

In 1929, Rebman offered to sell her 140-acre park to the State of Illinois, but it wasn't until 20 years later that efforts by conservation and political groups such as the Greater Egypt Association and the Illinois Redevelopment Board resulted in the state purchasing it. In 1995, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Forest Service finalized a land trade that resulted in the Cedar/Drapper Bluff area being added to the Ferne Clyffe State Park for management as a Land and Water Reserve. This allows for recreational use—hiking, hunting, horseback riding and rock climbing—yet protects the significant natural resources for which the sites are valued.

Today, Ferne Clyffe State Park covers 2,430 acres of the majestic Shawnee Hills. The park is visited by more than 250,000 nature lovers each year.

In 1899, two Cairo brothers purchased a part of the park known today as Hawks' Cave/Rocky Hollow. Using an Old English spelling, they called it Ferne Clyffe because of the ferns that grew in abundance. The area soon became known for its beauty. It eventually sold to Emma Rebman, a local schoolteacher and Johnson County school superintendent, who opened the park to the public on Sunday for a 10-cent admission. Ferne Clyffe was such a popular attraction that local entrepreneurs began providing transportation to the site from the Goreville train depot for an additional dime.

George Rogers Clark and his contingent reportedly passed through or near Ferne Clyffe on their trip to Fort Kaskaskia in 1778. One hundred years later, the Cherokee are reported to have used the area as their hunting range while on their Trail of Tears march.

History

Located on Illinois Route 37, just 1 mile south of Goreville and 12 miles south of Marion, the 2,430-acre park is easily accessible from both I-57 and I-24. With camping, picnicking, hiking, hunting, fishing and sightseeing to experience, you can't help but enjoy a visit to Ferne Clyffe.

Ferne Clyffe has been known as an outstanding natural scenic spot for nearly 100 years. An abundance of ferns, rare geological features and unusual plant communities create an atmosphere that enhances the many recreational facilities offered at the park. Designated trails wind through picturesque woods, allowing visitors to view fascinating rock formations and inspiring vistas. However, naturally occurring hazardous areas do exist within the park, so visitors are warned to use extreme caution if they leave the safety of a designated trail.

Ferne Clyffe State Park

State of Illinois
Department of Natural Resources

Ferne Clyffe
STATE PARK

ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

Ferne Clyffe has been a favorite picnic spot for decades. There are seven picnic areas, all with tables, cooking grills, parking and toilets. Several areas also have shelters, drinking water and playground equipment. Only park grills or personal cookstoves should be used for cooking fires to avoid the possibility of damaging the site.

Picnicking

Since 1960, the 16-acre Ferne Clyffe Lake has offered visitors additional recreational and scenic opportunities. The lake has a maximum depth of 22 feet, and a hiking trail encompasses the 1-mile shoreline. It is open to bank fishing, but boating and swimming are prohibited. Spectacular views of the lake can be seen from Lakeview Picnic Shelter and Blackjack Oak Trail.

Ferne Clyffe Lake



It would be nearly impossible to list all of the plant life that thrives in the park, as there are more than 700 species. Flowering dogwood, redbud, serviceberry, spicebush, sumac, sweetgum, maple, oak, hickory and some of the woodland flowers create an extraordinary color backdrop for recreational activities in the spring and fall. Late April and early May are particularly good times for viewing the springtime color show. Fall foliage is at its best in October. As you walk the trails, you can anticipate seeing squirrels, rabbits, doves, quail, bluebirds and other songbirds, and an occasional wild turkey.

Flora and Fauna

Impressive rock formations can be seen from almost all of the park trails, but two of the best-known sights are Hawks' Cave, a 150-foot-long shelter bluff, and a 100-foot-tall intermittent waterfall.

Natural Features



Ferne Clyffe State Park
P.O. Box 10, 90 Office Drive
Goreville, IL 62939, (618) 995-2411

- While groups of 25 or more are welcome and encouraged to use the park's facilities, they are required to register in advance with the site office to avoid crowding or scheduling conflicts.
- At least one responsible adult must accompany each group of 15 minors.
- Pets must be kept on leashes at all times.
- Actions by nature can result in closed roads and other facilities. We hope you enjoy your stay. Remember, take only memories, leave only footprints.
- For more information on state parks, write to the Department of Natural Resources, Clearinghouse, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271 visit our website at www.dnr.state.il.us.
- For more information on tourism in Illinois, call the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Bureau of Tourism at 1-800-2CONNECT.
- Hearing-impaired individuals may call the Department of Natural Resources' TTY number, (217) 782-9175, or use the Ameritech Relay Number, 1-800-526-0844.

