



## Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

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### **Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission Recognizes Dr. Dave Maehr as Award Recipient** *Agency's Highest Award Given Posthumously*

**FRANKFORT, Ky.** (March 1, 2010) -- Dr. Dave Maehr, a former professor of conservation biology at the University of Kentucky Department of Forestry, was the recipient of the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission's (KSNPC) 2009 Biological Diversity Protection Award.

Tragically, Dr. Maehr passed away in a single-engine plane accident in Lake Placid, Fla. in 2008 while monitoring radio-collared black bears.

Dr. Maehr worked professionally in conservation for nearly 30 years. After receiving his B.S. in wildlife from Ohio State University in 1977 and his M.S. from the University of Florida in 1980, he went to work for the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission.

While there, Dr. Maehr conducted research on the black bear, river otter and bobcat before beginning his groundbreaking field studies on the endangered Florida panther at a time when there were believed to be only 30 panthers living in the wild. He returned to the University of Florida and completed his PhD in 1996.

In 1997 he came to Kentucky where his research focused on biodiversity and conservation-related issues. His work was diverse and included studies of Kentucky's elk introduction, bison ecology in Yellowstone National Park, neotropical migrant songbirds in eastern Kentucky, university-owned natural areas throughout the nation, and black bear ecology in southeastern Kentucky, Florida and Mexico.

In addition to his research, Dr. Maehr influenced many students, citizens and fellow scientists, both in Kentucky and throughout the nation, with his enthusiasm for

biodiversity issues. While at UK he mentored dozens of interns, undergraduates and graduate students; taught conservation biology and other courses to hundreds of students; served on numerous committees; and authored more than 100 scientific articles on a wide-range of wildlife subjects and conservation topics.

His devotion and service to his profession was reflected in his peer-review of hundreds of books and journal articles, and involvement on numerous panels and committees, ranging from species recovery to certification of his fellow wildlife professionals. Never one to shy away from new ideas, he was also a Fellow of the Rewilding Institute, a group of conservationists dedicated to returning large carnivores to North American landscapes.

Dr. Maehr was the award winning author of *Florida's Birds*, *The Florida Panther: Life and Death of a Vanishing Carnivore*, and *Large Mammal Restoration: Ecological and Sociological Challenges in the 21st Century*, as well as a talented artist whose illustrations and drawings have appeared in more than a dozen books and articles. Even before beginning his professional wildlife career, he was the resident artist at the Cincinnati Zoo from 1974-77.

This is the first time KSNPC has given the Biological Diversity Protection Award posthumously. Dr. Maehr's wife, Diane, and father, Robert, were on hand to accept the award.

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