

The Hegau Volcanoes

(DM/BW-086 Hohenhewen, DM/BW-085 Hohenstoffeln and DM/BW-101 Hohentwiel)

Paul, HB9DST, April 9, 2015

I've driven the motorway near Singen many times and have always been fascinated by the volcanic landscape in the Hegau region as I passed by. It was time to stop and explore. Within a close distance and easily done in one day, there are three ancient volcano formations that are also SOTA summits.



Hohenhewen



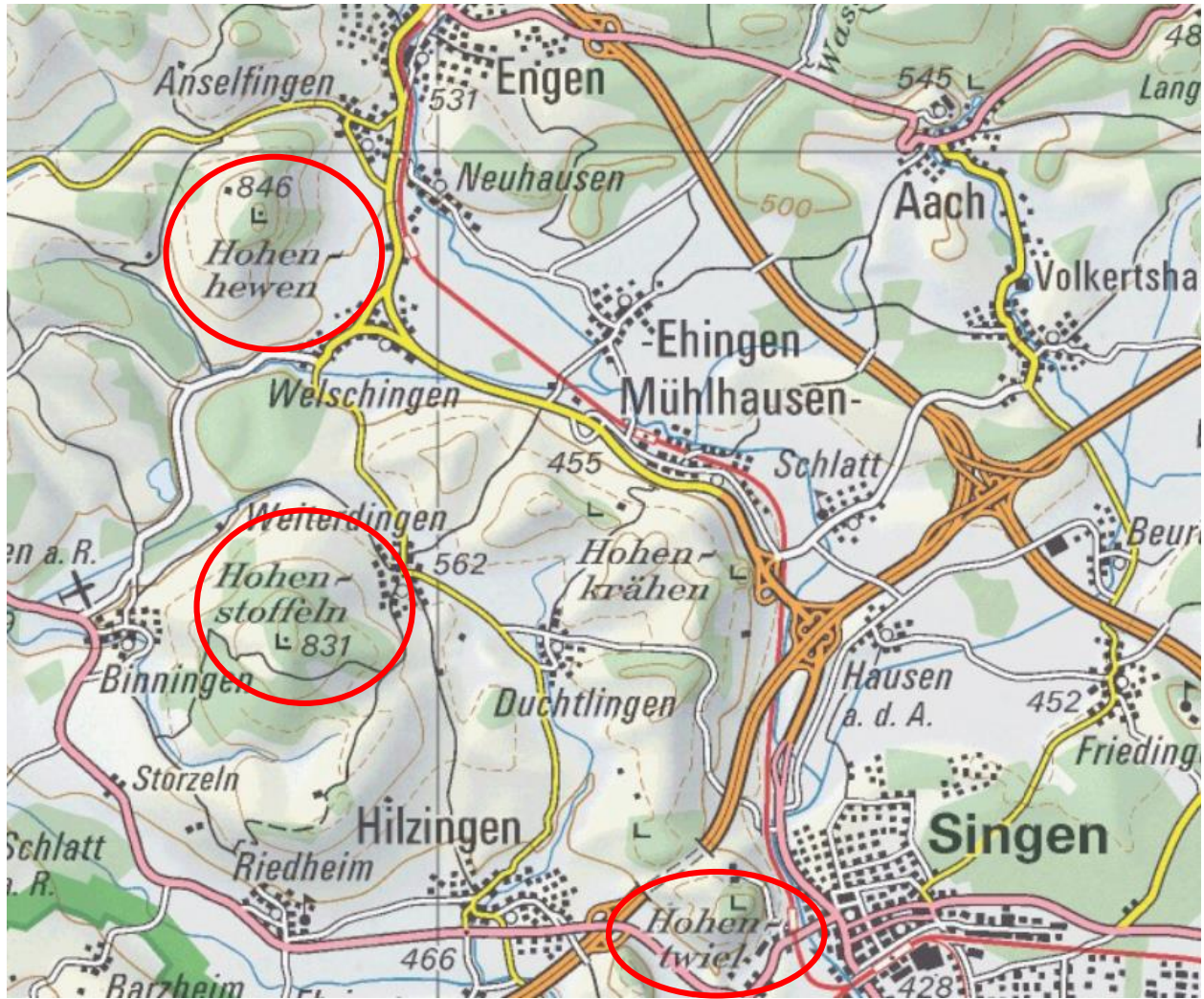
Hohenstoffeln



Hohentwiel

Driving along the motorway from Singen to Stuttgart, it is impossible not to be struck by the rolling landscape dotted with what seem to be mini-volcanoes. Indeed, this area is of great geological interest. According to Wikipedia, "The Hegau is an extinct volcanic landscape in southern Germany extending around the industrial city of Singen...The Hohentwiel is the southernmost of a row of volcanic stubs in the Hegau, including the Hohenkrähen, the Hohenstoffeln, and the Hohenhewen."

