



Photo courtesy: Lexington Herald-Leader

# Saying Farewell to Dr. Thomas Barnes

*We would like to honor Dr. Thomas G. Barnes in this edition as he contributed many photos and articles for the Kentucky Woodlands Magazine. Not only was he our colleague, he was also our friend. We will miss you Tom!*

Photo courtesy: Darryl Cremeans



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Naturalist Thomas G. Barnes, 56, a University of Kentucky professor with an uncommon devotion to documenting and championing the preservation of the state's flora and fauna, died in October 2014 at his home in Barbourville. Dr. Barnes, the state extension wildlife specialist and a full professor in the UK Department of Forestry, was the author of a number of books on the state's natural gems, a self-taught photographer and a conservationist who sounded the alarm that, without protection, Kentucky could lose some of its rarest wildlife treasures.

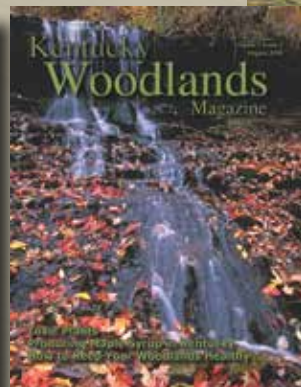
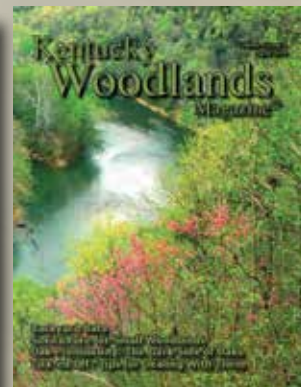
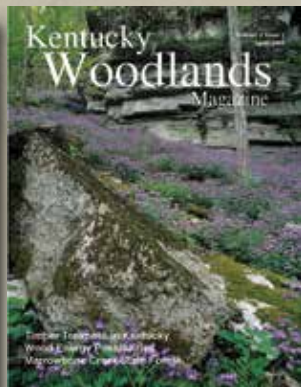
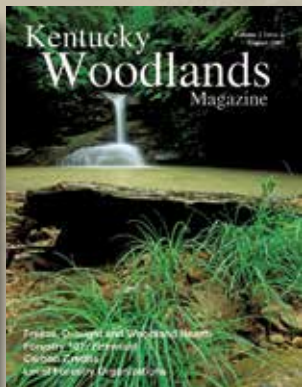
"I don't think people realize what we have here, how precious it is and how it's not a given it will stay that way," Dr. Barnes said in a 2002 Herald-Leader article about Kentucky's Last Great Places, a coffee table book for which he drove 20,000 miles, crisscrossing the state to photograph hidden destinations. Other works included *Gardening for the Birds*, *How to Find and Photograph Kentucky Wildflowers*, and *Wildflowers and Ferns of Kentucky*, a field guide he co-authored with S. Wilson Francis. His latest book was published this past summer: *Kentucky, Naturally: The Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund at Work*, and he had been working on a book about waterfalls that has not yet been released.

Of all the sights he had seen, Dr. Barnes said in 2011 that the trilliums covering Black Mountain in May were among his favorites. "When I am up there, I find it hard not to believe in a God who would make such a wonderful

place for us to enjoy, because you know, we all think we should please God, but we never seem to consider that God is also trying to please us," he said. "It really is a beautiful gift, and we should not destroy it for some short-term gain." Dr. Barnes described himself as an optimist, but he lamented the destructive nature of practices such as surface mining and development.

In 2009, he contributed an essay and photographs to *The Gift of Creation: Images from Scripture and Earth*, a collection to which his brother, Loyola University biologist Paul W. Barnes, also contributed. The book sought to highlight the connection between faith and concern for the environment. Dr. Barnes, who grew up in Conde, S.D., earned a bachelor's degree from Huron College in South Dakota, a master's from South Dakota State University and a doctorate from Texas A&M. He came to the University of Kentucky fresh from graduate school. As an extension professor, he conducted research on using herbicides to restore native grasslands, developed wildlife programs for the extension service and gave frequent educational talks. He published scores of research papers, extension publications and magazine articles.

He is survived by his wife, Jamie; his son, Jeremiah; his daughter, Michaela; and stepchildren Ayman, Zak, and Jehan Abuzour.



**Beginning with the first Kentucky Woodlands Magazine cover photo, Dr. Barnes has contributed countless photographs and covers for the magazine.**