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**EKU BIOLOGIST, AUTHOR RONALD L. JONES RECEIVES BIOLOGICAL
DIVERSITY PROTECTION AWARD**

Presented annually by Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Dec. 12, 2005) – Dr. Ronald L. Jones, whose *Plant Life of Kentucky* is considered the definitive work on Kentucky flora, has been presented the 2005 Biological Diversity Protection Award from the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission (KSNPC).

The award annually recognizes a person who has made a significant contribution to the discovery and protection of Kentucky's biological diversity. Jones has taught biology at Eastern Kentucky University since 1981 and is curator of the university's herbarium. He serves the commission as a technical adviser and was instrumental in founding the Kentucky Native Plant Society in 1986.

Jones' remarkable work on the flora of Kentucky – full title *Plant Life in Kentucky, An Illustrated Guide to the Vascular Flora* – was 10 years in the writing before its publication in February. It was the first comprehensive guide to all ferns, flowering herbs and woody plants of the state.

It provides identification keys for 2,600 native and naturalized vascular plants with intriguing notes on botanical history, human and wildlife uses of plants, poisonous plants and medicinal herbs. *Plant Life of Kentucky* is a research tool for biologist and a resource for students, amateur naturalists and anyone interested in understanding and preserving Kentucky's rich botanical heritage.

LaJuana S. Wilcher, secretary of the Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet, presented the award at the commission's year-end meeting, which was held Dec. 7.

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KSNPC's mission is to protect Kentucky's natural heritage by: (1) identifying, acquiring and managing natural areas that represent the best-known occurrences of rare, native species, natural communities and significant natural features in a statewide nature preserve system; (2) working with others to protect biological diversity; and (3) educating Kentuckians as to the value and purpose of nature preserves and biodiversity conservation. The commission inventories Kentucky for significant natural areas and protects the best examples in a state nature preserve system.

More information about the commission can be obtained by mail (KSNPC, 801 Schenkel Lane, Frankfort, Ky. 40601-1403), by telephone (502-573-2886) or via Internet (www.naturepreserves.ky.gov).

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