

The Ledges, located in Boone County, is one of central Iowa's most popular playgrounds. Visitors by the thousands enjoy its fine picnic areas from early spring until late fall, and hikers are on the trails year 'round. The natural beauty and historical interest of the park make it the ideal spot for a Sunday or holiday outing.

Outstanding among its approximately 1,200 acres of scenic attractions are the unusual rock formations from which its name is derived. The "ledges" are sandstone walls from 25 to 75 feet high. These miniature cliffs border Pease Creek, named in honor of one of the prominent pioneer settlers in that vicinity. Trails lead up and down steep slopes to scenic overlooks that offer breath-taking views so memorable that many carry cameras to record the beauty.

The Ledges holds great interest also for the naturalist in its wide variety of plant life. Some of the largest specimens of trees in the state are found here including many giant maples, cottonwoods and ash. Flowers and shrubs of many varieties grow in abundance, and some rare species such as the closed gentian, walking ferns, pussy-toes, and the rare showy orchis. Juneberry, ninebark, blue beech, and nanny-berry are just a few of the Ledges' small trees and shrubs. Bird life is bountiful and varied owing to the excellent cover and food potential of the plant life.

The Des Moines River, flowing through the west edge of the park, offers fine fishing; and a boat ramp provides easy access for canoes and other small craft.

For nearly a century the Ledges has been a favored picnic area. Indians used it before that for their councils and pow-wows. It was dedicated November 9th, 1924, as one of our first state parks. The following bit of poetry adorned the official program of the ceremony:

*Here the massive, sculptured ledges  
Towering to the sloping land,  
Represent a Coal-age valley,  
Filled with ancient river sand.  
In the brooks are sand and boulders,  
Residues from glacial clay,  
Telling stories of the ages  
That have moved along the way.  
Say the ledges to their lovers,  
"As you carve a picnic ham.  
Please preserve my gems of beauty;  
Keep me ever as I am."*

There are some very interesting Indian mounds also within hiking distance of the park. In the park itself there is an Indian Council Ledge where, according to legend, chiefs and warriors of the Sioux, and later the Sac and Fox

(now Mesquakie) and other tribes gathered to boast of their wars, adventures, and loves. A guard was placed on the cliff that is known as Sentinel Rock, a spot that commands a view for miles in every direction, to watch for enemies.

The Camp Fire Girls' Camp Hantesa lies just to the north of the park. Camp Mitigwa, the Boy Scout area, and the State 4-H Camp are to the south of the Ledges.

### CAMPING INFORMATION

Ledges State Park will accommodate 32 camping units. Ledges camp sites are classified as non-modern as there are no flush toilets and shower facilities available. All camping permits are issued by the park ranger. For camping rates, see the enclosed insert.

A basic camping unit is the portable shelter used by one to six persons. Only one vehicle may be used for transportation in the camp area. All other motor vehicles will be parked in the visitor parking area and so marked. Any persons over the basic unit of six will be charged 25 cents per person.

### SURROUNDING TOWNS

**Boone**, six miles from the park on paved highway, provides everything visitors to the Ledges might want during their stay: churches of all faiths, golf courses, movies, and a shopping center. Population: 12,468.

**Luther**, five miles from the Ledges has a service station and churches. Also, a cafe open for noon meals.

**Madrid**, 13 miles south of the park, is an old railroad town with a population over 2,000. Churches and shopping available.

*State park maintenance and operation funds are derived solely from legislative appropriation and receipts from camping and concession revenue, cabin and lodge rental and boat dock fees.*

*EQUAL RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES: All persons are entitled to full and equal enjoyment of the recreational opportunities, privileges and advantages available in Iowa's great outdoors.*

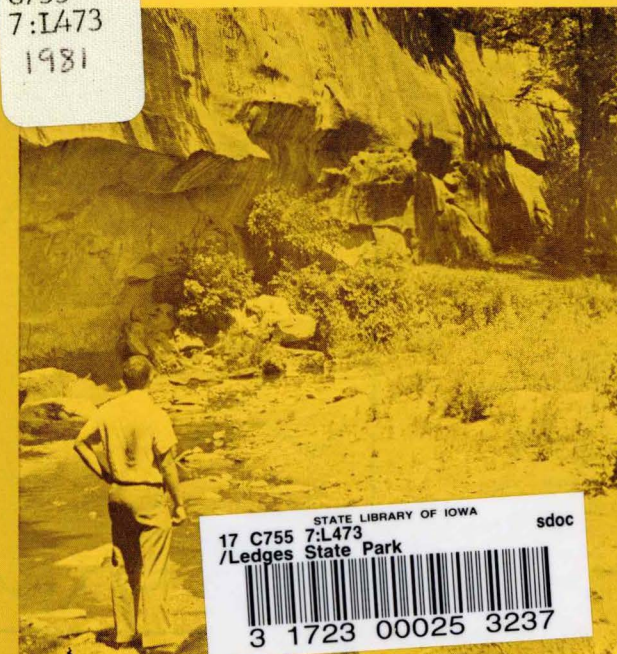
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IOWA CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
WALLACE STATE OFFICE BLDG.  
DES MOINES, IOWA 50319

# Ledges

## State Park

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C755  
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1981



### PARK RANGER ADDRESS

Ledges State Park  
Madrid, Iowa 50156  
Telephone 515-432-2730

STATE LIBRARY OF IOWA  
Historical Building  
DES MOINES, IOWA 50319



CONSERVATION  
COMMISSION



0 1/8 1/4 mi.  
SCALE

TO BOONE

- DRINKING WATER
- WILDLIFE RESEARCH STATION
- CAMPING AREA
- HIKING TRAIL
- SHELTER
- PICNIC AREA
- SNOWMOBILE TRAIL
- BOAT RAMP
- MEMORIAL
- PARKING
- CONCESSION
- LATRINE

DAVIS CREEK

PEA'S CREEK

HUTTON MEMORIAL

CROW'S NEST

INSPIRATION POINT

TABLE ROCK

COUNCIL RING

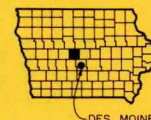
Natural Prairie

★ **NOTE**  
ONE WAY TRAFFIC - WESTBOUND

PARK ATTENDANT

HWY 17 3 miles

LOST LAKE



DES MOINES

