

**Recent Recording of Two Petroglyph
Locales: Hiwassee Rock 5 and the
Warren Rock Shelter**

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By Johannes Loubser

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Preface

This short monograph by archaeologist and LAMAR Institute Research Associate Johannes (Jannie) Loubser represents his first contribution to the LAMAR Institute Publication Series of reports. He has explored numerous rock art sites in northern Georgia and western North Carolina. This installment is the first effort supported in part by the LAMAR Institute. The work also was funded by a grant from Jean and Ray Auel. It represents an important contribution to the archaeology of the southeast and, particularly, our understanding of aboriginal rock art.



January 6, 2014.

Jean and Ray Auel,

Recording of Hiwassee Rock 5 and the Warren Rock Shelter

Included with this cover letter is a short report outlining the recording of two petroglyph boulders; one is a river boulder in western North Carolina near Murphy and the other is an open rock shelter in far northwestern Georgia near Trenton.

The seemingly undisturbed deposits within the Warren Rock Shelter near Trenton very likely contain buried artifacts and features. Controlled archaeological excavations of the deposits may yield material clues as to the possible significance of the petroglyphs against the southern wall.

Thanks so much for helping to fund this project, the results of which will go a long way towards obtaining a synthetic overview of the petroglyphs within northern Georgia and western North Carolina. Please do not hesitate contacting me if you have any questions.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J. H. N. Loubser".

Johannes (Jannie) Loubser PhD, RPA

Archaeologist/Rock Art Specialist

Hiwassee Rock 5, Clay County, western North Carolina

This petroglyph boulder was first discovered by Chris Espenshade and Johannes Loubser during a formal archaeological river survey for Duke Energy in June of 2010. The petroglyph boulder was labelled Hiwassee Rock 5, as it was the fifth petroglyph recorded downstream from the Mission Dam wall. With the assistance of Lorie Hansen, Loubser completed a thorough tracing of Hiwassee Rock 5 in October of 2013. This latter recording was funded by the LAMAR Institute and Jean Auel.

Hiwassee Rock 5 is located immediately south of the Hiwassee River's center-line, on the Clay County side of the river (Figure 1). The rock forms the downstream tip of a symmetric V-shaped fish weir (Figure 2), and can only be reached by swimming or by boat. The lunate-shaped rock is aligned north/south, measuring 600 centimeters by 90 centimeters (the size of this boulder, with its gently sloping eastward-facing side, decreases with higher water levels) (Figures 2 and 3). The boulder extends approximately 30 centimeters above the low water level. Immediately east of the boulder is a pebble and sand extension of the fish weir. Where the matrix covers the lower extremities of the boulder a thin crust of white salt-like mineralization is present. This discoloration of the rock surface suggests that being covered by deposit is not good for the long-term integrity and condition of the petroglyphs and the rock generally. The boulder is covered with a dense concentration of various surface alterations, including slightly elongated cupules (n~100), fine-line incisions (n~100), oval-shaped incisions (n~50), basin shapes (n~10), and spirals (n=2) (Figure 4). Multiple cupules on or adjacent to the spine of the boulder create a serrated edge. A few cupules appear to overlap the faint spirals, whereas incisions cut into a few basins. The condition of the unusually smoothly textured rock, colored 2.5YR3/1 dark reddish gray, is good, with merely five percent of the hard rock and surface alterations lost due to weathering. A light yellow brown layer of muddy silt that covers the boulder is deposited during high water levels. An anticipated threat to the boulder is that canoes may scrape the top of the boulder during high water levels. Hopefully the hardness of the rock will help minimize significant scarring.

The basin-shaped depressions on Hiwassee Rock 5 closely resemble those found on Boling Park Rock, within a tributary creek to the Etowah River, Cherokee County, Georgia. Perhaps significantly, both petroglyph boulders occur next-to flowing water.

