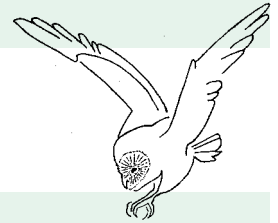


# NATURALLY KENTUCKY



Number 18, April, May, June 1996

## KSNPC Celebrates 20th Anniversary

by Tim Clarke

*"It is the public policy of the Commonwealth of Kentucky to secure for the people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of natural areas by establishing a system of nature preserves, protecting these areas and gathering and disseminating information regarding them, establishing and maintaining a registry of natural areas and otherwise encouraging and assisting in the preservation of natural areas and features" KRS section 146.410(2).*

The Kentucky Nature Preserves Commission (KNPC) was created in 1976 when Senate Bill 155, drafted by Senator Jon Rickert, was approved and compiled as KRS 146.410, the Kentucky Nature Preserves Act. Governor Julian M. Carroll appointed the first five Commissioners on September 17, 1976, officially forming the Kentucky Nature Preserves Commission.

The Commission hired its first director, Mr. Donald F. Harker, on August 1, 1977. Mr. Harker served until February 1982. Initially, the Commission was comprised of three permanent employees: an executive secretary, a zoologist, and a botanist. The number of employees quickly grew to over twenty, as many temporary positions were added to begin the daunting task of inventorying the state's flora and fauna. Mr. Harker and the Commission indicated four priorities of consideration for Kentucky's nature preserves: (1) conservation, (2) interpretative education, (3) scientific research and (4) passive recreation. Mr. Harker set the direction for the Commission by adopting the Natural Heritage Program methodology developed by The Nature Conservancy. The Kentucky Nature Preserves Commission was the twelfth such program in the United States. Today, there are Natural Heritage Programs throughout the United States, Canada and Latin America, placing the Commission within a network of similar agencies across the North and South American continents.

Blackacre State Nature Preserve, a 170-acre gift of land in Jefferson County from Judge and Mrs. Macauley Smith was dedicated on March 19, 1979, becoming the first state nature preserve in Kentucky. Today, Blackacre maintains a successful environmental education program.

## New Preserves Dedicated

At the March 15, 1996 Commission meeting, KSNPC voted to dedicate a 20-acre tract of Woodburn Glade in Warren County. Woodburn Glade is home to numerous rare plants including Butler's quillwort, Carolina larkspur, Gattinger's lobelia, Glade cress and Perideridia. The presence of several limestone glades and Kentucky's only known population of Gattinger's lobelia make this an ideal area to add to the KSNPC system. Woodburn Glade was purchased last year from The Nature Conservancy.

Also dedicated was Floracliff State Nature Preserve in Fayette County. The 78-acre sanctuary on the Kentucky River upstream from Raven Run Nature Sanctuary has been previously known as the Mary E. Wharton Nature Sanctuary. This sanctuary was acquired in several tracts from the 1950s to the 1980s by the late Mary Wharton, chair of the Biological Sciences Department at Georgetown College. Dr. Wharton was an author of "The Wildflowers and Ferns of Kentucky" and "Trees and Shrubs of Kentucky". Many of the photos for these books were taken at Floracliff. Property ownership is retained by the

Three additional preserves were dedicated in 1979: Six Mile Island, an 81 acre Ohio River island preserve in Jefferson County; Jesse Stuart State Nature Preserve, 733 acres in Greenup County; and John James Audubon State Park Nature Preserve, 325 acres in Henderson County. Audubon State Park Nature Preserve was the first state-owned property to be included in the preserve system.

The 1980 General Assembly passed legislation creating a state income tax refund “checkoff” program whose proceeds were to be shared between the Nongame Program of the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources and KNPC. Also in 1980, KNPC published Ferns and Fern Allies of Kentucky by Ray Cranfill -- the first in KNPC’s series of scientific and technical publications.

The early 1980’s was an active time for the Commission. KNPC had four full-time staff and sixteen federally funded employees by January of 1981. By then, over 350 natural areas had been identified by the Commission.

Three preserves were dedicated into the Commonwealth’s nature preserve system in 1981. Bat Cave and Cascade Caverns State Park Nature Preserve in Carter County, Blue Lick State Park Nature Preserve in Robertson County and Natural Bridge State Nature Preserve in Powell

County.

Richard R. Hannan became the second director of the Commission in February of 1982. Employed with the Commission since 1978 as a staff botanist, Mr. Hannan assumed the duties of the director when Mr. Harker left to farm. By 1982, the Natural Heritage Program database was recognized as a valued resource to other agencies and organizations within Kentucky and around the country. 1982 also saw the dedication of Beargrass Creek State Nature Preserve in Jefferson County.

