The **Caroline Dean Wildflower Trail** had its beginnings with the carving of a walking trail though a wooded section of Opelika Municipal Park in 2007. The Opelika Kiwanis Club and Opelika Parks and Recreation wished to honor Mrs. Dean for her many achievements, including a national award for Wetlands Conservation, and opened the trail at the dedication of the historic Salem Shotwell Bridge which provides access to the trail.

The entry of the **CDWT** was planted with Carolina jasmine, Christmas ferns, and native azaleas. In 2010 Mrs. Dean, an Honorary Master Gardener, asked Master Gardeners to improve the **Trail** with plants from her personal garden for the benefit the community. Before native azaleas could be transplanted from Mrs. Dean’s garden, the site required removal of invasive plants, poison ivy, and tangled undergrowth.

The **Trail**, now supported by Lee County Master Gardeners, started with our transplanting of twenty-two native azaleas from Mrs. Dean’s garden to the newly restored area. Dedicated to native plants in a natural wooded setting, the garden offers a relaxing walk and an opportunity to learn more of native plants that support the birds, bees, butterflies that we enjoy and need to support in our own gardens.

Personal donations of plants from Master Gardeners, the Alabama Wildflower Society members, the Auburn Arboretum, Gardens’ Delights, the Huntsville Botanical Gardens, and others resulted in over 100 species of native plants within the lower section of the **Trail** that comprises the present garden. Spring offers the most variety of blooms, but every season offers its surprises and delights.