

2 WILDFLOWER TRAIL

1/2 mile, moderate.

This scenic trail begins at the Dewar log cabin, intersecting after a short distance where it meets Trail 1 just south of the cabin. Continue straight to stay on the Wildflower Trail. After a gentle ascent, the trail curves around to end at the south end of the upper parking lot.

1 TRAIL OF SILENCES

1/2 mile, moderate.

Starting behind the cemetery, the trail descends along the slope then follows an intermittent stream bed where you may find water flowing after a heavy rain. The trail then ascends the hillside, ending where it meets Trail 2 just south of the Dewar log cabin.

HIKING TRAILS

"Take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints."

The 211 acre site and nature preserve were established for the purpose of protecting the area. It is open for hiking and observing.

Rules of Hiking

- Please remain on the trails at all times.
- Hunting, camping and fires are prohibited.
- Horseback riding and mountain biking are prohibited.
- All plants and animals are protected.
- Please keep areas free of litter.

A SELF-GUIDING MAP OF GARDENS, GROUNDS & HIKING TRAILS

In 1907, Theodore Clement Steele (1847-1926), noted Indiana artist and member of the Hoosier Group of Impressionist Painters, bought a partly wooded, abandoned farm in Brown County. The beauty and solitude of the forest and hilltop vistas served as his artistic inspiration.

The scenic 211-acre site includes five hiking trails, partially restored gardens, and historic buildings containing original furnishings and paintings.

In 1945, the artist's widow, Selma Neubacher Steele, donated the property to the State of Indiana to be preserved for future art and nature lovers.

Guided tours of the historic house and studio are available year-round.

Hours:

Tuesday-Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday, 1 to 5 p.m.