In October 1983, KNPC hosted the Tenth Annual Midwest Natural Areas Workshop, drawing natural areas professionals from all over the United States and Canada. Two more preserves, Cumberland Falls State Park Nature Preserve in Whitley and McCreary counties and Pine Mountain State Park Nature Preserve in Bell County were dedicated as well.

In cooperation with The Nature Conservancy, 1984 saw the beginning of the Natural Areas Registry Program and 31 areas were registered that year. Metropolis Lake in McCracken County was also dedicated as a State Nature Preserve.

The Natural Heritage Program database contained over 6,300 records by January of 1985. The Commission then moni-

tored 263 animals, and over 300 vascular plant species. Bad Branch in Letcher County, Brigadoon in Barren County and Pilot Knob in Powell County were KNPC’s additions to the state nature preserve system.

KNPC signed a limited Cooperative Agreement on Plants with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on January 8, 1986. In November of 1986, the first full-time position for managing preserves was filled by Joyce Bender. Cypress Creek State Nature Preserve in Muhlenberg County was dedicated in 1986.

By January of 1987, 16 nature preserves encompassing 5,708 acres had been dedicated in 12 counties. A total of 28 landowners with interests in 23 areas had entered the Natural Areas Registry Program. This registered natural areas land totaled 5,638 acres in 20 counties. Also, the Commission’s first partnership with a County government resulted in the dedication of Jim Scudder State Nature Preserve in Hardin County. Also dedicated was Boone County Cliffs State Nature Preserve.

A county level natural areas inventory, initiated in 1988 using methodology consistent with similar surveys in other states, continues to this day. On June 1, 1988, the name of the Commission was changed from Kentucky Nature Preserves Commission (KNPC) to the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission

(KSNPC) by legislative action.

KSNPC had published five volumes in its scientific and technical series by January of 1989. These included a report on the fishes of the Dix and lower Green rivers, Kentucky's fish fauna, and the aquatic and wetland plants of the Commonwealth. The latter book by John Thieret of Northern Kentucky University has been reprinted and is used as a university textbook. 1990 saw the first funding from the legislature strictly for land acquisition purposes.

1990 saw four more dedications: Dinsmore Woods in Boone County, Flat Rock Glade in Simpson County, Raymond Athey Barrens and Logan County Glade both in Logan County. The following year Axe Lake in Ballard County and Chaney Lake in Warren County were dedicated.

In September 1992, Richard Hannan resigned to take a position with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Atlanta, Georgia. Marc Evans served as Acting Director until January of 1993 when Robert McCance, Jr., became KSNPC's third director. 1992 was also the busiest year ever for State Nature Preserve dedications. Goodrum Cave in Allen County, Kingdom Come State Park Nature Preserve in Letcher County, Quiet Trails in Harrison County, Terrapin Creek in Graves County, Thompson Creek Glades in Larue County,

and Vernon-Douglas in Hardin County were added to the nature preserve system.

In April 1994, KSNPC moved from 407 Broadway to 801 Schenkel Lane, significantly improving its facilities. The 1994 General Assembly passed the Rare Plant Recognition Act, authorizing KSNPC to create an official state list of endangered and threatened plants. The 1994 General Assembly also appropriated monies for the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund, a funding program for public and private land acquisition and initial management. By 1994, KSNPC staff totaled 11 permanent and 12 seasonal positions.

KSNPC saw in 1995 the implementation of a local area computer network and increased technological capabilities. Computer networking allowed greater manipulation and interpretation of data within the Biological Conservation Database, which then held over 9,000 records of endangered, threatened or special concern plants, animals and natural communities. Internet access and electronic mail capabilities were also established. KSNPC dedicated Blanton Forest in Hardin County; its 32nd nature preserve.

1996 stands to be one of the busiest and best years yet. Floracliff State Nature Preserve in Fayette County and Woodburn Glade State Natural Area in

Warren County were dedicated early this year. The Commission will also publish an updated Endangered and Threatened Species list, which now contains over 600 species and 54 natural communities. The Kentucky Breeding Bird Atlas, compiled and written by Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr., is forthcoming and should be available by the summer. KSNPC's World Wide Web homepage was recently completed. It can be seen at URL: <http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/nrepc/ksnpc/index.htm>.

Two permanent regional preserve manager positions are now filled by Dave Skinner and Rick Remington, the first additional permanent stewardship staff since 1986. Their arrival greatly enhances the Commission's stewardship efforts. A seasonal stewardship ecologist will be hired this year to do community classifications of state nature preserves.

