

1.6 Chestnut Grove Parking. American chestnuts succumbed in the early 1900s to chestnut blight. Roots may survive, but growth becomes shrubby as stems die back. The American chestnuts, Chinese chestnuts, and hybrids seen here are part of a cooperative research project with the American Chestnut Foundation.

1.65 Turn left onto Ginkgo Spur, and drive through the Norway spruce allée.

1.9 Ginkgo Grove Parking. Blandy's Ginkgo Grove, one of North America's largest, includes over 300 living trees. The ginkgo is a popular street tree, but it is virtually extinct in the wild. The cottages provide housing for researchers. Behind these is a field, last mowed in 1986, that is slowly changing from grassland to forest. Return to main loop, then continue straight.

2.1 Cedar of Lebanon allée. This cedar has a rich cultural and religious history. It is frequently planted but increasingly rare in its native Mediterranean.

2.3 Blandy was once part of the Tuleyries, left, a private estate built in the 1830s. Dogwood Lane is on the right. The dogwood is Virginia's state flower and state tree. These dry-stack walls were restored in 2004 with support from the Garden Club of Virginia.

2.4 Event Field: the location of Garden Fair, Nature Nurtures, and other events.

2.5 Boxwood Memorial Collection, planted by the American Boxwood Society.

The Arboretum grounds are open to the public dawn to dusk, 365 days a year, free of charge. The Arboretum offers programs to school groups, garden clubs, service organizations, senior centers, and other groups. Call the main office at 540-837-1758 Ext. 0 to arrange a tour or program, and check events at the Arboretum's web site, www.blandy.virginia.edu

The Wilkins Lane Loop Drive, dedicated in April 2010, was built with the generous support of the James R. Wilkins Sr. Charitable Trust, Donna Wilkins Downing, Edward Wilkins Winn, the Foundation of the State Arboretum, Patton, Harris, Rust & Associates, Winchester Building Supply Co., Inc., Jim Wyatt, and others.

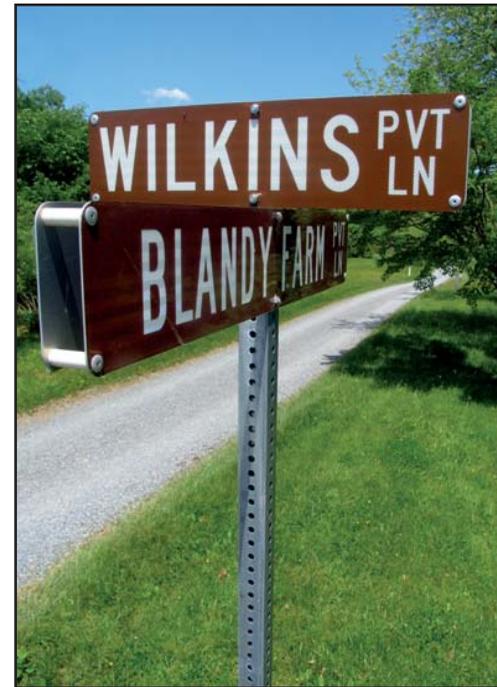


Foundation of the
State Arboretum of Virginia
At the University of Virginia's Historic
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Wilkins Lane

Driving Tour



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BLANDY EXPERIMENTAL FARM

The State Arboretum of Virginia is part of the University of Virginia's Blandy Experimental Farm, which occupies over 700 acres of woodlands, meadows, gardens, and seasonal wetlands in the northern Shenandoah Valley. The Arboretum's collection includes more than 1,000 species and varieties of woody plants. Particularly noteworthy are its conifers and its collections of pines, oaks, and boxwoods. The Arboretum is also known for its ginkgo grove, which is one of the largest in North America, and for its recently planted test plots of American chestnut. The ginkgo grove and chestnut orchards are included on the Wilkins Lane Driving Tour.

This land was deeded to the University of Virginia in 1926, upon the death of owner Graham F. Blandy. The property was originally part of the Tuleyries estate to the west. The Arboretum is named for its first director, Orland E. White, and was designated the State Arboretum of Virginia in 1986 by the Virginia General Assembly. Blandy Experimental Farm serves as a research field station for the University of Virginia's Department of Environmental Sciences.

Blandy Experimental Farm and the State Arboretum of Virginia have a combined mission of research, environmental education, and outreach.



