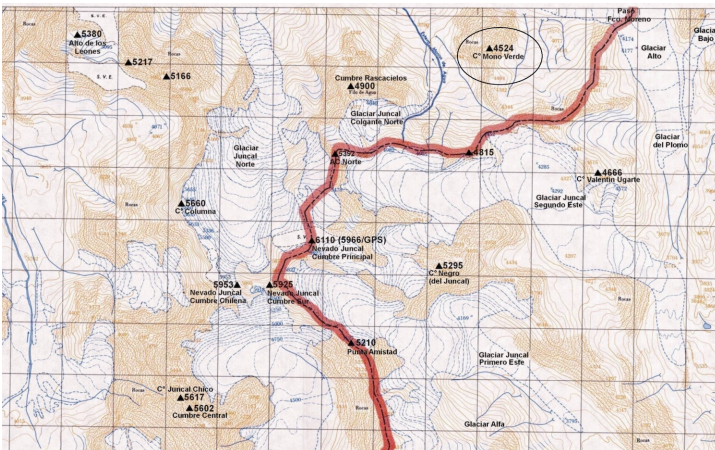
Images



En route on the central couloir of Cerro Mono Verde (4,524m) for the peak's second known ascent.



The northeast face of Cerro Mono Verde (4,524m) showing the 2017 route up the central couloir (800m, 30–50°).



Map showing the location of Cerro Mono Verde in the mountains west of Mendoza.

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