

FEATURES

By Francesca Amico
Managing Editor

Beauty IN OUR BACKYARD

Summer is soon to arrive! There are many beautiful places to see in Northeastern Pennsylvania, and one of those places is Ricketts Glen State Park. The ride to Ricketts Glen State Park, located on PA Route 487 between Red

free-flowing waterfalls, which cascade through moss covered cliffs at this ancient hillside. The 94-foot Ganoga Falls is the highest of 22 named waterfalls. Just writing about this majestic place does not do it justice.

This quote captures the experience:

"It sings songs of laughter and peace to the birds and wild life and people. There amid the brown and greens of the earth comes forth a pool of sparkling color and tranquility unmatched by any manmade creation. It is life spilling over the edges-flowing on and on,"

sais Jussme.

Beginning a trek

down the trails to the waterfalls towering old trees and greenery become present, which add to the tranquil scenic wonder. Two branches of Kitchen Creek cut through the deep gorges of Ganoga Glen and Glen Leigh and unite at "Waters Meet" and then flow through Ricketts Glen. It's there along the path the sound of rushing water can be heard but the beauty cannot be seen just yet. Continuing on down the clearly marked paths there are choices to make as to the location of the falls, level of hiking tastes and time limits.

The trails, covering a total of five miles, parallel the streams as they descend down the Glens and ascend along the other side of the creek. A shorter hike of 1/2 mile, The Evergreen Trail, offers an excellent view of the final series of falls. The best trail makes a complete journey down the hillsides and provides a view of most of the water falls. It can take a couple hours so be sure to bring along something to drink. Stopping frequently to view the incredible falls' grandeur will give your body rest during the physical adventure. The path meanders downhill, crosses

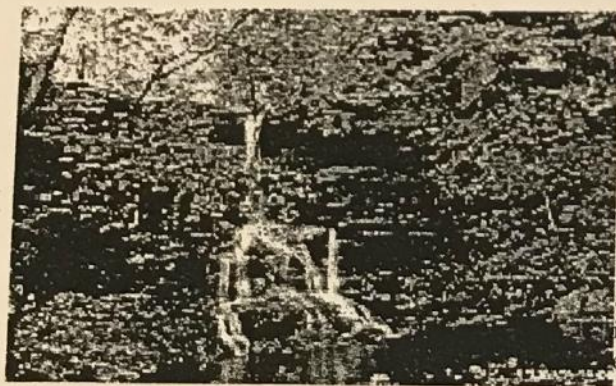
bridges and then comes back up on the other side of the falls, back to the parking lot where you first began.

In addition to the sightseeing and hiking around the falls, there are other recreational activities at Rickett's Glen State Park. For campers, there are 120 tent and trailer campsites, some available all year round. The campground features hot showers, flush toilets, shaded sites, gravel parking spurs and a sanitary dump station. Six campsites are ADA accessible. Ten modern cabin rentals are available year-round. Cabins are furnished and have a living area/dining area, toilet/shower room and two or three bedrooms. One cabin is ADA accessible. Call toll free 1-888-PA-PARKS to make reservations for the cabins.

On the top of the hill at the main entrance there is a road marked to the picnic facilities located on Lake Jean.

Directions

The ride to Ricketts Glen State Park, located on PA Route 487 between Red Rock and Lake Jean, takes about 45 minutes from downtown Wilkes-Barre



One of Rickett's Glenn's many waterfalls.

Rock and Lake Jean, takes about 45 minutes from downtown Wilkes-Barre, and is time well spent. The park is a place where time stops and peace is the backdrop.

Upon entering the area of Ricketts Glen on Route 118, and parking in one of the parking lots, one can see a taste of what is to come - beautiful forests and flowing waterfalls. But do not stop there for too long because the real majesty awaits up ahead, inside the depths of the park at the Glen's Natural Area, the main scenic attraction of Ricketts Glen. Take the road marked "Ricketts Glen State Park," which is Route 487. It is a very steep, winding road that will lead to the entrance. Once inside the park, there are plenty of signs to give guidance to new visitors.

Whether interested in hiking the park trails that outline the beautiful waterfalls, swimming, camping or fishing, the signs are very clear to give direction around the large park comprised of 13,050 acres in Luzerne, Sullivan and Columbia Counties. Ricketts Glen State Park's Glen Natural Area is considered a National Natural Landmark because of its series of wild,

There are also other picnic areas at the lower side on PA Route 118. Restroom facilities are located in these areas as well. Lake Jean, with its 600-foot beach, is a popular swimming area during the summer months - open daily from Memorial Day Weekend to Labor Day. Boat rentals are available including paddleboats, rowboats and canoes. Electric motor boats are permitted on the lake, and must have a current boat

continued on page 11