

Suggestions & Reminders:

The nature walk is divided into three areas which can be walked in its entirety or separately as time permits.

Please note that the University of West Florida is a nature preserve. Plant poaching, off-road vehicles or mountain bikes are not allowed.



For information:

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Self-guided Nature Walk



**UNIVERSITY of
WEST FLORIDA**

The University of West Florida's 1,600-acre campus has been designated a nature preserve. You can enjoy walking along a half-mile boardwalk that winds through a hardwood swamp above Thompson's Bayou. The Edward Ball Wildlife Sanctuary is a favorite destination for viewing wildlife and plants. Central campus is bisected by Magnolia Row and Cannon Lawn. On the north is Riverview which overlooks the Escambia Bay estuary. South of University Drive is the Baars-Firestone Wildlife Sanctuary where a wilderness trail winds through sandhill, hammock and wetlands. This area also encompasses a wildflower preserve and the Center for Fine and Performing Arts bermwork.



EDWARD BALL NATURE TRAIL AREA

1. Beech Oak Forest. This wooded area is located on a slope below the Bailey Center. To the north and south is a section of upland hammock with a high density of white oak and American beech. These kings of the forest are found only in rich woodlands. The beech (*Fagus grandiflora*) and oak (*Quercus alba*) on the UWF campus are at the southern edge of their range.

2. The Bee Tree. Best observed from a distance, this oak is home to honey bees that congregate on the north side of the tree. The hive has been inhabited for years. Please pay heed to their flight path.

3. The Edward Ball Nature Preserve. A half-mile boardwalk meanders through Thompson's Bayou over a hardwood swamp that is home to mammals, birds, fish and reptiles, including an occasional American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*). The trail and preserve were funded by a grant from the Edward Ball Wildlife Foundation.



4. Needle Palm Courtyard.

The needle palm (*Rhapidothymum hystrix*), which may be the world's most cold-hardy palm, is native to this area. The "needles" form at the base of the plant. The courtyard of building 11 hosts several outstanding examples.

5. Formosa Azaleas. Nestled under giant live oaks, this hardy azalea species is noted for vigor and cold resistance. Planted in the late '60s, these azaleas have weathered 5-degree F temperatures, 100-degree days and several hurricanes. During March and April these hearty plants bear magnificent blooms.

6. Big Leaf Magnolia. The big leaf magnolia is a native to Florida. When the leaves fall the ground appears to be littered with large pieces of green and gray paper. The leaves may reach 32 inches in length under ideal conditions. Florida is the southernmost range.

7. Magnolia Row. Running east and west through the heart of campus, these *Magnolia grandiflora* are now designated as living memorials to the University of West Florida's presidents, past and future. The best viewing time is during the month of May, when the trees are in bloom.

8. Cannon Lawn. The lawn is named for a cannon from a ship of the Spanish Main re-



CENTRAL CAMPUS

trieved from Pensacola Pass in 1970 by a UWF student, Robert Annin. The lawn is the site of campus concerts, picnics, protests and other events. The grass is Bermuda Tifway 419, a favorite turf for sports use.

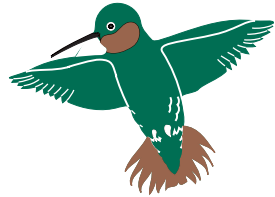
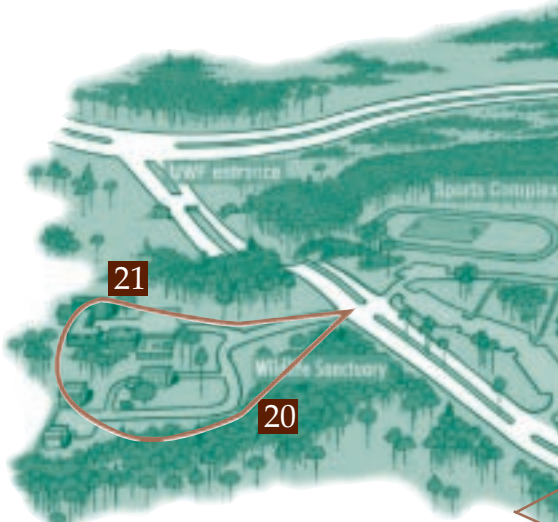
9. The Green. A large, propeller-shaped lawn in the heart of campus, the green is used as the university's park. This area represents a break in the campus development and boasts a combination of grasses, native trees and wildflowers.

10. Oakwood Lawn. Casually known as bikini green, this 80,000 square foot St. Augustine lawn hosts sunbathers, volleyball players, contemplative loungers and several species of oak. This is the largest stand of St. Augustine grass on campus.

11. Riverview. On clear days a view of Escambia Bay estuary as well as wetlands that border UWF property may be seen from here. The campus site borders a community once known as Riverview.

12. Giant Sparkleberry. Botanically known as *Vaccinium arboreum*, the sparkleberry is a member of the blueberry family. This magnificent example, entered into the Giant Tree Registry in 1973, tops out at 30 feet. A foot trail from parking lot 42 leads to this giant shrub.

Distance condensed →



 EDWARD BALL NATURE TRAIL — 1-3

 CENTRAL CAMPUS — 4-12

 BAARS-FIRESTONE AREA — 13-21





13. Oak Grove. This secluded haven, a popular picnic spot, boasts some of the largest live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) specimens on campus. The gazebo marks the location of one of the largest.

14. Dogwood Lane. Stroll down dogwood lane, following the footsteps of thousands of UWF graduates. The colorful campus commencement processional once followed this path. Dogwoods in a natural pine overstory are best viewed in March and early April.

15. Wildflower Preserve. Best in autumn when liatris, asclepias, baptisia, carphophorus (deer tongue), veronica and elephants foot are in bloom. An interesting collection of native hawthorn trees grow in this undeveloped plot at the southernmost section of the campus green.

16. Secret Garden. This unexpected garden, located in a small courtyard within the recesses of the Center for Fine & Performing Arts, invites the passerby to sit and stay a while. Sharp contrasts exist between sand-white brick and bloodleaf Japanese maples. Creeping fig softens the effect.

17. “Endangered” Outdoor Sculpture and Bermwork.



Concentric arcs of lawn formed into berms surround William Maxwell’s dark pool commemorating endangered animals. The berms are an earthen extension of ripples from the reflecting pool.

18. Sandhill Ridge. Longleaf pine, turkey oak, summer haw, shiny blueberry, bracken fern and wiregrass represent a cross-section of the sandhill ecosystem. One of six major campus environmental habitats, these plants are easily viewed from the lawn areas on the north side of the College of Education.

19. Education Waterworks. Native red iron rock and an eclectic group of plant materials are the foundation for this recirculating waterfall, a College of Professional Studies landmark. Many flowering ornamentals surround this site.

20. Baars-Firestone Wildlife Sanctuary. This wonderful forest is a cross-section of three natural habitats —sandhill to the south,

hammock at the core, and wetlands to the extreme south. The trail was constructed with a 1971 grant from Mrs. Mary Firestone-Baars. Stroll here in April for a spring delight.



21. Tart Oak. The largest live oak on the UWF campus marks the location of the old Tart residence. The trunk of this *Quercus virginiana* measures 4 feet in diameter and has a limb spread of 80 feet. The mansion on this site, once considered a residence for the university president, was deemed un-salvageable because of termite damage and razed prior to the opening of the university.