Closed Monday

T.C. Steele State Historic Site

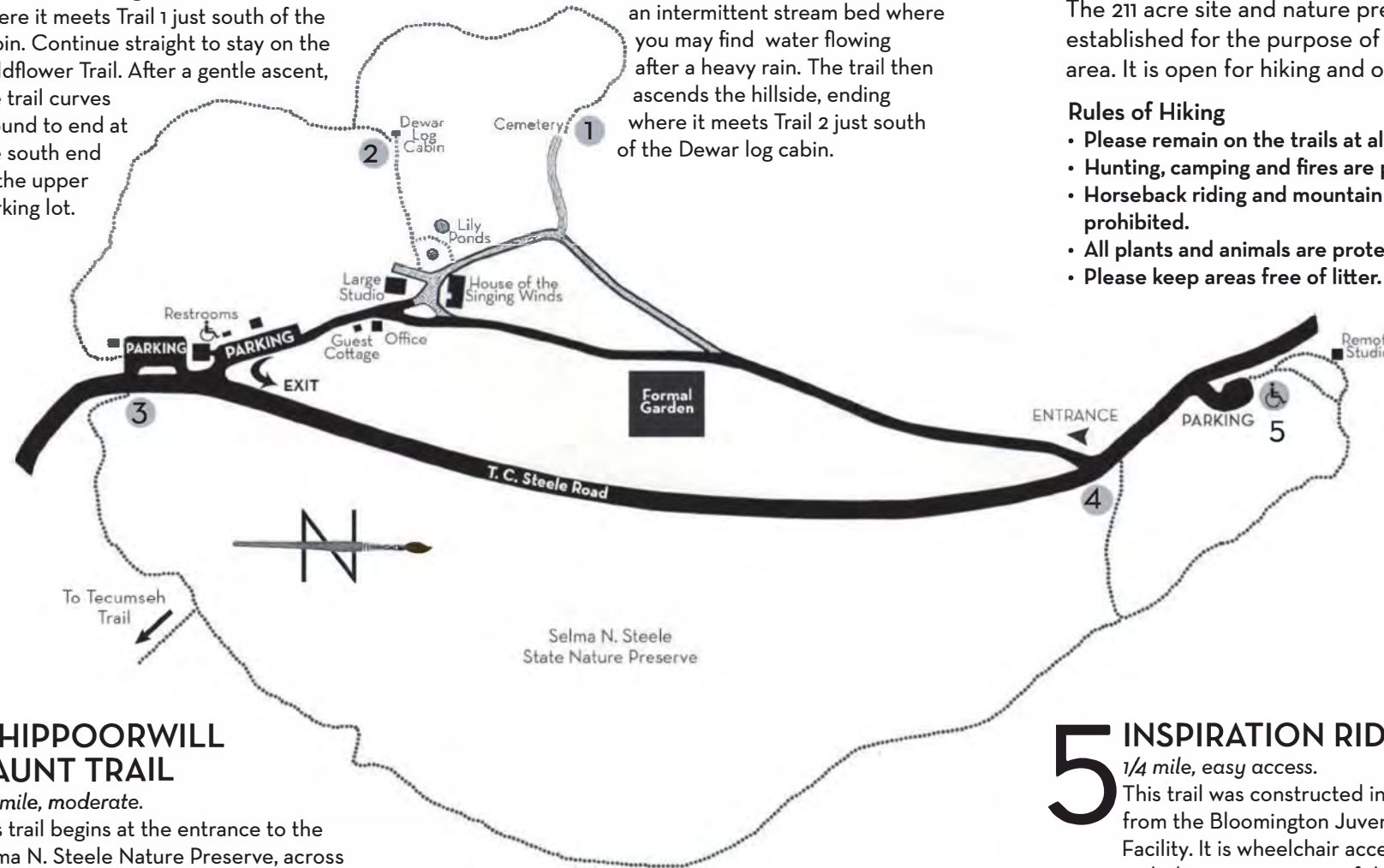
Selma N. Steele State Nature Preserve

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3 WHIPPOORWILL HAUNT TRAIL

3/4 mile, moderate.

This trail begins at the entrance to the Selma N. Steele Nature Preserve, across the road from the south end of the upper parking lot. While in the preserve, please remain on the trail. The trail ends where it meets the Peckerwood Trail (Trail 4). A left turn takes you up to the stone entry arches, while continuing straight leads to Trail 5 and the Remote Studio.

4 WOODPECKER TRAIL

1/2 mile, difficult.

The Woodpecker Trail begins at the north entrance to the Selma N. Steele Nature Preserve, across from the stone entry arches. It descends into the valley where it meets the end of Trail 3, then turns north before ascending to join Trail 5. From this junction, the right fork takes you to the Remote Studio. The trail to the left leads to a small parking lot off the county road. From there you can return to the stone arches.

5 INSPIRATION RIDGE TRAIL

1/4 mile, easy access.

This trail was constructed in 1994 by youth from the Bloomington Juvenile Treatment Facility. It is wheelchair accessible, along with the upper section of the Peckerwood Trail. Beginning at the parking lot north of the stone entry arches, the trail provides access to the Remote Painting Studio, then loops back around to the parking lot.



T.C. STEELE
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SELMA'S GARDENS

Mrs. Steele's creative outlet began with a "few packages of flower seeds from the city" and a "handful of Scotch daffodils" that grew into acres of flowers, orchards and vegetable gardens. For inspiration, Mrs. Steele studied the informal perennial borders popularized by English garden designer Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932), the "wild garden" advocated by William Robinson (1838-1935), and Arts and Crafts traditions, which encouraged techniques and materials that blend with the surrounding landscape and emphasized relationships between house and garden. Information for restoration was gleaned from old photos, paintings, gardening scrapbooks, letters and journals.

HILLSIDE & PERENNIAL GARDENS

Each year, visitors enjoy the sweeps of daffodils naturalized on the hillsides by Mrs. Steele. Irises, peonies and other old-fashioned flowers follow this early spring display. Garden beds sprawl in the informal planting schemes popular in the 1910s and '20s, while stone borders, terraces and rock walls keep plantings in place on the slope and visually unify the gardens. Pergolas and arbors adjoining the "House of the Singing Winds" extend living space into the garden.

SELMA N. STEELE STATE NATURE PRESERVE

This 92-acre preserve was dedicated in 1990, in keeping with Mrs. Steele's wish that the property remain 'a tribute to natural beauty.' Deep ravines with seasonally flowing streams cut through soft bedrock. Rich undergrowth provides a wealth of wildflowers throughout the spring.

