



Martin's Fork Watershed ~ Marc Evans, KSNPC

By Greg Abernathy, GIS Specialist

Biodiversity is set to take center stage globally this year with the United Nations declaration of 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity has taken the lead in promoting this event with the intent of raising awareness of the importance of and threats to biodiversity worldwide. Learn more by visiting [www.cbd.int/2010](http://www.cbd.int/2010).



2010 International Year of Biodiversity

Kentucky's contribution to global biodiversity is often overlooked. From the summit of Black Mountain to the cypress swamps of western Kentucky there is a diversity of life which may surprise you. Black-throated green warblers, firebelly darters, lizard skin liverworts and small yellow lady's-slippers along with over 19,000 other species are a part of our natural heritage. These unique and interesting species form natural communities across the state and collectively represent the environmental support system upon which we depend. The state boasts a diverse aquatic fauna of global and national significance; ranks in the top five nationally for fishes, mussels and crayfishes, as well as total

*Biodiversity is the variety of all living things and their roles and connections within ecosystems. Simply put, it is the web of life.*



Red salamander ~ John R. MacGregor

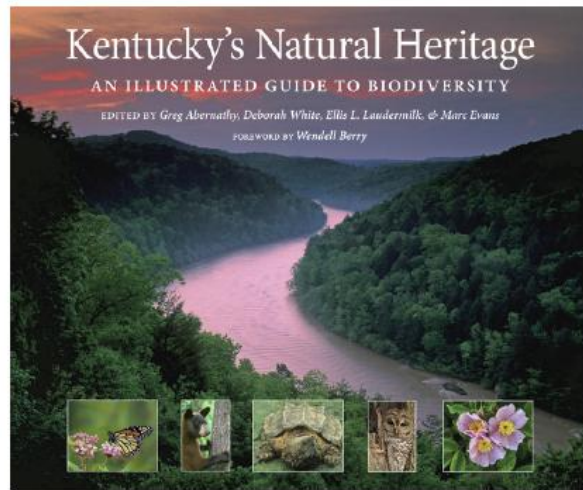


Eastern hemlock ~ Ellis Laudemilk, KSNPC



number of obligate cave-dwelling species; is home to 102 taxa (species, subspecies, and varieties) believed to be endemic (found nowhere else in the world); and lies within the southeastern United States which has some of the greatest salamander diversity in the world.

KSNPC's mission has always been focused on biodiversity protection. Over the last few years we have been working on a publication that highlights the state's biodiversity. This June *Kentucky's Natural Heritage: An Illustrated Guide to Biodiversity* will be published by the University Press of Kentucky (UPK). The book is an exploration of wild Kentucky which highlights the species and the natural communities found throughout the Commonwealth. This synthesis of the current state of biodiversity knowledge is accompanied by more than 250 photographs, maps and illustrations that offer a means to visually explore wild Kentucky. We thank everyone who directly contributed content for this publication, as well as those who have contributed valuable insight into the natural world of Kentucky over the years. View the spring 2010 UPK catalog by visiting [www.kentuckypress.com/newsite/pages/catalog.html](http://www.kentuckypress.com/newsite/pages/catalog.html). Preorders can also be placed via the UPK Web site.



Watch KET this spring during their Earth Day programming for a biodiversity highlight that features KSNPC.

### Selections from Kentucky's Natural Heritage

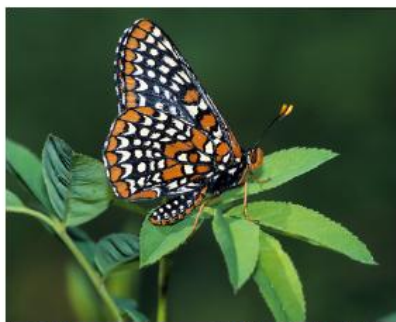


Red-headed woodpecker ~ Lana Hays



Three Levels of Biodiversity

schematic by Greg Abernathy, KSNPC



Baltimore checkerspot ~ Ellis Laudermilk, KSNPC



Upland burrowing crayfish ~ Guenter A. Schuster



Earth star ~ John R. MacGregor



