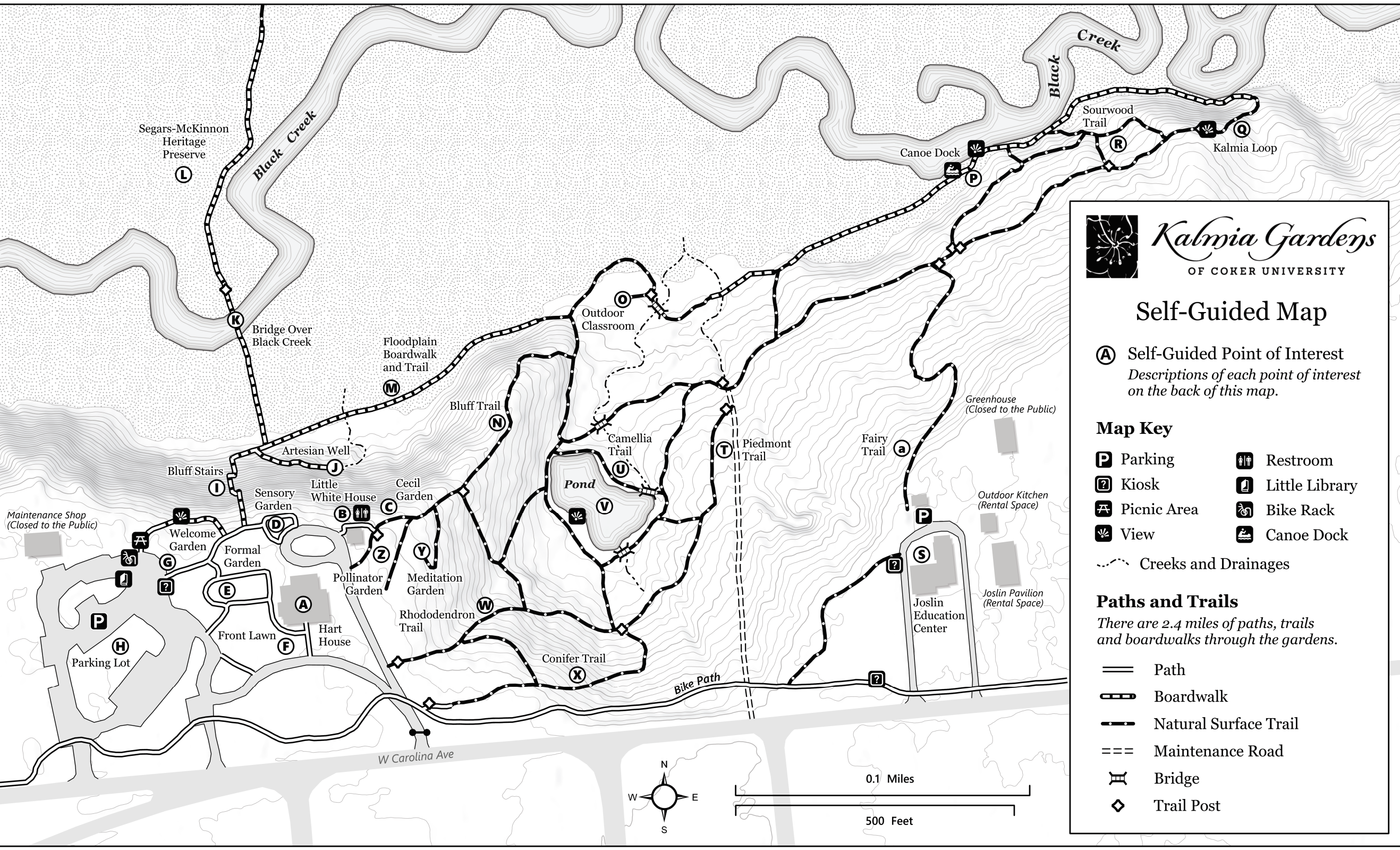




Kalmia Gardens
OF COKER UNIVERSITY

Self-Guided Map

(A) Self-Guided Point of Interest
Descriptions of each point of interest on the back of this map.

Map Key

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| (P) Parking | Restroom |
| (?) Kiosk | Little Library |
| Picnic Area | Bike Rack |
| View | Canoe Dock |

Creeks and Drainages

Paths and Trails

There are 2.4 miles of paths, trails and boardwalks through the gardens.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| | Path |
| | Boardwalk |
| | Natural Surface Trail |
| | Maintenance Road |
| | Bridge |
| | Trail Post |