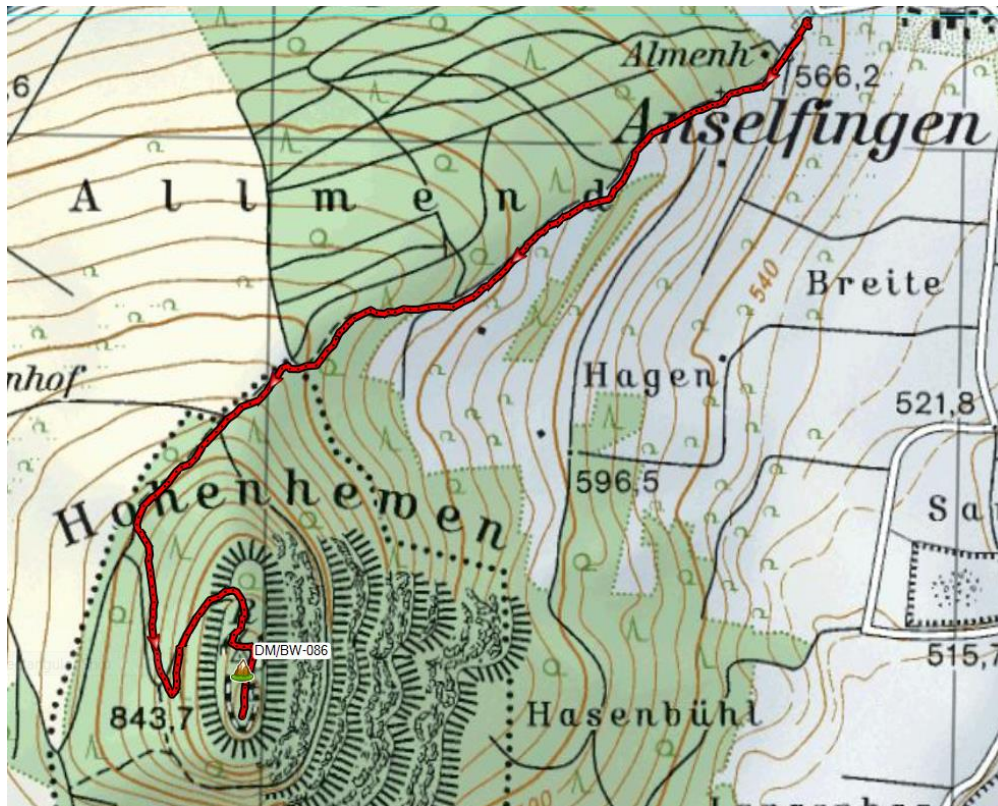
Of them, the three circled below are SOTA summits.



SOTA summits in the Hegau volcanic range: DM/BW-086 Hohenhewen, DM/BW-085 Hohenstoffeln and DM/BW-101 Hohentwiel. (It is a mystery to me why Hohenkrähen, formerly BW-106, was deleted as a summit at the end of 2008; it seems to fulfill every criteria for inclusion in the list.)

All three summits are easily accessible and are quite family friendly; you will see many children and retired people. None of the hikes are the least bit technically difficult with excellent trails going the entire way up. Even when the weather is not perfect they are quite busy; on a nice day parking could be tough, and finding space for an antenna without disrupting other visitors could likewise be somewhat difficult. I went in the off season and still had plenty of company because the weather was so nice.

DM/BW-086 Hohenhewen



The parking lot, which you approach from Anselfingen, is not terribly large and has room for roughly 10 vehicles. The route up to the ruins is easy to follow on excellent paths. The route is 2.1 km long with an ascent of 309 meters; it took me 39 minutes to go up.

There is quite a large activation zone with a number of picnic tables. You also get some nice views of the other nearby volcanic summits.