Tasks ahead include development of a classification system that will provide a framework by which natural communities in Kentucky can be inventoried, itemized and assessed for preservation purposes, continued natural areas inventories of Harlan, Bell and Letcher counties, and the preparation of Commission comments for the U.S. Forest Service regarding

## Stewardship Program New Staff Profiles

*by Joyce Bender*

The Stewardship Program has gotten off to a great start in 1996. On January second, Dave Skinner and Rick Remington joined my staff as the two permanent Regional Nature Preserve Managers. They joined Brad Nyholm, who has been working as an eleven-month seasonal planning assistant since December 18. Brad is busy writing preserve management plans and has taken on the responsibility of managing our volunteer program. He will also be assisting me in writing resource management plans for Heritage Land Conservation Fund projects.

I've divided up the state and the nature preserves into two regions. Presently, the eastern region is comprised of seventeen preserves and the western region has sixteen. I have certainly been enjoying the time spent in the field introducing Rick and Dave to their respective preserves. After Rick and Dave get up to speed, we will increase the frequency of preserve inspections, rare species monitoring, and general maintenance for all our preserves. Additionally, we will be able to accommodate requests for guided hikes by setting up a schedule of events on selected preserves.

All three men bring a wealth of experience to the Stewardship Program. Dave, the Eastern

Regional Manager, worked for the Ohio State Parks Department and regional park districts for the past fifteen years. He attended Miami University's unique Interdisciplinary Studies Program where he earned a Bachelor's Degree with an emphasis in Applied Ecology. Most of his career has been as a park naturalist. As a naturalist, Dave's exposure to natural areas management and restoration work appealed to him so much that he decided to redirect his career into natural areas management. Dave finds his new position very rewarding and meaningful.

Dave is married to Susan, a high school biology teacher. They both enjoy wilderness camping, gardening, canoeing, birding and research on neotropical migrant birds. Dave is a bird bander and besides working on his own projects, he assists with two bird migration observatories.

Rick is the Western Regional Preserves Manager. Rick is a native of Wisconsin and a graduate of the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. He received a B.S. in Natural Resources with a minor in Environmental Communication. Rick has spent the last eight years working with a wide variety of natural resources agencies. Most recently he has been involved in preserve stewardship with The Nature Conservancy throughout the Midwest and Maine. Of particular interest

to Rick is the prescribed burning and restoration of the barrens/glade areas in the western part of the Kentucky.

Rick is eager to begin his new life in Kentucky as is his fiancée Heather, who will join him here following their April 20 wedding. In his free time, Rick enjoys bicycling, backpacking, and acoustic guitar. He will spend this first year in Frankfort before being relocated to the Bowling Green area where he will be closer to the western preserves. Rick is looking forward to the challenges of his new job and the diversity of duties that come with it.

Brad and Heather, his wife of two and a half years, and Sara, their four-month-old daughter, moved from Virginia to make their new home in central Kentucky. Brad studied Geography and Geology at Radford University in Radford, Virginia, where he earned a B.S. in Geography: North America Regional Studies. Before graduating, he entered the natural resources field by volunteering as a GIS/Forestry Technician with the U.S. Forest Service. He was hired onto a seasonal appointment after graduation, and later secured a contract to research the air quality of the Daniel Boone National Forest. Working to preserve natural areas means a great deal to him and he is thrilled to be contributing to KSNPC's mission.

**KSNPC Celebrates 20th Anniversary**  
**Continued from page 3**

the ten year management plan for the Daniel Boone National Forest.

Commission botanists will present recovery plans and inventories for Eggert's Sunflower (*Helianthus egertii*) and Braun's Rockcress (*Arabis perstallata*), and will undertake an effort to update historical occurrences of rare plants.

Aquatic biologists will complete a project with Mammoth Cave National Park to establish a monitoring program of freshwater mussels in the Green River. They will also inventory freshwater mussels of the Red River within Daniel Boone National Forest, and will continue an aquatic inventory of the Eastern Kentucky coalfield.

Terrestrial biologists will conduct inventories for rare species on several nature preserves and within the coal bearing regions of the state.

The last twenty years of the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission have been active ones. Much has been accomplished, but there is much yet to do. We at the Commission look forward to the next twenty years of preserving the best examples of Kentucky's Natural Heritage.

