



# Kentucky's Last Great Places

*Thomas Barnes*

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## **Kentucky's Last Great Places** Thomas Barnes

" With over 100 glorious full-color photographs and insightful text, Kentucky's Last Great Places highlights the incredible natural beauty found in the Commonwealth's old-growth forests, prairies, wetlands, and other distinctive biological habitats. Many types?more than 3,000 vascular plants, 230 fish, 105 amphibians and reptiles, 350 birds, 75 mammals, and 12,000 insects?make Kentucky their home. Many of these species and their habitats are considered rare, threatened, or endangered. Overall, less than one percent of Kentucky is classified ecologically as being in a "pre-European" condition that deserves significant protection. Award-winning photographer and author Thomas G. Barnes combines his striking photographs with essays describing the splendor found in more than forty of Kentucky's diverse natural preserves or ecological areas, including the old-growth Blanton Forest near Pine Mountain in Harlan County, Axe Lake Swamp in Ballard County near the Mississippi River, Red River Gorge, the Kentucky River Palisades, Mammoth Cave, and many others. This spectacular oversized book explores the biodiversity of Kentucky, the challenges to protecting its biological heritage, and the ways that organizations such as The Nature Conservancy, Kentucky Nature Preserves Commission, the National Park Service, and others are continuing to protect the state's unique biological legacy. Thomas G. Barnes, an associate extension professor of forestry at the University of Kentucky, is the author of Gardening for the Birds.

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