DEWAR LOG CABIN

The Dewar log cabin was built by early Brown County settler Peter Dewar, five miles south of its present site. The cabin faced destruction in the early 1930s but, feeling it was part of Brown County's heritage, Selma Steele bought the cabin, moved it and filled it with natural history displays. This "Trailside Museum" was dedicated in 1934 in memory of her brother Walter, an amateur naturalist. Today, the cabin houses natural history displays and information on local flora and fauna.



CEMETERY

The white oaks shading the cemetery have broad crowns, indicating they grew in an open sunny location. The Steeles chose the "oak grove" as their eventual resting places because of its inspirational setting. Mrs. Steele's parents, brothers and sisters were buried here after Mr. Steele's death.

LILY PONDS

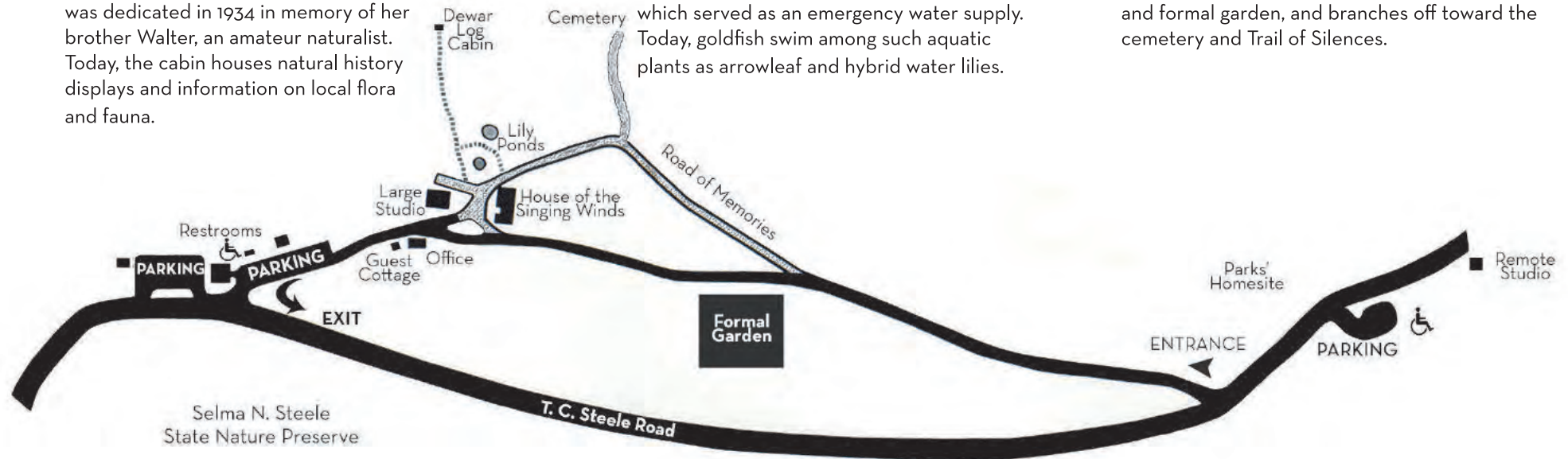
The lily ponds served a practical and decorative purpose. Water was directed from the large studio roof into the ponds, which served as an emergency water supply. Today, goldfish swim among such aquatic plants as arrowleaf and hybrid water lilies.

PARKS' HOMESITE

West of the stone arches, foundations of the home of the Washington Parks family are still visible. The Steeles bought the buildings and surrounding land in 1911, when these close neighbors moved away.

ROAD OF MEMORIES

Until 1910, the Road of Memories served as the main driveway. This short lane along the forest edge connects the "House of the Singing Winds" and formal garden, and branches off toward the cemetery and Trail of Silences.



FORMAL GARDEN

The formal garden was once filled with specimen trees, hedges and perennial borders. The garden combines formal and rustic elements, and contains herbs and vegetables as well as flowers. The layout is roughly symmetrical, with rose arbors sheltering the north end of the main axis. Stately white spruces at the south end were planted just before Mrs. Steele's death in 1945, so she could only have speculated on the dramatic backdrop they would provide. The original sundial marks the crossing of a secondary east-west axis.

REMOTE STUDIO

In 1911, Mr. Steele had two temporary structures built to provide shelter when he painted outside during bad weather. With the help of the Rotary Club of Brown County, one of these studios was reconstructed, based on historic photographs.

