ARKANSAS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY NEWS RELEASE

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Native Plant Society Organized 1980

The Arkansas Native Plant Society came officially into being September 20 in Mena. A statewide organization, the Society is headed by Dr. Don Culwell, a biologist at UCA in Conway. Approximately 90 charter members are from all sections of Arkansas with a few from neignboring states.

Dedicated to the study, conservation, and preservation of native plants in the state, the group is comprised mainly of amateur botanists. Culwell, one of the professional botanists, stated, "We are delighted to have amateurs play such a large role in watching after the native flora."

Members plan to work individually and in small groups to monitor particular rare species. They hope to aid state agencies which are charged with identifying and preserving endangered plants. "A number of local groups, such as the Mena Nature Club, have already done excellent work with rare species," Culwell said." We expect to coordinate the work for the entire state."

Other officers elected at the Mena meeting include: Randy Johnson, Naturalist at Pinnacle Mountain State Park, Vice President; Debbie Qualls, student at Arkansas Tech, Russellville, Secretary; Don Peach, Mena resident and past president of National Rock Garden Society, Treasurer; Robert Wright, Biology Department, UCA, Newsletter Editor; and Freeman Thomas, Jacksonville High School, Historian.

The group adopted by-laws setting dues at $5.00 per year. The by-laws state that the society is open to any person interested in the native plants of Arkansas. Charter memberships are available through 1980 from the Treasurer (Don Peach, Route 1, Box 282, Mena, Arkansas 71953.)

Future meetings will include workshops on identifying plants and monitoring rare plants. Statewide field trips are planned for spring and fall, with regional field activities throughout the year.