

24

CINCINNATI NATURE CENTER'S
ROWE WOODSKEY AT-A-GLANCE
INFORMATION**LENGTH:** 8.9 miles**CONFIGURATION:** Loop**DIFFICULTY:** Difficult**SCENERY:** Forest, ponds, prairie,
restored stream, and creeks**EXPOSURE:** Shade and full sun**TRAFFIC:** Moderate–heavy**TRAIL SURFACE:** Soil, mowed, gravel,
and mulch**HIKING TIME:** 7 hours**DRIVING DISTANCE:** 30 minutes from
Cincinnati**SEASON:** Year-round**ACCESS:** 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays
are free; small admission fee
Tuesday–Sunday or purchase
annual membership.**MAPS:** USGS Batavia, Madeira,
Withamsville, Goshen; Cincinnati
Nature Center map**WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE:** Stanley
M. Rowe All-Persons' Trail**FACILITIES:** Restrooms and drinking
water at nature center**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** (513)
831-1711 or www.cincynature.org**SPECIAL COMMENTS:** Bring a bag
and a couple of quarters for turtle
food.

IN BRIEF

Cincinnati Nature Center is a gem. Plenty of trails, ranging from wheelchair-accessible to difficult, take hikers through different habitats. In addition to the coffee shop, gift shop, and bird-viewing area, the nature center offers hands-on interactive activities and friendly naturalists.

DESCRIPTION

In spring, Rowe Woods is filled with the dainty blooms of thousands of daffodils, which possibly descend from the thousands of bulbs Mary and Carl Krippendorf and family planted on their property in the early 1900s. Mary and Carl enjoyed sharing their love of nature with friends and family.

They lived in the building that is now the Krippendorf Lodge for 64 years until they died within one month of each other in 1965. After their deaths, friends and family rallied to protect the land from development. Karl Maslowski, Stanley Rowe Sr., Rosan Krippendorf Adams, and Kay Nyce signed the articles of incorporation for the Cincinnati Nature Center Association. Today CNC's 1,600 acres of natural and agricultural land is composed of two sites: Rowe Woods and Long Branch Farm and Trails.

GPS Trailhead
Coordinates

UTM Zone (WGS84) 16S

Easting 0739898.7

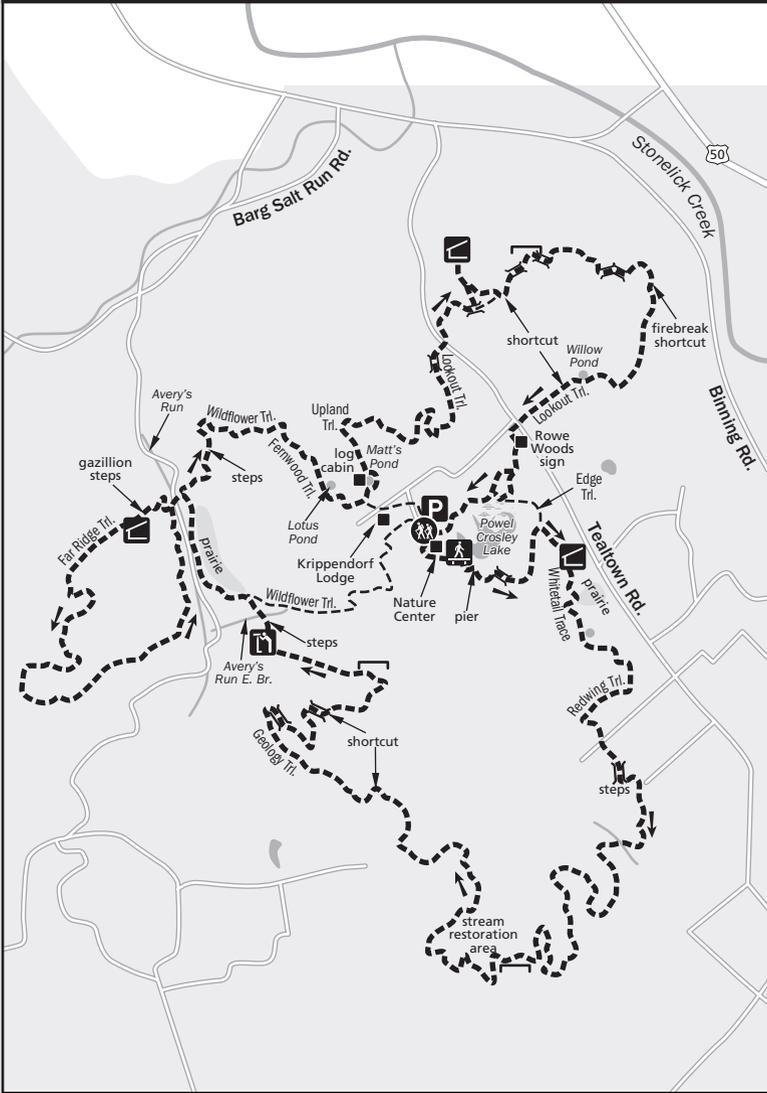
Northing 4325491.6

Latitude N 39° 02' 44.08"

Longitude W 84° 13' 40.76"

Directions 

From Cincinnati, follow Interstate 275 to Exit 59/Milford Parkway and travel east less than 0.5 miles to US 50. Turn right and travel for 2 miles, then turn right onto Round Bottom Road. Drive less than 0.5 miles and turn left onto Tealtown Road. After a little more than 0.6 miles, turn left into Cincinnati Nature Center's Rowe Woods.



CNC is one of the top ten nature centers in the country, and it continually succeeds in fulfilling its mission statement (“To inspire passion for nature and promote environmentally responsible choices through experience, education, and stewardship to ensure a sustainable future”) via excellent staff, displays, trails, *Newsleaf* newsletter, and ongoing educational programming and events.

