The Bluegrass—Its bedrock consists of limestone and calcium-like shale. Some bedrock has weathered to produce soils with high phosphate content and exceptionally productive vegetation that is attractive to wildlife and people. Pioneers first settled the Bluegrass because of its open woodlands, fertile soils, and salt springs. Large pastures bloom with a lavender hue in spring, and from a distance the fields look blue—hence the name “Bluegrass.”

Pennyrile—The area’s bedrock is also limestone and calcium-like shale, but at this region of rolling hills and plains the pure limestone forms a western and eastern plain. Its flat karst plains are characterized by having many sinkholes and cave systems. Those cave systems include Mammoth Cave, where acidic groundwater has dissolved the underlying rocks, flowing through passages to springs and valleys at lower levels. Pioneers gave the name “harness” to plains in this region that have extensive grasslands and little or no woody growth.

Shawnee Hills—Its bedrock is similar to that of the Appalachian Plateaus, with much sandstone, siltstone, shale, and coal. This region is named after the Shawnee, who, along with other Native American tribes, were driven into refuges here after the first waves of settlement in the Ohio Valley.

Mississippi Embayment—This region has relatively young sediments, including gravels, sands, silts, and clays. Most of the region has low hills, upland flats, terraces, and floodplains. Drainage is slow in many areas. The Native Americans developed towns and much farmland on fertile loess, and it was not until 1815 that the United States acquired these lands from the Chickasaw as part of the Jackson Purchase.

Aboretum Woods—The Aboretum Woods is an optional trail that is part of the Walk across Kentucky. It is a 16-acre section of rare remaining Inner Bluegrass woodlands containing 18 native Kentucky tree species as well as more than 10 native Kentucky grasses and herbs.

This brochure was created and published by the Friends of The Arboretum.

If You’re Visiting

• No admission fee.
• Call 859-257-6955 to schedule a guided tour.
• Guided school tours—$1/student.

Temporary closures due to special events will be posted on The Arboretum Web site.
Welcome to The Arboretum, State Botanical Garden of Kentucky

The Arboretum is a wonderful 100-acre state botanical garden. Its special attraction is the Walk Across Kentucky, a 2-mile walk which includes a unique collection of Kentucky native plants. The Arboretum is owned and operated by the University of Kentucky and the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government (LFUCG) in cooperation with the Friends of The Arboretum, a non-profit, member-supported organization. The Friends of The Arboretum helps ensure that The Arboretum remains a premier public botanical garden, outdoor classroom, and urban sanctuary.

History

In 1983 students and faculty of the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture and the Department of Biology proposed an arboretum on UK grounds. One-hundred acres of land south of Alumni Drive was designated as the site. In 1986 UK and LFUCG joined forces to develop The Arboretum. It was designed to have 50 acres for “passive recreation,” to be open to the public, to have a 12-member advisory committee consisting of six representatives each from UK and LFUCG, and to have maintenance provided by UK. In 1992, The Friends of The Arboretum was established by members of the Fayette County Master Gardeners Association, the Lexington Council of Federated Garden Clubs, and other Lexington and Kentucky citizens. Its purpose was to stimulate interest in The Arboretum, to encourage participation in its educational programs and recreational aspects, and to raise funds and solicit Friends members to assist in the development of The Arboretum. In 1998 the Walk Across Kentucky was completed and opened. It contains over 1,200 native species that were planted from 1990 to 1998. The Dorotha Smith Oatts Visitor Center was completed in 2002. It is named for a UK alumna who made a generous $200,000 challenge grant to build the visitor center.

 Regions
Appalachian Plateau, Bluegrass, Cumberland Mountain, Knobs, Mississippi Embayment, Pennyrile, Shawnee Hills, Arboretum Woods

Friends of The Arboretum Membership
Member contributions support The Arboretum’s outstanding educational programs and events. Members receive discounts on classes and at several area nurseries, free admission to the spring and fall plant exchanges, and a subscription to The Friends of The Arboretum quarterly newsletter. For more information, call 859-257-6955.

Mission Statement
The Arboretum celebrates nature, fosters an understanding of relationships between humans and their natural world, provides cultural opportunities for the community, and serves as a community center for environmental education, horticulture, and urban forestry renewal. The Arboretum emphasizes research on the environment and attention to conservation issues.

The Arboretum
State Botanical Garden of Kentucky
500 Alumni Drive
Lexington, KY 40503
(859) 257-6955
http://www.ca.uky.edu/arboretum/