**Goodbye...Hello!**

After working with the Commission for five years, Landon McKinney, Nature Preserves Field Representative aka Land Protection Specialist, left KSNPC February 15, 1996. Landon has returned to his native state of Tennessee and we wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

A new face around the office is that of Michelle Clendenin. Michelle came on board the first of the year to conduct county-level natural area inventory. Michelle graduated with a Masters of Forestry degree from Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogoches, Texas. We're excited to have her on board!

Everyone else is gearing up again for summer field work with the addition of seasonal personnel.



**KSNPC Quarterly  
Commission Meeting**

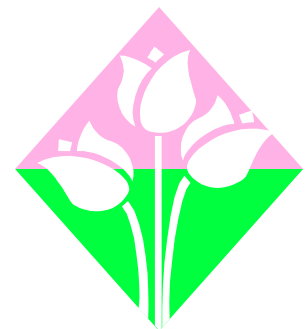
**WHEN: June 14, 1996**  
**WHERE: Jefferson County  
Memorial Forest, Welcome  
Center Conference Room**  
**TIME: 10:00 a.m.**

**KSNPC Commission**

The past 20 years have seen many changes and KSNPC Commission members have been no exception. Since 1976, eighteen people have held this distinguished position, many serving more than one term. As provided by KRS 146.425, the KSNPC Commission consist of five members qualified and appointed by the Governor for a term of three years.

The latest changes for the Commission is the departure of Hugh Archer. Mr. Archer served on the Commission since 1989 and among other great things, was instrumental in the acquisition of Blanton Forest State Nature Preserve. He now calls The Kentucky River Authority his home since his appointment as director in December of last year. He continues to remain as active as possible with the Commission's mission and goals.

Mrs. Lucy A. Breathitt was appointed as Hugh's replacement and will serve the remainder of Mr. Archer's term through June 30. Mrs. Breathitt's enthusiasm is contagious and we're excited at having her serve with us.

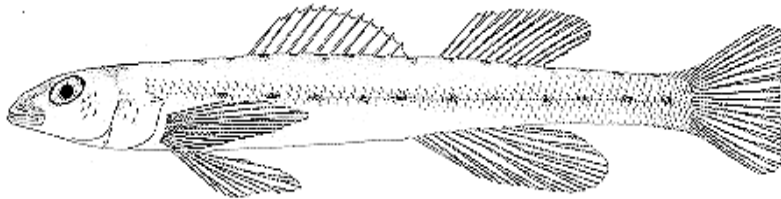


# Rediscovery of the western sand darter (*Ammocrypta clara*)

by  
Ronald R. Ciccerello  
and  
E.L. Laudermilk

Whenever Commission biologists venture into the field, we have written and mental shopping lists of rare or unusual plants and animals that we would like to find. While working on the Green River in Mammoth Cave

Or so we thought! Only later did we discover that we had in fact found the western sand darter (*Ammocrypta clara*), which superficially looks like an eastern sand darter but is much more rare in Kentucky. Western sand darters inhabit sandy rivers in the Mississippi River drainage to the west and north, but they are rare in Kentucky and in states to the south. Until this rediscovery, the Commission believed that the western sand darter was extirpated from Kentucky, where the last of three total sightings was made in the Big Sandy River drainage in 1938! Our good fortune was compounded upon recognizing that what we assumed was an



National Park last summer, the sight of an extensive sandy shoal below Cave Island reminded us that the eastern sand darter (*Ammocrypta pellucida*) had not been seen in the Park since 1929. Long, slender, stream fishes that live on and in clean sand deposits, the eastern sand darter is considered of special concern by the Commission and is a candidate for listing as endangered or threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. By laboriously dragging a seine over the extensive shoal numerous times, we and Amy Covert, our summer assistant, were rewarded with two beautiful eastern sand darters!

eastern sand darter that we and summer assistant Matt Patterson had found in the North Fork Kentucky River near Jackson in June also was a western sand darter! Because of these fortunate discoveries, the western sand darter will be added to our rare species list as endangered, and other aquatic biologists possibly will soon report additional occurrences.

But with the approach of spring and another field season, it's time to check the shopping list and to think about what other species hard work or serendipity might yield!

## New Preserves Dedicated Continued from page 1

Board that operates Floracliff and will be managed to protect a geologic feature known as tufa, for environmental education, for natural community management and for scientific research.

Two additional tracts to Terrapin Creek State Nature Preserve located in southern Graves County were also dedicated. One tract consists of 31 acres, and the other contains 48 acres. The largest portion of these dedicated additions was purchased with money from Harper Industries, Inc., of Paducah, based on a wetland mitigation plan. Terrapin Creek and its associated wetlands and tributaries support the most unique fish fauna in Kentucky. In addition to a number of rare darters, madtoms, and sunfishes, several fishes occur nowhere else in Kentucky and reach their northern range limit in Terrapin Creek. Other rare species include the three-lined salamander and western ribbon snake.

