

WISCONSIN GEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

WISCONSIN'S WATERS

ATER IS A POWERFUL FORCE, able to reshape the earth. Sometimes water interferes with itself when different forms collide. During the last Ice Age, about 20,000 years ago, a wall of ice and debris blocked the natural path of this small stream, forcing it to turn northwest. Although the glacier has long since melted, the stream remained in its new channel, cutting through soft sandstone to carve this deep gorge.

Pewit's Nest got its name in the mid-1800s after a mechanic set up shop in a cave partway up the gorge wall. His workshop was only accessible by climbing down a rock wall or by climbing up a ladder from a floating bridge. He used a water wheel to power the machines. Locals named his unusual place for its resemblance to the nest of a phoebe (formerly known as a pewit). The "nest" and the water wheel are long gone; only the name and the water remain.





PEWIT'S NEST ON SKILLET CREEK



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