Wilkins Lane Driving Tour

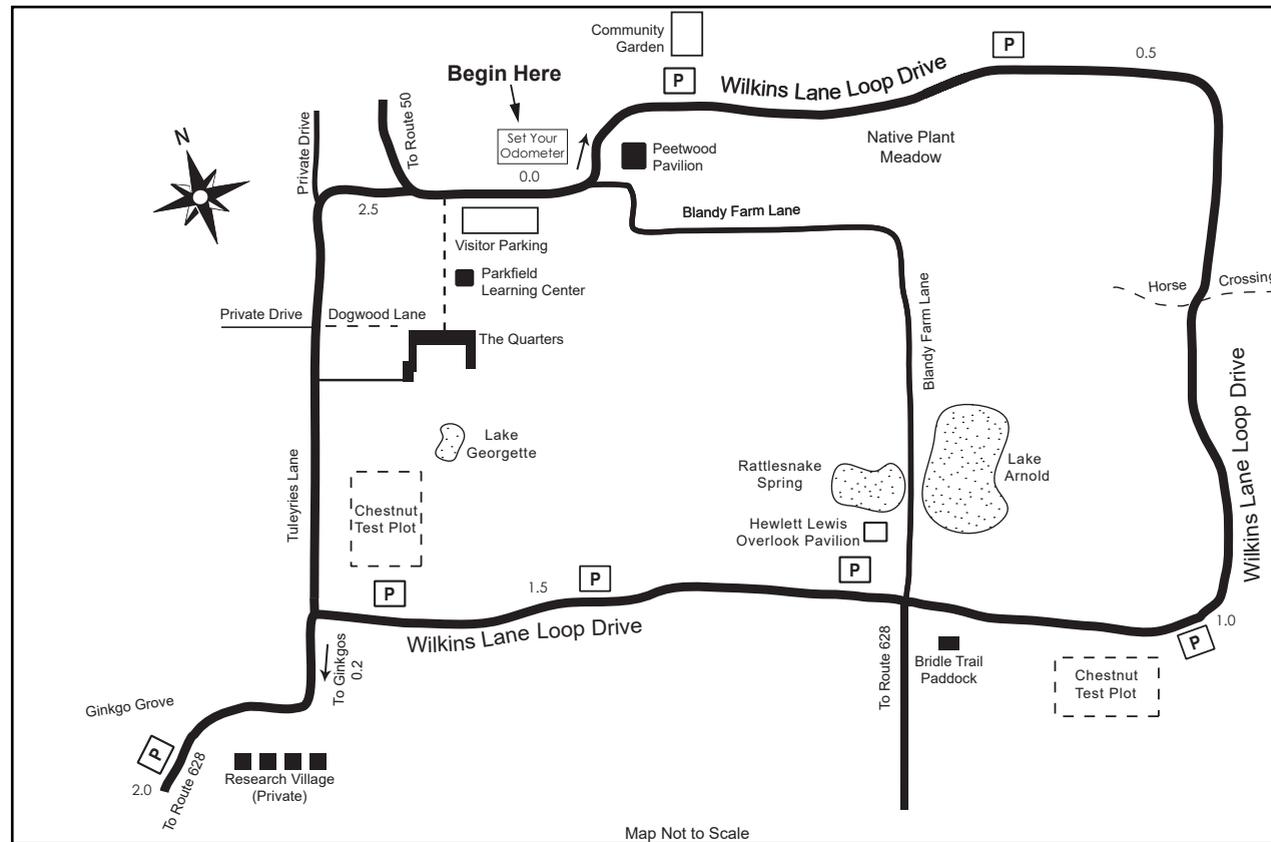
0.0 Begin Driving Tour. The 2.6-mile Wilkins Lane driving tour begins just east of the visitor parking area. The picnic grove lies through the trees on the right.

0.1 Community Garden Parking. Blandly's 10,000-square-foot Community Garden provides space to grow vegetables for personal use and for local food banks. The structure to the right of the garden is a habitat wall for observing solitary bees and wasps. The Peetwood Pavilion for Environmental Education, just up slope, is used for school programs, public programs, and meetings.

0.2 Catalpas and alien, invasive empress trees on left. Blandly's 35-acre restored meadow (right) contains native grasses and wildflowers. Fire is used here as a management tool to encourage natives.

0.2-0.4 Pines and other conifers mark the Arboretum's northeast border.

0.3 Successional Field Parking. Blandly's successional field research area contains 20 100-meter by 100-meter experimental plots. These plots have different disturbance histories, allowing researchers to study how ecological communities change over time. To the east, a shrubby field merges into a second-growth forest.



0.5-0.7 Invasives Alert! This section of the road cuts through an extensive growth of buckthorn, honeysuckle, and other introduced species. Birds use these shrubs for food and nest sites, but these exotics displace native species.

0.8 These dolomitic limestone rocks, typical of the region, were excavated during construction. Fenced areas on the right are research plots.

1.0 Blue Ridge Parking. Height of land with view of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Plantings in the fenced experimental chestnut grove began in March 2009. See Milemarker 1.6 for more.

1.1 Maple family to the right. Blandly's horse paddock lies to your left. Continue straight across access road.

1.2 Pea Hill Parking. The pea (legume) family and other plant groups are represented here. The Hewlett Lewis Overlook Pavilion and Rattlesnake Spring are through the trees. Blandly has more than 100 volunteer-maintained, bird nesting boxes. These were built for bluebirds, but are also used by tree swallows and other songbirds.

1.3-1.4 Rose and Magnolia families

1.4 Nut Tree Collection Parking. More of the Arboretum's collection is featured here. Look for mulberry, hackberry, black cherry, and persimmon. One of Blandly's many dry-stack stone walls runs past. Lake Georgette is down slope, and oaks, black walnut, beech, and chestnut are just ahead.



A Southern Magnolia shows its dramatic yet delicate flowers.

Highlights of the Tour



The Arboretum's conifer collection includes one-third of the world's pine species.



Watch and listen for bobwhite quail in the native plant meadow.