Park your vehicle in the gravel lot and walk to the Nature Center at the bottom of the slight hill. Be sure to plan time to explore the center. If you have small children, they’ll enjoy the hollowed-out log and playhouse. Adults will enjoy the small coffee café and wonderful reading room/library. The enormous bird-viewing area is a great place to sit and sketch the birds at the feeders.

Outside the door to the right of the bird-viewing area is a turtle food dispenser. Buy a handful and stash it in your bag before returning inside the center and leaving through the doors near the front desk and to the left (if you are facing the front doors). On the deck to the right is an outdoor nature center, complete with skulls, fossils, rocks, paper wasps’ nests, and much more.

Continue forward to the mulched path and turn left. At the split in the trail, follow Edge Trail to the left and around the back of the Nature Center. When it joins with a wooden boardwalk, turn right and follow Edge Trail along the boardwalk down to the edge of Powel Crosley Lake. The boardwalk skirts the edge of the lake over the water. This is where the turtle food comes in handy. Just don’t get your hands too close to the water, as at least two enormous snapping turtles are regulars.

The boardwalk ends; at the trail intersection, turn left. In about 150 feet, take the side trail to the left that leads to a small pier. Return to Edge Trail and head downhill. Pass Geology Trail at 0.3 miles and cross the bridge. The forest includes chinquapin, red, and white oaks, honey locusts, and sugar maples.

Pass by the first trailhead for Whitetail Trace, a bench, and the shelter house and dock area. At 0.5 miles, turn right onto the second trailhead for Whitetail Trace and into a forest dominated by sugar maples. At 0.69 miles, the trail takes a hard right at the edge of a prairie. At the junction, in 200 feet, follow Whitetail Trace to the left. At the small pond and dock, watch for waterfowl, dragonflies, and songbirds.

Sassafras and redbuds line the edges of the trail before it joins with Redwing Trail at 1.1 miles. Turn left onto Redwing Trail, which follows the ridges of several beautiful hillsides of shagbark hickories, red oaks, and sugar maples. Cross a footbridge at 1.28 miles. This area is well insulated from urban noise.

Cross on the flat rocks over a small stream at 1.51 miles, then walk through an area dense with pawpaw and honeysuckle. At 2.66 miles, cross the stream and enter a stream restoration area. The kiosk explains the partnership, scope, and results of the project.

Continue on Redwing Trail uphill as it passes in and out of the prairie and forest of sugar maples, hackberry, and sassafras. Pass the shortcut at 3.26 miles. Sugar maples dominate the forest, which also includes a few black cherry and hackberry trees. The understory is virtually nonexistent as the trail weaves up

Creek crossing in Rowe Woods

and down hills through the serene, picturesque woods.

You'll reach a junction at 3.82 miles with the other end of the shortcut. Follow Redwing Trail to the left and over a bridge. Turn left onto Geology Trail at 4.02 miles and follow the ridge 0.25 miles to the small gazebo-style overlook. Take the boardwalk trail around the hillside and check out the rocky outcropping at the observation deck below. Return to the main trail, follow the steps downhill, and cross Avery's Run East Branch.

At 4.32 miles, Geology Trail intersects with Wildflower Trail. Keep left to stay on Wildflower Trail. The open prairie is to the right, and the wood line and stream to the left.

Turn left onto Far Ridge Trail at 4.49 miles. When the trail splits, take the right side and walk up more than a gazillion steps. (Okay, I may have rounded up . . . a little). Halfway up the hill is a small shelter house to enjoy the view of the upland woods and valley.

At the top of the hill, the trail flattens out a bit and passes through an incredible white oak, ash, and sugar maple forest. The loop trail passes over a swath of flat stones before crossing the creek again and rejoining Wildflower Trail.

Turn left and follow Wildflower Trail over several steps and through a predominately sugar maple forest, which is stunning in the fall. At 6 miles, turn right at the intersection with Fernwood Trail, which leads to Upland Trail.

Pass by Lotus Pond and turn left at the end of the pond. Enjoy the view of the pond from the boardwalk and at the end of the boardwalk, turn right and step into the prairie area. Walk to the end of the prairie and turn left, then take the next left back into the prairie and to the log cabin and Matt's Pond.

Follow the trail down the short hill to the west of the log cabin and take the raised boardwalks to crisscross over Matt's Pond. Return to the trail on





Wooden staircase at
Cincinnati Nature Center

the cabin side of the pond, turn right, and follow the trail to the gravel road at 3.69 miles. Follow the gravel road, and then turn right onto Upland Trail.

Pass by the shortcut and stay on the main trail through an incredibly beautiful upland woods with several large sycamore and ash trees. At 6.76 miles, turn left onto Lookout Trail and follow it north across Tealtown Road.

At the trail split near the bridge, turn left and head to the small shelter house to enjoy a rest. Return the main trail and turn left. The trail passes over a shortcut and several footbridges as it weaves through the forest and eventually

through prairie before crossing back over Tealtown Road at 8.4 miles.

Immediately behind the Rowe Woods entrance sign, the trail continues back into the woods, eventually intersecting with Edge Trail at 8.6 miles. Turn left and follow the trail to the boardwalk overlooking the pond. This is a great place to see bullfrogs and enormous dragonflies.

Follow the boardwalk through, and at the end turn left and continue on Edge Trail to the east. Pass the intersection with Lookout Trail and then the bird blind before walking up to the back of the Nature Center. Continue on the trail to your vehicle.

NEARBY ACTIVITIES

East Fork State Park, California Woods Nature Preserve, and Withrow Nature Preserve offer additional trails. Milford's downtown shops have plenty of dining and shopping opportunities, including Nature Outfitters.