Equal opportunity to participate in programs of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and those funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies is available to all individuals regardless of race, sex, national origin, disability, age, religion or other nonmerit factors. If you believe you have been discriminated against, contact the funding source's civil rights office and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, IDNR, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271; (217) 785-0067; TTY (217) 782-9175.

Scouts, church groups and other youth groups will enjoy the Youth Group campground. This Class D facility is equipped with drinking water, picnic tables, cooking grills, toilets and parking. Groups of minors must have adequate supervision, and at least one adult must accompany each group of 15 minors.

Turkey Ridge is for campers who want a serene outdoor experience. It is a Class C walk-in campground that includes camp pads, picnic tables, cooking grills and showers. Drinking water and toilets are located near the parking lots.

Deer Ridge campground is a well-shaded Class A facility offering gravel pads with electricity, picnic tables and cooking grills. Drinking water, showers, flush toilets and a sanitary dump station complete the setting for campers who prefer to include a few comforts of home with their outdoor adventure.

Ferne Clyffe has a campground for every type of camper: modern, primitive, youth group, backpack or equestrian. The shower facilities that are offered at some campgrounds are available seasonally.

Camping



Fishing and Hunting

Bank fishermen will be impressed by populations of largemouth bass, bluegill, channel catfish and redear in the lake.

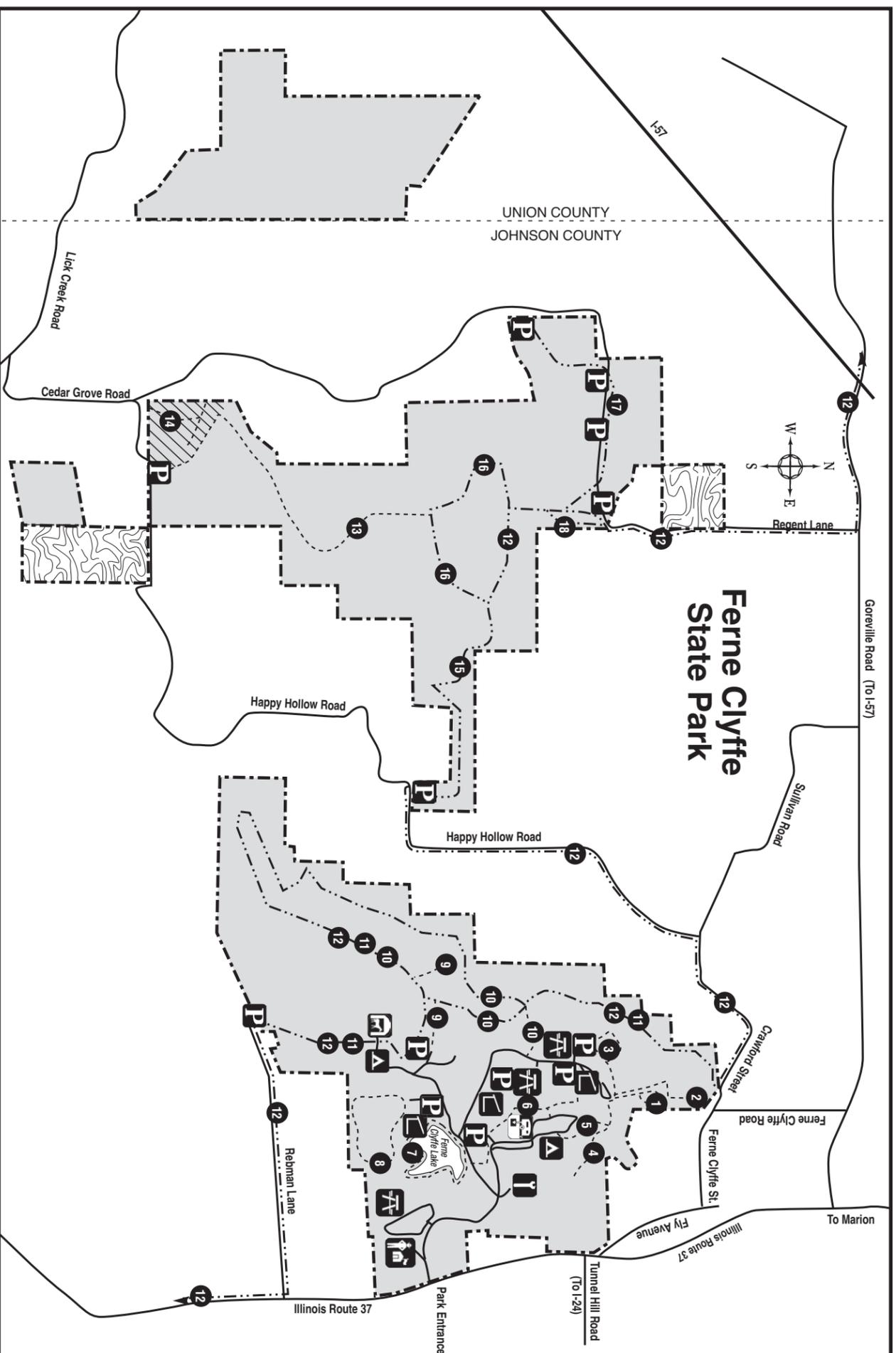
Hunters will appreciate the 1,750 acres of forested habitat, which has good populations of deer, squirrel and turkey. Quail and rabbit populations are fair. Food patches are planted in open areas each year to enhance the habitat for upland and forest game species. Please check in at the hunter check station, located at the maintenance building, prior to your hunt.