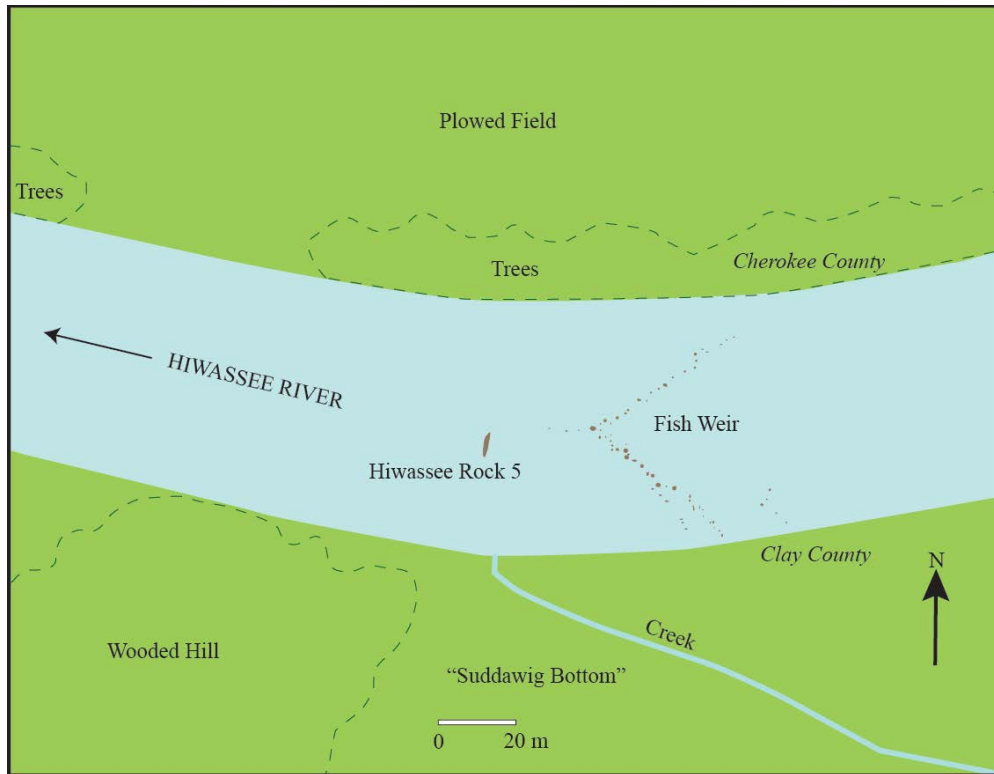


Figure 1. Plan Map Showing Location of Hiwassee Rock 5.



Figure 2. Photo Showing Hiwassee Rock 5 in Relation to Fish Weir Upstream (Facing East).



Figure 3. Photo Showing Hiwassee Rock 5 in Relation to Gravel Bar (Facing West).

