

## Description

Devil's Backbone State Natural Area includes 126 acres of diverse Mississippi River blufflands. A steep hike up the face of the bluff will take you to the ridge top and incredible scenic views of the Mississippi River corridor. It was permanently protected by MVC in 2007 and was designated a State Natural Area by the DNR.

The site is unusual in that there is nothing but a narrow gravel road and railroad tracks between it and the Mississippi River. Consequently, it's a wild and peaceful spot. In addition to beautiful shooting star flowers, the property provides habitat for rare snails. A small, old cabin exists on the property.



"This land contains natural resources so unique and rare that nothing like it has yet been protected in the state of Wisconsin," George Howe, conservation director, said. The site includes another rare geologic feature informally referred to as "petrified waterfalls" in which algae causes minerals to form cave-type stalactites above the ground.



## Stewardship

Mississippi Valley Conservancy has saved a rare Wisconsin Ice Age relic with the purchase of 98 acres along the Mississippi River, another milestone in MVC's record of achievement.

"For the first time in the entire State of Wisconsin, an algific talus slope has been permanently protected," said Tim Jacobson, MVC executive director.

An algific talus slope is an ecosystem frozen in time—a plant and animal community remnant from the Ice Age that is maintained through a rare geological formation, a system of sinkholes and subterranean ice caves that vent cold air all summer through rock fissures on the side of a bluff.



### What Can I do at Devil's Backbone/ Chase Creek Bluff?

- ◆ Open to the public for hunting, fishing, canoeing, hiking, wildlife observation, nature photography and snowshoeing. (See trail map)
- ◆ Hikers are encouraged to take precautions during hunting seasons.
- ◆ Provide environmental education to area school groups.
- ◆ You can help keep our Preserve beautiful by carrying out your trash.

## Mississippi Valley Conservancy

Mississippi Valley Conservancy was formed by a group of local citizens that responded to growing development in the blufflands of southwestern Wisconsin by organizing a land trust to ensure conservation of the remaining special places in this region.

MVC works with willing landowners to protect our region's beautiful and natural areas for the enjoyment of current and future generations. We focus on areas of scenic, biological, agricultural and cultural importance throughout nine counties of southwestern Wisconsin (Buffalo, Trempealeau, Jackson, Monroe, La Crosse, Vernon, Crawford, Richland and Grant). Our various tools for land conservation include:

- ◆ Conservation Agreements
- ◆ Land Donations & Purchases
- ◆ Land Acquisition

You can help! Please become a contributing member by sending a tax-deductible donation to:

**Mississippi Valley Conservancy**  
1309 Norplex Dr., Suite 9  
P.O. Box 2611  
La Crosse, WI 54602  
(608) 784-3606

[info@MississippiValleyConservancy.org](mailto:info@MississippiValleyConservancy.org)