Round Bluff Nature Preserve

Just south of the Lakeview Picnic Shelter is the 53-acre Round Bluff Nature Preserve. This area is a marvelous mix of unusual geological features and uncommon plant communities. Each season brings its own beauty to the area, but spring and fall are the most colorful seasons. Dutchman's breeches, trillium, spring beauty, trout lily and other woodland wildflowers add vibrant color to the groundcover in the spring. Fall's colder temperatures change the deep greens of the summer tree foliage to a spectacular mix of reds, purples, golds and browns that cover every hillside.

Within the preserve, hiking is restricted to marked trails only. All plants and animals within the preserve are protected by law.



Goreville Road (To I-57)

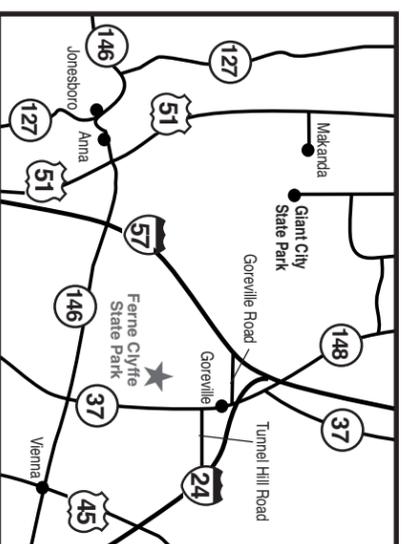
To Marion

Ferne Clyffe State Park



- ### Legend
- Park Boundary
 - Horseback Trail
 - Park Office
 - Picnic Area
 - Picnic Shelter
 - Dump Station
 - Maintenance Bldg.
 - Hiking Trail
 - Campground
 - Restricted Area
 - U.S. Forest Service Property
 - Shawnee National Forest
 - No Hunting

- ### Trails
- | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Rebman trail | 7. Ferne Clyffe Lake Trail | 13. Cedar Bluff Trail |
| 2. Goreville Boy Scout Trail | 8. Round Bluff Nature Preserve Trail | 14. Cedar Bluff Climber's Access Trail |
| 3. Hawk's Cave Trail | 9. Rocky Branch Trail | 15. Big Buck Creek Trail |
| 4. Big Rocky Hollow Trail | 10. Happy Hollow Trail | 16. Bobcat Loop Trail |
| 5. Waterfall Trail | 11. Happy Hollow Horse Trail | 17. High Ridge Trail |
| 6. Blackjack Oak Trail | 12. River to River Trail | 18. Bork's Waterfall Trail |



Backpackers enjoying their commune with nature will appreciate the solitude of the individual campsites in the Class C Backpack campground. Located a half-mile from the Turkey Ridge primitive campground parking lot, these woodland sites have cooking and grills. Water and trash receptacles are available at the Turkey Ridge parking lot. You're reminded to be careful with your fires and to pack out what you pack in.

Horseback riders can ride directly to their own Class C Equestrian campground on the trail or drive to it in their vehicles. Up to 25 riders can be accommodated at the site, which includes picnic tables, drinking water, cooking grills, toilets, parking and showers. The campground is well-shaded by an abundance of trees, and you must protect the trees by tying horses to the hitching rails. There are no horses available for rent.

