

## MAQUOKETA CAVES STATE PARK

Maquoketa Caves State Park contains less than half a mile of surfaced road. Visitors reach the caves by foot on well marked and sometimes rugged trails. In the center of the 272-acre park is a steep ravine with sheer cliffs ranging from 10 to 75 feet high. Trails lead around the top of the cliffs to overlooks, which offer beautiful views of the valley below. Hikers will experience a mild form of "mountain climbing" as they view spectacular geological formations above and below the ground. The cave trail is unique and the balanced rock and natural bridge are features found nowhere else in the state.

In the spring, the whole area is carpeted with hepaticas. In the summer, wildflowers are everywhere. Fall brings out the bright orange of bitter-sweet which can be seen climbing tall white pines until they appear to be decorated for Christmas. Winter snows cover the evergreen and aspen and the gnarled cedars in clefts of rock on the cliffs appear as ghostly mountain climbers.

## HISTORY

Maquoketa Caves became a state park in 1921, but the initials and names carved in its limestone walls date back to 1835. Indian pottery, arrowheads, spears and other relics found in the caves provide proof that they were used by tribes hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years ago.

When the caves were discovered before the Civil War, beautiful milk white stalactites hung from the ceilings and stalagmites rose from the floor. Souvenir hunters have robbed the caves of this rare beauty, but many fascinating formations remain. Electric lights are strung through the main cave and cement walkways are easily followed. Flashlights are necessary at other caves like "Hernando's Hideaway," "Ice Cave," "Rainy Day," "Bat Passage" and the exciting "Steel Gate Passage." The park ranger will be glad to tell you about the caves, most of which are marked by signs.

## PICNICKING

The unique beauty of Maquoketa Caves State Park provides a lovely setting for picnicking. There are three picnic shelters which may be reserved for \$15 through the park ranger.

## SAGERS MUSEUM

The nearby Sagers Museum is located at the junction of Co. Y31 and Iowa HWY 428, 1/4-mile southeast of the park. The museum contains a wide variety of Native American artifacts, as well as many mounted birds and animals and historical objects from the Jackson County area. It is open on a seasonal basis.

## CONCESSION

There is a concession stand at the park where refreshments and information on the caves and trails are available.

## CAMPING

The campground has 29 campsites. There are no flush toilets or shower facilities. Camping permits are obtained by self-registration at the campground.

## NEIGHBORING TOWNS

**Maquoketa** is six miles southeast of the park.

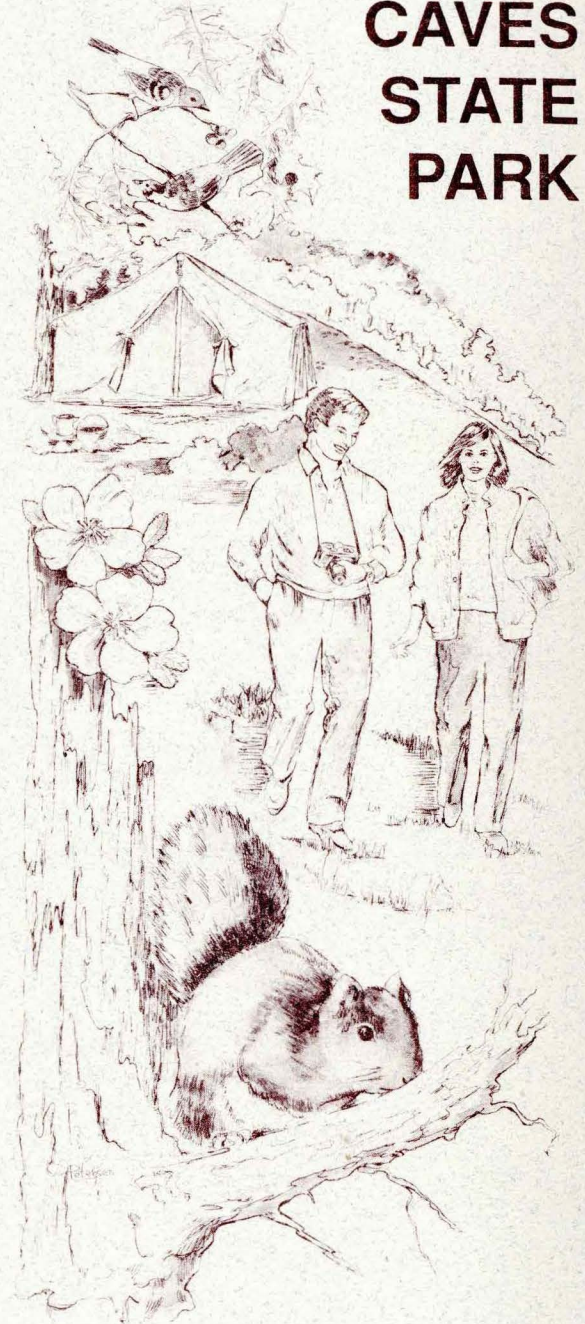
## EQUAL RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

