

Old Man's Cave

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

The most popular of all the Hocking areas is Old Man's Cave, located on State Route 664. Here at the Upper Falls, the Grandma Gatewood Trail begins its six-mile course connecting three of the park's areas: Old Man's Cave to Cedar Falls to Ash Cave. This same trail has been designated as part of Ohio's Buckeye Trail as well as part of two national systems - the North Country Scenic Trail and America's Discovery Trail.

Old Man's Cave is a pet friendly trail. ☐☐

Old Man's Cave derives its name from the hermit Richard Rowe who lived in the large recess cave of the gorge. His family moved to the Ohio River Valley around 1796 from the Cumberland Mountains of Tennessee to establish a trading post. He and his two dogs traveled through Ohio along the Scioto River in search of game. On one side trip up Salt Creek, he found the Hocking Region. Rowe lived out his life in the area and is buried beneath the ledge of the main recess cave. Earlier residents of the cave were two brothers, Nathaniel and Pat Rayon, who came to the area in 1795. They built a permanent cabin 30 feet north of the cave entrance. Both brothers are buried in or near the cave. Their cabin was later dismantled and relocated on the nearby Iles farm to be used as a tobacco drying house.

The Old Man's Cave area can be divided into five principal sections found along the valley of Old Man's Creek. In order, they are: Upper Falls, Upper Gorge, Middle Falls, Lower Falls and Lower Gorge. Along the length of the trail the magnificent gorge cuts through the entire 150-foot thickness of the Blackhand sandstone. Carved by the creek, the gorge serves as an avenue for visitors to peer into the earth's subsurface. The full distance of the gorge is approximately one half mile.



Highlights

Picture of Upper Falls.

Upper Falls

The Upper Falls is a picturesque waterfall that cascades into a clear pool below. Whether in the summer, surrounded by lush greenery and rugged sandstone cliffs, or in the winter, surrounded by snow and frozen in mid-fall, the falls create a tranquil and scenic spot perfect for nature lovers and photographers. The trail can be viewed from above via the Gorge Entrance and Exit Trail. The Grandma Gatewood trail will take you to the pool below.

Picture of Devil's Bathtub.

Devil's Bathtub

It's a smooth, swirling basin carved out of the Blackhand sandstone by the constant flow of water over thousands of years. The bathtub is fed by a small waterfall, and the water spirals down through the narrow, cylindrical formation before continuing its journey downstream. The name "Devil's Bathtub" comes from the eerie, otherworldly appearance of the swirling water and the deep, mysterious pool it creates. Hike down the Grandma Gatewood Trail to view it.

Whale in the Wall

This natural sculpture is characterized by its smooth, curving lines that mimic the shape of a whale's body and head. The formation appears as though the whale is partially embedded in the rock face. Hike down the Grandma Gatewood Trail to view it.

Picture of Eagle Rock.

Eagle Rock

Eagle Rock is an outcropping of sandstone rock eroded over time to resemble the head of an eagle poking out into the gorge. Eagle Rock can be reached via Grandma Gatewood Trail.

A-Frame Bridge

The A-Frame Bridge is a charming and rustic structure that spans a scenic section of the gorge. Its name comes from the distinctive A-frame shape of the supports that hold up the bridge. Made primarily of wood, the bridge blends seamlessly into the natural surroundings, providing a picturesque crossing point over the flowing stream below. The bridge is accessed via the Gorge Entrance/Exit Trails.

Picture of Old Man's Cave.

Old Man's Cave

The cave is actually a recess cave, a large overhanging cliff carved out by erosion, creating a sheltered space beneath. This natural shelter is named after Richard Rowe, a hermit who lived in the cave in the 19th century. The cave can be accessed via the Gorge Entrance/Exit Trails.

Turtle Rock

Turtle Rock is a distinctive rock formation that resembles the shape of a turtle. This natural sculpture is characterized by its rounded, dome-like top and flatter base, mimicking the appearance of a turtle's shell. The formation is composed of the region's characteristic Blackhand sandstone, which has been sculpted by years of erosion. Hike down the Grandma Gatewood Trail to view it.

Picture of Sphinx Head.

Sphinx Head

The Sphinx Head resembles the profile of an Egyptian Sphinx, with distinct features that have been shaped over time by natural erosion. This formation is part of the diverse sandstone landscape in the Hocking Hills, known for its unique and striking rock structures. Take the Grandma Gatewood Trail to view it.

Picture of Lower Falls.

Lower Falls

The Lower Falls is a beautiful and serene waterfall that cascades into a clear, shallow pool below. This waterfall is smaller and more intimate compared to the Upper Falls, but it is equally picturesque. The water flows over a rocky ledge, creating a gentle curtain of water that splashes into the pool surrounded by smooth sandstone rocks. Can be viewed from above via the Gorge Entrance and Exit Trail. The Grandma Gatewood trail will take you to the pool below.

Picture of Broken Rock Falls.

Broken Rock Falls

Broken Rock Falls is a hidden gem within the park, known for its secluded and tranquil setting. This waterfall features a graceful cascade of water that flows down a series of rocky steps and ledges, creating a tiered effect as it descends. Access the Falls via the Broken Rock Trail.

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