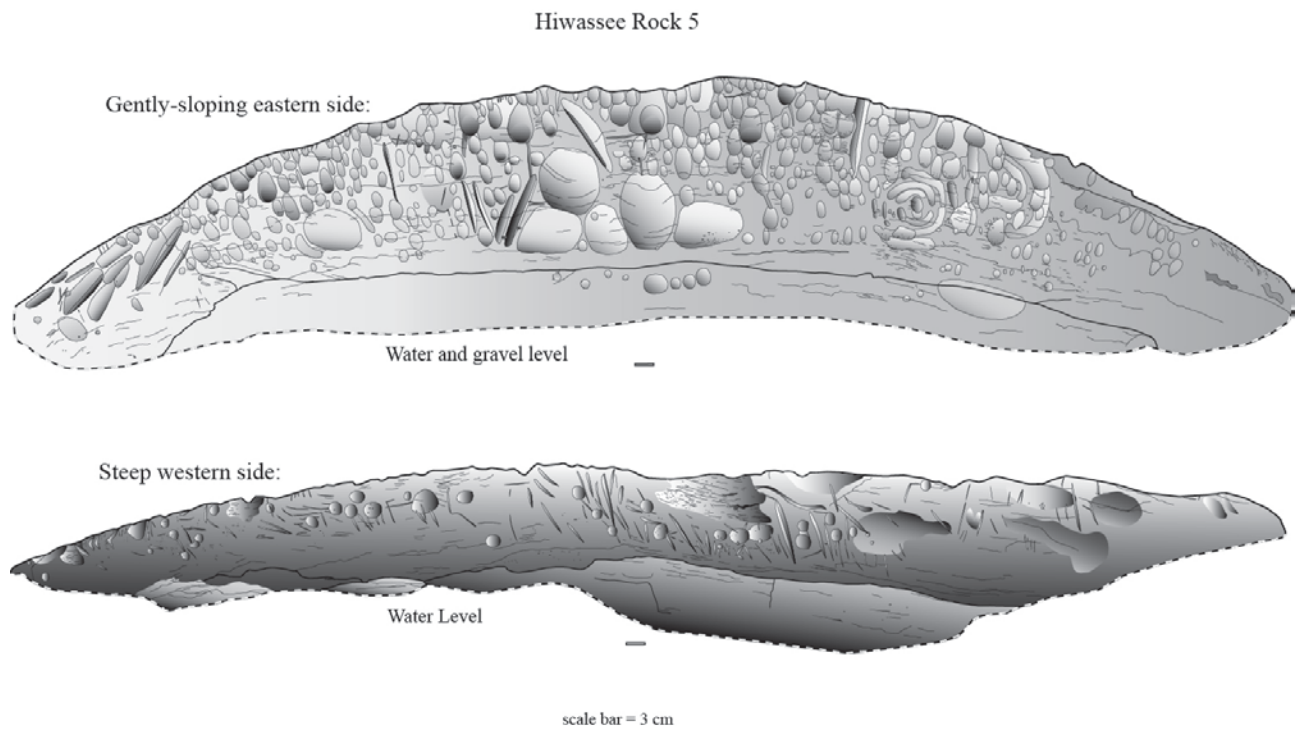


Figure 4. Re-Drawn Tracing of Hiwassee Rock 5 Showing Eastern and Western Sides.

The Warren Rock Shelter, Dade County, northwestern Georgia

This petroglyph panel was first discovered by Taylor Warren while on a family hike with her brother and dad in January of 2013. The sandstone rock shelter was labelled the Warren Site in honor of its discoverers. With the assistance of Coach Bradley Warren of Trenton, Loubser completed a thorough tracing of the petroglyph panel in January of 2014. This latter recording was funded by the LAMAR Institute and Jean Auel.

The Warren Rock Shelter is located within a southeastward-facing sandstone cliff overlooking the Stewart Town Creek valley (Figure 5). To enter the shelter, a person has to scramble up onto a low shelf (Figure 6). The oval-shaped entrance to the shelter measures 700 centimeters long by 300 centimeters wide by 150 centimeters high. The slightly sloping shelter floor is located approximately 300 centimeters above the steep mountain slope and 250 centimeters below the cliff's summit. Sandy topsoil covers deposits of unknown depth on the shelter floor. The petroglyph panel occurs against the southern entrance corner into the shelter, which is also the entrance into a small alcove-like annex. The sandstone in this southern portion of the shelter is a comparatively soft and friable band of 10YR7/4 grayish orange rock (Figure 7), which contrasts with the harder and more stable 5YR5/6 light brown surrounding rock. The petroglyph panel, which is between 50 and 220 centimeters above the alcoves' ground surface, includes vulva-shaped designs (n=4), swallow and comparatively small cupule-like holes (n=8), and various fine-line incisions, many of which are intersecting (Figure 8). Small holes, which could be natural or made by people, appear to have been incorporated in the panel's design. The central vertical lines of the upper two left vulva-shapes appear to have been re-incised with a sharp object. The condition of the friable rock is bad, with almost 55 percent of the visible petroglyphs lost due to granular disintegration. Cobwebs and mud dauber nests attached to the ceiling and overhanging portions of the walls attest to insect activity within the shelter. Lichens are limited to harder rock surfaces away from the panel. An anticipated threat to the panel is increased human visitation with resultant damage to the friable rock surface. Hopefully the remote location of the rock shelter on private property will help minimize visitation. Another potential threat is uncontrolled excavations of the deposit within the rock shelter.

The designs within the Warren Rock Shelter closely resemble those found within Witches' Nest, Walker County, Georgia. Perhaps significantly, both rock shelters occur within a cliff that faces southeast.