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



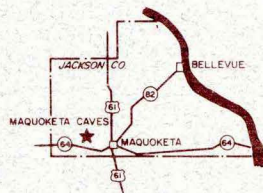
Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
Wallace State Office Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0034

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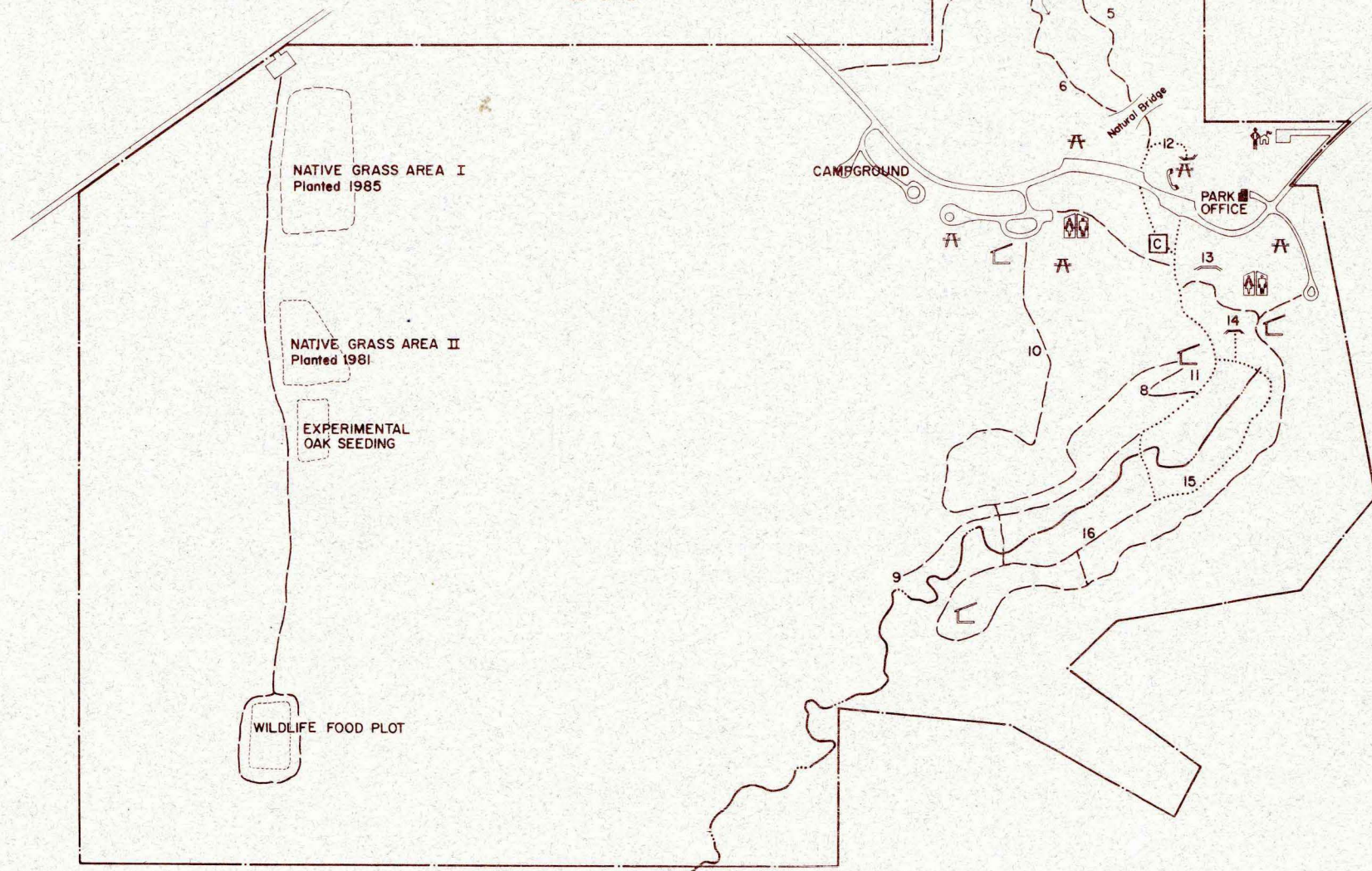
Maquoketa, Iowa 52060  
Telephone 319/652-5833





- 1 WIDE MOUTH CAVE
- 2 TWIN ARCH CAVE
- 3 HERNANDO'S HIDEAWAY CAVE
- 4 UP-N-DOWN CAVE
- 5 DUG OUT CAVE
- 6 WINDOW CAVE
- 7 MATCH CAVE
- 8 BARBELL CAVE
- 9 SHINBONE CAVE
- 10 WYE CAVE
- 11 BALANCED ROCK
- 12 UPPER CAVE ENTRANCE
- 13 MIDDLE CAVE ENTRANCE
- 14 LOWER CAVE ENTRANCE
- 15 RAINY DAY CAVE
- 16 ICE CAVE

-  PARK RANGER RESIDENCE
-  SHELTER
-  PICNIC AREA
-  REST ROOM
-  TELEPHONE
-  CONCESSION STAND & ENCLOSED SHELTER
-  HIKING TRAIL
-  NATURE TRAIL



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