

## TRAIL TO STARVED ROCK



**Hike right into history as you climb the footsteps of the past to the top of Starved Rock... the namesake for this beautiful State Park. History abounds as you explore the highest point of the Park overlooking the beauty of the Illinois River and Dam.**

The story is a Legend...the legend is really more like an epic. French and English fur traders referred to the American Indian tribe who lived in the area the "Illinois of the Rock" This tribe, which gave its name to a state with one of the largest populations in the United States is no more. The legend of the end of that tribe is also the story of how Starved Rock got its name.

The "Illinois of the Rock" (or "The Illini") had chosen a great site of lush trees, shrubs and other vegetation to inhabit. Wild game was everywhere and the land north of the river was excellent farm land for their crops. Plus the rock itself offered them a great fortress in case of attack. This made their land the envy of the other tribes.

Shortly after the middle of the eighteenth century, Pontiac, the great chief of the Ottawa Indians, united his tribe with other area tribes to become chief of an even larger, more powerful Indian nation. Pontiac wanted to unite all of the Indian tribes in the area and drive out the arriving Europeans. However, the Illini Chief Kineboo, lived among the Europeans and refused to join this confederacy.

Outraged, Chief Pontiac led his warriors to drive the Illini from their valley. Many battles took place. In the late 1760's, Chief Kineboo and Chief Pontiac met in a peace council. During an argument between the two chiefs, Kineboo drew his knife and killed Pontiac.

News of his death spread swiftly and soon other tribes joined the Ottawas and Pottawatomies to form the most powerful confederation of tribes in the Middle West. Together, they were to avenge the murder of their great chief.

The powerful confederation overcame the Illini and the remaining band of men, women and children took refuge on top the The Rock and for a while they were safe. However, this protection was also their downfall. The Illini stayed on top of the rock for over three weeks. They refused to surrender. But the avengers spared no one. Many starved atop the rock.

Chief Pontiac was avenged. The "Illinois of the Rock" were no more.  
The Rock was given a new name - Starved Rock.

**HOW LONG:** 15 minutes

**LENGTH FROM THE VISITOR CENTER:** 0.3 miles

**DIFFICULTY:** Moderate/Difficult (quite a few steps)

**PARKING:** Park at the Lower Park parking lot or the Lodge

**WATERFALL:** No

**TOP VIEW:** Yes

**INTERIOR CANYON VIEW:** No

**WILDLIFE:** Birdwatching (Great for Eagle viewing in the winter and Pelican viewing in the Spring!)

**VIEWS:** Spectacular views of Lover's Leap Overlook, Leopold Island No.1, Plum Island, Dam at Starved Rock, Starved Rock Lodge overlook, and the Illinois River

**CONNECTING TRAILS:** Council Overhang, Ottawa Canyon, Kaskaskia Canyon, Illinois Canyon

#### **VIEWS FROM THE TRAIL**

