Geology

From Barbour Rock, the visitor enjoys a spectacular view of Pine Creek Gorge—otherwise known as the “Pennsylvania Grand Canyon.” The gorge depth here is over 850 feet, and the distance from rim to rim reaches 2,000 feet. The site was named after Samuel Barbour, a logger who died in the 1890s on the river below during a log jam at the Owassee Rapids.

Barbour Rock is an outcrop of gray, crossbedded sandstone of the Catskill Formation. Crossbedding in rocks can develop when, for example, sand migrates as a dune or sand wave across the bed of a stream and builds out sloped layers relative to the main bed layer. Crossbeds can be clues to the original current direction of deposition. The Catskill Formation formed during the Late Devonian, about 370 million years ago.

The Barbour Rock vista can be accessed from the mile-long Barbour Rock Trail in Leonard Harrison State Park. There is also a handicapped-accessible trail to the overlook.

Recommended Reading


Colton Point State Park web page of DCNR.
Leonard Harrison State Park web page of DCNR.

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