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- A****Hart House** Built in 1820 by Thomas Hart using timber cut from the property. This is a typical farmhouse of the era: one room deep with a central hall upstairs and downstairs for efficient heating and cooling. Hart and his wife Hannah Lide Hart raised eight children here. The house and land were acquired in 1932 by Miss May Coker, who began to lay out the trails and plant hundreds of azaleas and camellias to create a public garden. It is known locally as Laurel Land and became known as Kalmia Gardens in 1935 when it opened to the public. Since 1965, Kalmia Gardens has been owned and operated by Coker College (now University). The garden is free to the public and is open from dawn until dusk every day of the year.
- B****Little White House** Probably built in the 1930's to serve as a yard man's house. Restrooms are at the rear of the building.
- C****Cecil Garden** A peaceful memorial garden with a fountain and benches.
- D****Sensory Garden** Here is a series of raised beds created to delight the senses of smell, sight, and sound.
- E****Formal Garden** Created in honor of Miss May Coker, this is the perfect venue for outdoor weddings and parties. Plants growing here include 'Little Gem' magnolia, Lenten rose, live oak, sycamore, boxwood, azalea, and hydrangea.
- F****Front Lawn** Here stands the former South Carolina state champion American Beech, once measuring 80 feet in height with a canopy spread of 74 feet and a trunk circumference of 178 inches. Its age is uncertain, but legend has it that it was growing here at the time of the Hart House's construction.
- G****Welcome Garden** Begin your journey at the Welcome Garden. Take a seat and enjoy naturalistic plantings that set the stage for the experiences to come within the ecological haven that is Kalmia Gardens.
- H****Parking Lot** The gate at the easternmost entrance was crafted in 1935 to highlight Miss May's favorite flower, the camellia. The newest gates were installed in 1992. The islands in the parking lot contain hemlock, maples, magnolias, and oaks, as well as several perennial beds.
- I****Bluff Stairs** Descending 60 feet down the north-facing bluff toward Black Creek, a unique mixture of piedmont, lower mountain, and bottomland plant species can be found. Called a "mixed mesophytic hardwood forest," or a "beech ravine," this area is dominated by American beech, white oak, loblolly pine, mockernut hickory, and tulip poplar. Mountain laurel is common on this slope, along with other understory species including flowering dogwood, witch hazel, sassafras, American holly, and sourwood. Vines include poison ivy, trumpet vine, and Virginia creeper.
- J****Artesian Well** In an artesian well, water rises from an underground water-containing rock layer under its own pressure. This particular well supplied the Hart House in former times, as evidenced by the remains of a cistern and a pump for delivering the water up the bluff. The water is still pure to drink.
- K****Bridge Over Black Creek** The creek has its source near Pageland, S.C. and meanders continuously for almost 80 miles to the point near Quinby where it enters the Great Pee Dee River. Its channel was formed by erosion of a ridge through what is now called the Sand Hills, and at Kalmia Gardens the creek serves as the divider between the Sand Hills and the upper Coastal Plain regions of the state. The water is acidic and slightly discolored by dissolved tannins and other organics from decayed vegetation, especially the bark of trees.
- L****Segars-McKinnon Heritage Preserve** Established in 1994, the heritage preserve contains 795 acres of floodplain and upland on the north side of Black Creek. It provides habitat for swamp dwelling creatures, including several rare plant species. The dominant trees along Black Creek are bald cypress and swamp tupelo, which are indicative of flooded soil conditions, with their swollen bases and cypress knees. Other trees found here include red maple, tulip poplar, red bay, sweet bay, and American holly. Shrubs include gallberry, inkberry, Virginia willow, fetterbush, and leucothoe. Because of frequent flooding, herbaceous species are usually found near solid "islands" and old stumps and logs.
- M****Floodplain Boardwalk & Trail** This boardwalk was built in 2004 to replace a circuitous path along the bluff past the artesian well.
- N****Bluff Trail** This area is quite sandy, with a moisture-retaining clay subsoil. Sandhills species include loblolly pine, southern red oak, persimmon, sassafras, and blackgum. American holly, yaupon, sparkleberry, and huckleberry are also found here, along with the state flower, yellow jessamine.
- O****Outdoor Classroom** This bottomland is dominated by tulip poplar, red maple, and loblolly pine. Understory trees include strawberry bush, Virginia willow, gallberries, fetterbush, and leucothoe. Many species of vines here include poison ivy, smilax, muscadine grape, cross-vine, and trumpet vine. Cane is also common, along with white oak, American beech, and American holly. The clearing in the forest is an ideal place for birdwatching.
- P****Creekside Boardwalk and Canoe Dock** This section of boardwalk was completed in 2004 with a dock for canoes and other boats.
- Q****Kalmia Loop** This loop trail follows Black Creek before climbing part way up the bluff at its farthest point. The upper loop, dominated by mountain laurel, features an overlook situated 30 feet above the creek and near a large Atlantic white cedar which has fallen across the lower trail and continues to live. Nearby can be seen the erosion which continues to change the face of the bluff.
- R****Sourwood Trail** Within the Kalmia Loop is a trail through large sourwood, beech, and white oak trees.
- S****Joslin Education Center** This building was donated to Kalmia Gardens in 2002 by Mary Coker Joslin, daughter of Miss May Coker, and can be accessed by a trail from the Upper Kalmia Loop. The building is used as a classroom for educational programs.
- T****Piedmont Trail** This trail is located between the access road and the pond and winds through camellias and loblolly pines.
- U****Camellia Trail** This trail curves around the pond and is named for its large collection of camellias.
- V****Pond** The pond, which was dug by Miss May's workers and has a dam around one side, was originally fed by an artesian well. The pond is about 5 feet deep in the center and is home to fish, turtles, including snapping turtles, water bugs and other insects, and snakes.
- W****Rhododendron Trail** This trail rises from the pond to the east side of the Hart House and includes may varieties of azaleas.
- X****Conifer Trail** The conifer trail runs alongside the bike path and includes different conifers.
- Y****Meditation Garden** A quiet space to sit and enjoy the peacefulness of the garden.
- Z****Pollinator Garden** Formerly the Fern Garden, the Pollinator Garden is planted with an array of plants aimed to attract pollinators, including bees, butterflies, birds, ants, beetles, and more.
- a****Fairy Trail** Filled with whimsy, the Fairy Trail is outfitted with several fairy residences and invites guests of all ages to engage their imaginations – you may just see a fairy or two!