Small parking lot

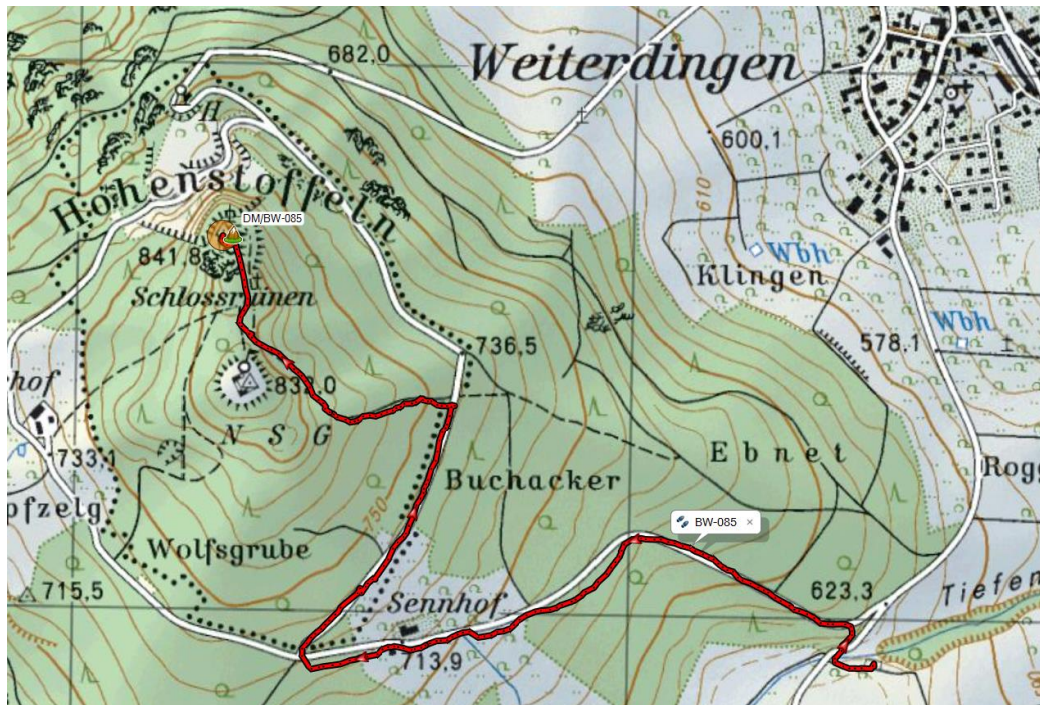


View to the summit just after the parking lot

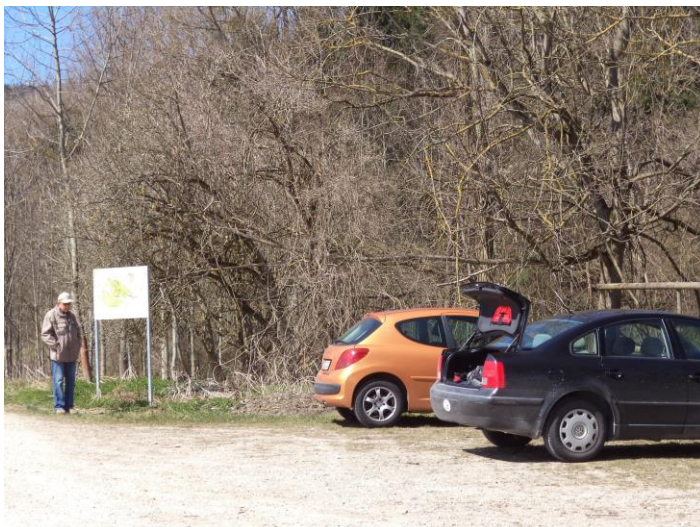


Approaching the summit and the fortress ruins

DM/BW-085 Hohenstoffeln



Parking is in a small parking lot for hikers located off a side road that you can reach only from Weiterdingen. Again, the hiking route was very safe and easy. The hike is 2.6 km with an ascent of 283 meters, and it took me 44 minutes. At the summit there is limited space for an antenna. Because there were few people that day I was able to string my end-fed dipole from a bench along some trees; normally with many visitors this would be difficult. The benches will also be very busy with visitors.



Parking lot with space for roughly a dozen cars.

