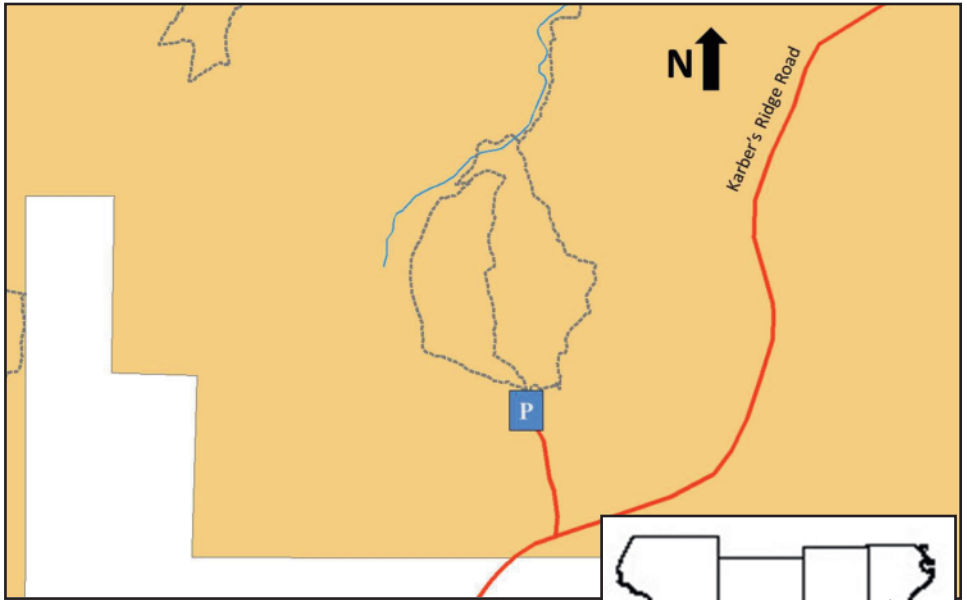


Rim Rock Trail

Shawnee National Forest

0.5 mile - Moderate Rating

Trailhead: 37.6022, -88.2783



Rich sandstone glades, rock crevices, a natural spring and sheer cliff walls await you at this popular trail in southern Gallatin County. East of the Garden of the Gods along Karber's Ridge Road is Rim Rock National Recreational Trail, a natural area within the Shawnee National Forest. Although this site exhibits one of the better preserved stoneforts built by the late Woodland culture in southern Illinois, this gem of a hike is often overlooked.

There are several options along this interpretive trail and the path leading to the left (northwest) out of the parking lot is recommended. A brick walkway leads you along the top of the escarpment and past the stonefort with buttercups, violets, chickweed, woodland phlox, violet wood sorrel, Virginia spiderwort and yellow star grass flowering along the edges. Wild columbine is also common, and later in the spring the trail is lined with shooting stars. In the rocky openings, false garlic, small bluets and widow's cross can be seen, and the careful observer may spot the perfectly camouflaged lichen grasshopper flying about.

The trail leads to an observation deck at the edge of the cliff and a set of stairs enables hikers to descend into Pounds Hollow. "Pounds" is a term that describes

the type of sandstone found here and it refers to an Old English term that means “some sort of enclosure.” Notice the crack called Fat Man’s Squeeze as you descend the stairs. Liverleaf, once erroneously used as a medicinal plant, can be seen flowering in the early part of spring.

Ox-Lot Cave is the area at the base of the cliffs. A permanent spring flows out of the rock and this area was once used as a livestock impoundment. The trail leads along the creek and around the other side of the cliffs, where white trillium, false rue anemone, mayapple, purple trillium, yellow trout lily, fern-leaved phacelia, pale corydalis and bellwort can be seen flowering near the trail. Look for the white flowers of the bladdernut shrub and notice the unique flowers of the jack-in-the-pulpit along the base of the cliffs. At least two orchid species can also be found in this area.

Notable wildflowers present at site

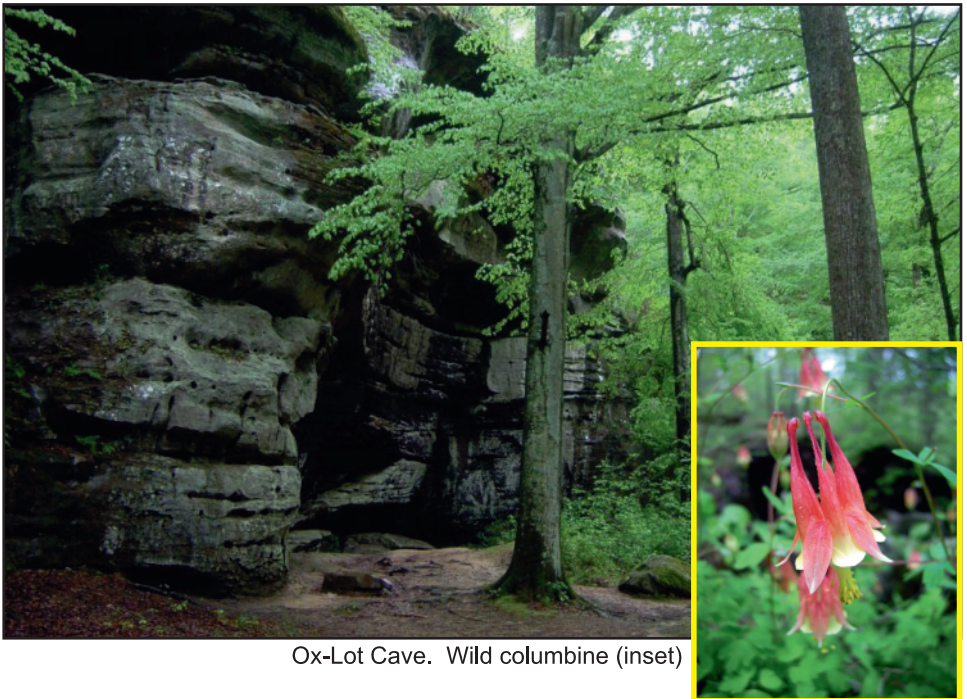
Wild columbine
Aquilegia canadensis

Shooting star
Dodecatheon meadia

False garlic
Nothoscordum bivalve

Liverleaf
Hepatica acutiloba

Yellow star grass
Hypoxis hirsuta



Ox-Lot Cave. Wild columbine (inset)