Woodburn Glade and both Terrapin Creek additions cannot be opened for public visitation until additional acreage is acquired so that adequate trails and parking facilities can be developed. Floracliff is also not open for public visitation and use will be restricted according to Dr. Wharton's will.

*You are cordially invited to join the  
staff of the  
Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission  
for an open house in celebration of 20 years  
of protecting Kentucky's best natural areas.*

*Friday, July 12  
2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
801 Schenkel Lane  
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601*

As stated earlier in this issue, KSNPC is celebrating 20 years of protecting Kentucky's best natural areas. July 15 officially marks the Commission's birthday; however, Saturday, June 1 will kick-off the celebration with a tour of Eagle Falls and Cumberland Falls State Park Nature Preserve. Many tours are being planned throughout the rest of the year to take advantage of the area's best features. Other tours are as follows.

**Eagle Falls & Cumberland Falls SPNP**

Whitley and McCreary counties - June 1  
11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (eastern)

Observe wildflower display, sensitive plants associated with river bank and cliffline habitats with KSNPC Environmental Biologist Martina Hines.

Limit 20, moderate/difficult hike.

**Bad Branch SNP**

Letcher County - June 15

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (eastern)

Join KSNPC's Data Systems Manager, Tim Clarke in viewing hemlock and rhododendron line banks of Poor Fork of Cumberland River. Limit 20: strenuous hike, not suitable for children under 12.

**Flat Rock Glade SNP**

Simpson County - June 15

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (central)

Visit the only flat rock glade in Kentucky and see prairie/glade flora and several rare plants with KSNPC Botanist Deborah White. Limit 20; easy hike.

**Pilot Knob SNP**

Powell County - June 22

9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. (eastern)

Join KSNPC Director Bob McCance in hiking up the sandstone outcrop and observe Kentucky from the prominence from which Daniel Boone may have first viewed the Bluegrass region. Limit 20; difficult.

**Quiet Trails SNP**

Harrison County - June 22

9:00 a.m. - 12 noon (eastern)

Join KSNPC Stewardship Coordinator, Joyce Bender and view the Licking River and native wildflowers.

Limit 20; moderate hike.

**Metropolis Lake SNP**

McCracken County - June 22

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (central)

Observe dragonfly territorial display, egg disposition, and other amazing dragonfly behavior with KSNPC Environmental Biologist, Ellis Lauder milk. Limit 20; easy hike.

**Blanton Forest SNP**

Harlan County - July 27

10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (eastern)

Join KSNPC Botanist Marc Evans and see Kentucky's premiere old growth forest. Limit 20; strenuous hike.

**Raymond Athey Barrens SNP**

Logan County - September 7

10:00 a.m. - 12 noon (central)

See barrens restoration and early fall wildflowers with KSNPC Western Regional Nature Preserves Manager, Rick Remington. Limit 15; moderate hike.

**More tour information on page 8**

Vernon Douglas SNP  
 Hardin County - September 28 (night hike)  
 8:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. (central)  
 Go on an owl prowl with Eastern Regional Nature Preserves Manager, David Skinner. Hikers may see glow worms and other types of wildlife. No flashlights please. Limit 20; moderate/difficult hike.  
 Not appropriate for small children.

Vernon Douglas SNP  
 Hardin County - October 12  
 8:00 a.m. - 12 noon (eastern)  
 Join KSNPC's Terrestrial Biologist, Brainard Palmer-Ball in search of fall songbird migrants. Limit 20; difficult hike rating.

Tours are limited and reservations will be taken on a first come, first-served basis. Contact Teresa Prather at 502/573-2886 for reservations.

**Field Trip Ratings**

- easy..... Hiking short distances on trails with little or no slope.
- moderate. . . . . Generally easy with a comfortable pace. Must be able to negotiate occasional steep slope or rough trail.
- difficult . . . . . More endurance required to negotiate longer distances and longer stretches of steep slopes and rough trail.
- strenuous . . . . . Long hike, brisk pace, sometimes off trail, steep slopes and/or steps involved.

*An Equal Opportunity  
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The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Cabinet does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or disability and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodations including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in all services, programs, and activities.

*It is the mission of the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission 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 preserves 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.*

Commonwealth of Kentucky  
**Kentucky State  
 Nature Preserves  
 Commission**

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