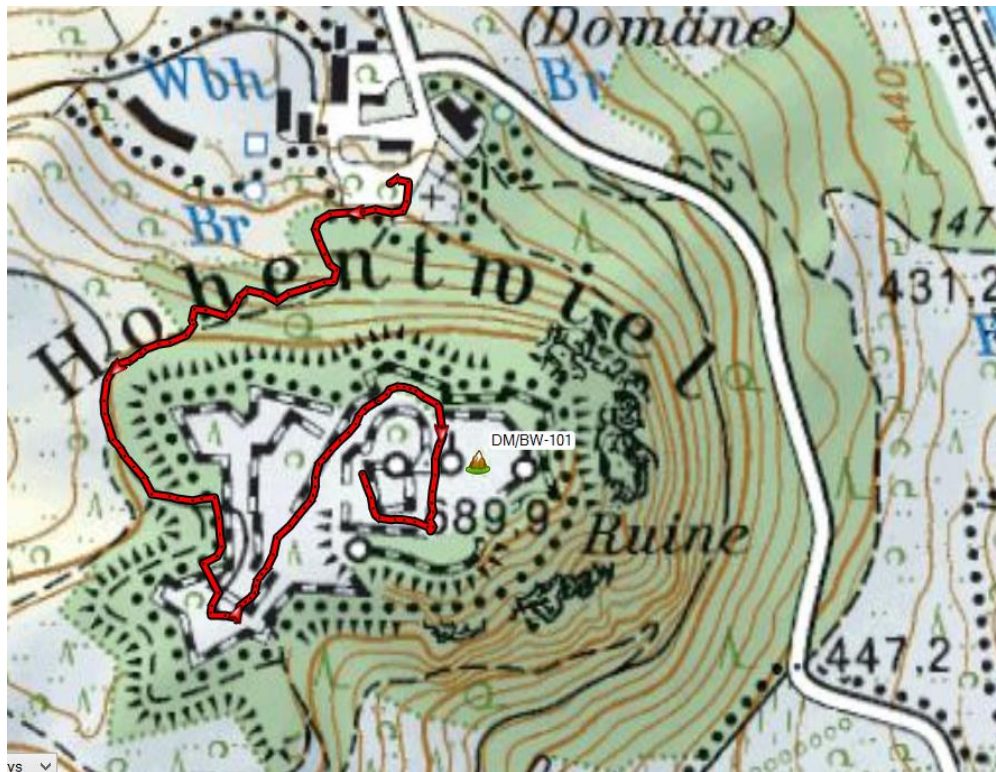


Looking up at the summit cross. This photo was taken from a slight dip that contains a fire pit and picnic table; on the other side there is another rise with two benches.



View up to the rise with the benches; if you are very lucky one will be free for you to use during the activation.

DM/BW-101 Hohentwiel



Hohentwiel is a major tourist attraction. From Singen you drive up on the east side of the summit to a staging area with parking, the ticket booth, and a restaurant with a pleasant beer garden in the summer months. Even though there is lots of parking, so many people come up here that finding a spot can be difficult at times. There is also bus service to this staging area.

Note that if you wish to enter the fortress, you must purchase your tickets in the staging area at the parking lot (adults: 4 euros); tickets are not sold at the top. Note also that to get into the SOTA activation zone, you must get the paid admission to enter the fortress area.

The path up is paved most of the way up to a park area, which has the gated entrance to the fortress for those with tickets. There is also a booth with refreshments such as drinks and sausages (the full restaurant is at the parking lot where you start). Unfortunately, this park area is 80m below the summit and is far from being in the activation zone. From the entrance gate you follow a stone path (very slippery when wet!) to the top. The entire hike to the summit from the parking area is 1.3 km with an ascent of 176 meters; it took me half a leisurely half hour. I spent just as long looking for an unobtrusive place to set up my antenna without bothering other visitors. All the most promising benches were taken but I eventually had some luck. I strung my antenna wire from a tree to a stone wall so as not to attract attention with an antenna mast.



The park at the entrance gate to the fortress; the fortress is visible in the background at the top.



A view down to the park area from near the top of the fortress.



The area where I set up my wire antenna in the tree (this is near Station 20 on the fortress map).



My first two activations of the day as seen from BM-101. You can get a good idea of how these volcanic stubs stick up from the rest of the landscape.