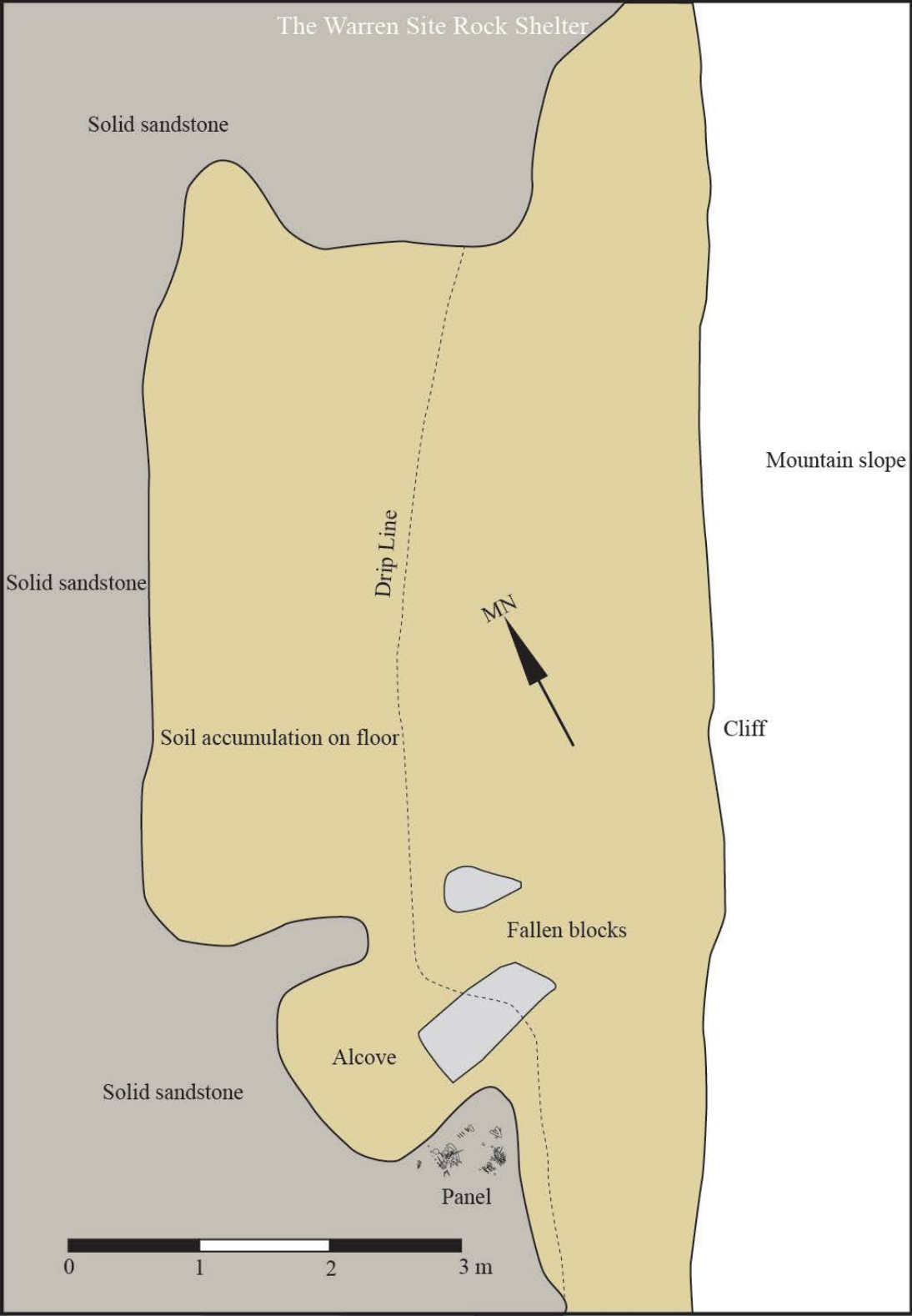


Figure 5. Plan Map of the Warren Rock Shelter.



Figure 6. Photo Showing the Warren Rock Shelter within the Cliff (Facing Northwest).



Figure 7. Photo Showing Panel Next-To Small Alcove (Facing South).



Figure 8. Re-Drawn Tracing of Warren Site Petroglyph Panel (Fold-Out View).