

Conkle's Hollow - State Nature Preserve

Conkle's Hollow

Conkle's Hollow, situated off S.R. 374 on Big Pine Road is a rugged, rocky gorge - considered one of the deepest in Ohio. The valley floor is a veritable wilderness covered by a profusion of ferns and wildflowers while hemlock, birch and other hardwood tower overhead. The growth is so thick in places that little or no sunlight reaches the deep valley floor. **Conkle's Hollow is not a pet friendly trail.**

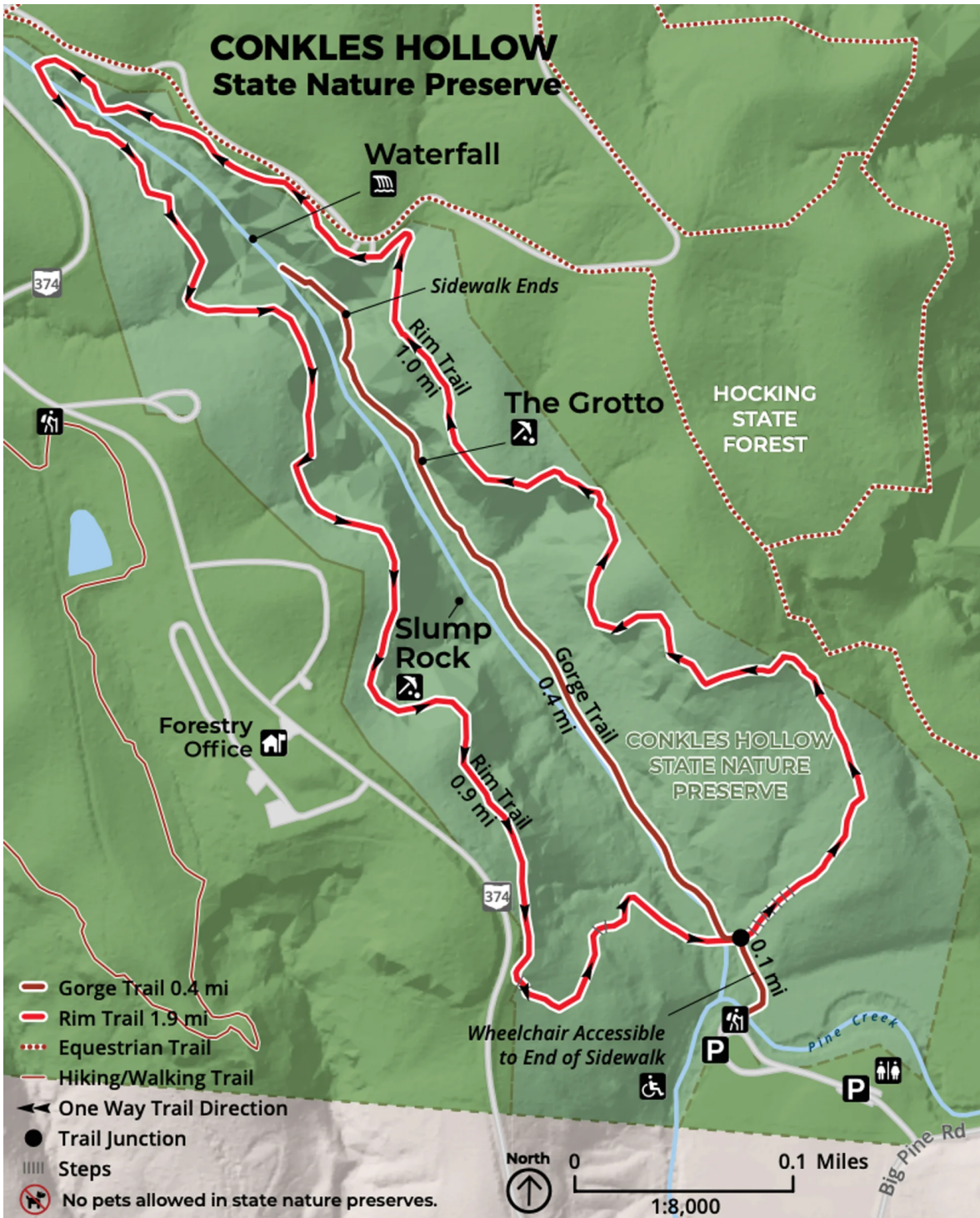
The trail leading up the narrow half-mile long ravine is surrounded by vertical cliffs rising over 200 feet above the mouth of the gorge. As the trail continues, the gorge narrows further to only a distance of 300 feet from cliff to cliff.

A folk legend speaks of a petroglyph that was found on the gorge wall by early settlers. The carving was fashioned as an arrow pointing to the opposite side of the hollow. As the legend goes, a small band of Indians robbed a flotilla of settlers along the Ohio River of a large amount money. The Indians journeyed to Conkle's Hollow to hide the stolen goods until the danger had passed. A small recess was located on the west gorge wall and was reachable only by climbing one of the two towering hemlocks growing at the base of the cliff. First, they had to cut one of the trees so that when it fell it served as a ladder to the recess cave above. They hid the money and carved the directional arrow on the opposite side of the gorge which pointed to the hiding spot. The Indians then shoved the hemlock to the gorge floor leaving only one standing in order to retrieve the goods later. As time passed and efforts of the settlers to find the Indians had ceased, the thieves returned for the stolen property. Much to their chagrin, the other hemlock had been felled during a storm, and the stolen money remains to this day somewhere in the hollow. Many locals claim having seen the carving, but it has since eroded away.

For the more adventurous hiker, the rim trail on top of the cliffs circles the gorge. These cliffs are the highest in the area and provide some of the most outstanding scenery. Great caution should be exercised on this trail as it can be extremely dangerous in all seasons.

This hollow was named for W.J. Conkle who left his name and the date 1797 carved into the sandstone on the west wall of the gorge. Conkle's Hollow is a state nature preserve operated by ODNR Division of Natural Areas and Preserves.

https://www.hockinghills.com/conkles_hollow.html



Picture of The Grotto.

The Grotto

Nestled within a deep, narrow gorge, the grotto is characterized by its cool, shaded environment and lush vegetation. The walls of the gorge are composed of towering sandstone cliffs, often adorned with mosses and ferns, creating a verdant, almost otherworldly atmosphere. Water trickles down the rock faces, forming small streams and pools that enhance the grotto's tranquil ambiance. Accessed via the Gorge Trail.

Picture of Slump Rock.

Slump Rock

A fascinating geological feature resulting from a large section of rock that has broken away and "slumped" down the hillside. This massive rock formation sits at an angle, with parts of it leaning against the surrounding cliffs and other sections resting on the forest floor. The surface of Slump Rock is often covered in mosses and lichens, adding a touch of green to the rugged, weathered stone. Visible from the Rim and Gorge Trails.

Picture of Waterfall.

Waterfall

Nestled within the lush, narrow gorge, the waterfall cascades down a steep sandstone cliff, creating a delicate and graceful flow of water. As the water descends, it forms a clear pool at the base, reflecting the greenery and rock formations around it. The sound of the water splashing into the pool adds to the tranquil ambiance, making it a perfect spot for relaxation and reflection. Accessed via the Gorge Trail.

Overlook

The Overlook view of the waterfall is a breathtaking sight. This elevated vantage point provides a panoramic perspective of the gorge, with the waterfall cascading down the steep sandstone cliffs far below. Accessed via the Overlook Trail.

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