made by yellow-bellied sapsuckers can be found on the cedar trees, as these birds feed on the sap and small insects nestled there. In the spring, beautiful magenta-colored blossoms erupt on the shooting star plants and the bright orange of the columbine delights the eye. By summer, a rainbow of color emerges with the yellow partridge pea, the violet spiked lead plants and potherb hazel, black huckleberry and bracken fern. Nuthatches and chickadees can be seen feeding on the nuts, seeds and insects here.

While groups of 25 or more are welcome and encouraged to use the park’s facilities, they are required to register in advance with the site office to avoid crowding or scheduling conflicts. At least one responsible adult must accompany each group of 15 minors.

Pets must be kept on leashes at all times. Actions by nature can result in closed roads and other facilities. We hope you enjoy your stay. Remember, take only memories, leave only footprints.

For more information on state parks, write to the Department of Natural Resources, Office of Land Management, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702 or visit our website at www.dnr.state.il.us.
Picnicking
The Matthiessen Area of the park provides a perfect setting for picnics and an afternoon of relaxation. This area has picnic tables, water fountains and playground equipment, as well as a large parking lot and toilet facilities. An added attraction is the restored fort representative of the fortifications the French built in the Midwest during the 1600s and early 1700s. The main trail to the Cascade Falls area originates in this area.

To the south, at the Vermilion River Area, additional picnic shelters, picnic tables, grills and drinking fountains provide convenient picnic facilities.

Alcohol is prohibited Jan. 1 through May 31 in the picnic area. It is always prohibited on all trails.

Exotic Species
Plants and animals not native to Illinois are exotic species. Most of them are harmless to our state; however, some can be very invasive to native plant communities and can overwhelm or wipe out native species. Prevention and control of exotic, invasive species requires tremendous cooperation between managers and all users of parks, natural areas, and privately owned land.

To learn more about exotic and invasive species and how you can help prevent their spread, visit the IDNR Exotic Species Website at: http://www.dnr.state.il.us/lands/education/ExoticSpecies/exoticspintro.htm.

Trails
The park has five miles of well-marked, well-surfaced hiking trails for a relaxing walk or a vigorous hike. Large trail maps are located at all major trail intersections so visitors can choose a variety of routes. The upper area and bluff tops are easy hiking paths for the novice, but the trails into the interiors of the two dells may be difficult to negotiate, particularly during spring and early summer. Hikers must stay on marked trails, as steep cliffs and deep canyons can be dangerous. Hikers will marvel at the plant and animal life along the trails, and have an unparalleled view of geological wonders as they travel through the park. Alcohol is prohibited on all trails.

On the north side of the Dells Area entrance is a parking lot with a Ritchie post, which marks the access to 13 miles of horseback riding trails. Horse rental is located on Route 71 a half mile west of Route 178. It is open weekends in April and November and Wednesday through Sunday from May through October. There are also six miles of cross-country ski trails with ski rental available weekends from December through March.

Regulations
No camping, rappelling, or rock or ice climbing are allowed. Alcohol is prohibited on all trails.

Hike only the marked trails. Unmarked areas are dangerous. Numerous people have been seriously injured or killed in this park. Be off the trails by dark.

In case of an accident, notify the Park Business Office, 667-4868, or Starved Rock Park Office, 667-4726. After 4 p.m., notify the State Police, 224-1150. (All phone numbers are 815 area code.)

To Find Your Way
Check the map to see where you are and decide where you want to go. This map is located at all major trail intersections with your exact location marked. There are additional directional signs along the trails to assist you.

Other Activities
A field archery range with a sight-in area and four separate targets is located in the northwestern portion of Matthiessen State Park near Deer Park Country Club just off Illinois Route 71.

A radio-controlled model airplane field is located at the Vermilion River Area. Hobbyists and visitors will enjoy flying or watching as these crafts are maneuvered around this open field area.

An equestrian campground for horseback riders and their horses is located on Route 178 1/2 mile south of Route 71. The horseback riders campground and horseback trails are open as weather permits May 1 – Oct. 31. Call the park office to check conditions and status before coming to use these facilities.

For further information, contact the site superintend-ent, Matthiessen State Park, Box 509, Utica, IL 61373, phone (815) 667-4868, fax (815) 667-5533.

PLEASE NOTE!
It is a state offense to remove any archeological or Native American materials from any Illinois state park.