Sites in the Deer Ridge, Turkey Ridge and Youth Group campgrounds do not require advance reservations. Backpackers and horseback riders should, however, make advance arrangements through the park office.

Trails

Eighteen diverse trails offer visitors the chance to view the beauty of Ferne Clyffe at their own pace. Please note that the park does not allow motorized vehicles or bicycles on the trails. Equestrian use is allowed only on equestrian-designated trails. Equestrian trails are closed to horses from Nov. 1 to April 30. Naturally occurring dangerous areas exist within the park, so exercise awareness and caution. For your safety, it's recommended you hike on designated trails. Each trail has been assigned a number, as well as a name, to make map reading easy for even the novice hiker.

1. Rebman Trail is an easy 0.25-mile hike. A plaque dedicated to Emma Rebman marks the beginning of the trail. This trail also provides foot access to a designated climbing/trappelling area.
2. Goreville Boy Scout Trail is a steep trail that connects the park to the nearby town of Goreville. This 0.5-mile trail is moderately difficult.
3. Hawk's Cave Trail is an easy 0.5-mile trail that leads visitors past one of the largest shelter bluffs in Illinois.

4. Big Rocky Hollow Trail is an easy hike with a round-trip distance of 0.75-mile. The trail leads to a 100-foot-tall intermittent waterfall.
5. Waterfall Trail is a moderately difficult 0.75-mile hike that begins at Deer Ridge Campground and also leads to the waterfall.
6. Blackjack Oak Trail is a moderately difficult 1-mile trail that offers impressive vistas. It leads hikers up two steep climbs from the lake to the Hillside picnic area.
7. Ferne Clyffe Lake Trail is an easy 1-mile hike that provides anglers with an opportunity to get close to the banks of the lake.
8. Round Bluff Nature Preserve Trail is a 1-mile moderately difficult trail that leads hikers past rare plants and impressive rock formations. This is a nature preserve, and hiking is restricted to the designated trail only.
9. Rocky Branch Trail is a 0.25 mile foot trail. This trail forms a linkage between the portion of the Happy Hollow Trail on top of the bluff with the portion of the Happy Hollow Trail near the creek. Hikers and hunters often use it as a shortcut.

10. Happy Hollow Trail is a difficult 5-mile trail that winds through woods and old fields and includes several steep climbs.
11. Happy Hollow Horse Trail is an 8-mile equestrian route accessible from the horseback campground. Portions of the trail are shared by hikers and horseback riders. Horses should be kept on the equestrian-designated trails only. The trail is closed to horses from Nov. 1 to April 30.
12. River to River Trail, which cuts across southern Illinois from the Ohio River to the Mississippi River, passes through Ferne Clyffe State Park, offering 8 miles of moderately difficult terrain. The trail is marked with white diamonds with a blue "I" in the center. The portion of the trail that passes through Ferne Clyffe is open to foot traffic and horses only, and the trail is closed to horses from Nov. 1 to April 30. No motorized vehicles or bicycles are allowed on any Ferne Clyffe trails.
13. Cedar Bluff Trail is a 2-mile hiking trail rated as moderate in difficulty. A short hike on Cedar Bluff trail leads to a scenic vista atop Cedar Bluff. For those interested in a longer hike, the trail proceeds from the vista along the ridge top then descends the bluff and intersects with the Bobcat Loop Trail.

14. Cedar Bluff Climber's Access Trail is an easy 0.5-mile hike that provides foot access to various climbs at a designated climbing/trappelling area, located at the southwest end of Cedar Bluff. Foot access only is allowed.
15. Big Buck Creek Trail is a scenic, wooded 2-mile trail that generally follows along Big Buck Creek. Its difficulty is moderate.
16. Bobcat Loop Trail is a secluded 1-mile loop in the heart of the Cedar Bluff area. Difficulty is considered moderate. This trail links with the Cedar Bluff Trail and the Big Buck Creek Trail.
17. High Ridge Trail is a 1.5-mile trail, moderate in difficulty and open to hikers and equestrians. This trail splits off of the Big Buck Creek Trail and travels high along a ridge through the woods.
18. Bork's Waterfall Trail is a 0.5-mile-long trail that provides access to the base of the waterfall. This is an easy hike to an exceptional geological feature.