THE ARBORETUM...

...radiates out from the Estate House in waves of color and texture. The 55-acre arboretum is filled with rare and unusual plants and trees. Take a walk along any of Welkinweir’s two miles of trails to experience more of this enchanted place.

- Just a short walk from the Estate House, rustic stone steps lead visitors along the Early Spring Walk featuring a colorful display of spring bulbs and early-blooming trees and shrubs such as witch- and winter-hazels, and early rhododendrons.

- At the crest of the hill, visitors enter the quiet solitude of the Pinetum, a collection of dwarf evergreen conifers given as a gift to the Rodebaughs in 1972 from noted horticulturist Phillip A. Livingston. Enveloping two small elliptical lawns, the Pinetum provides year-round interest with a variety of textures and shapes. The collection is focused on unique species and cultivars, including those with variegated, golden, or blue foliage.

- Azalea Lane draws visitors away from the house toward the perennial gardens planted at the ruins of the old bank barn. In spring, hundreds of azaleas, rhododendrons, and mountain laurels bloom in the shade of an understory layer of dogwoods, redbuds, and magnolias. The azalea collection represents a period of intense cultivation of the estate by the Rodebaughs in the 1940s and 50s, and illustrates beautifully the continuum from formal gardens to naturalistic landscapes. Many of the plants are one-of-a-kind, donated by award winning plant breeder, Lloyd Partain, when he retired to this area in 1972.

- The gardens within the nearby Barn Ruins were built around the old barn's stone foundation, which was exposed by a fire in 1935. Grace Rodebaugh used the stable walls as design inspiration for her garden beds. A member of the Rock Garden Society, she incorporated many of these hardy plants in and among the stonework.

- Paths continue to draw visitors to a series of ponds on the valley floor where summer-blooming white water lilies are reflected. Surrounded by native wildflower meadows, the area is alive with birds and butterflies.

- Crossing the bridge that spans a stepped waterfall, visitors can select among several woodland trails. Dappled sunlight filters through a towering canopy of native tuliptrees, maples, beeches, and oaks—all part of the wider Hopewell Big Woods, the last large, unbroken forest left in southeastern Pennsylvania.

- Consider exploring beyond Welkinweir! By hooking up with the Horse-Shoe Trail, visitors can hike to French Creek State Park (12.5 miles from Welkinweir).