



Ozark Society Foundation offers Sassafras Award

New Award to recognize excellence in environmental writing

A new literary prize, the Sassafras Award for Excellence in Environmental Writing, will be offered by the Ozark Society Foundation. The Little Rock-based nonprofit organization will offer a \$3,000 prize for a literary work whose regional focus relates to areas in Arkansas, Missouri, and Louisiana where the Ozark Society operates. Submissions are encouraged from any author in any location whose writing reflects this regional link.

Finalist judge for the award will be Davis McCombs, Director of the Program in Creative Writing and Translation at the University of Arkansas, winner of the Yale Younger Poets Series Award and other national writing honors, and a former park ranger at Mammoth Cave National Park.

The Sassafras Award seeks to encourage innovative writing and new perspectives of nature and conservation as well as new voices and the expression of contemporary environmental experiences. While scientific writing is not accepted, eligible genres include fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, dramatic scripts, graphic novels, illustrated books, children's books, young adult fiction, edited compilations, published columns, or blogs.

"The new Sassafras Award encourages writers and artists of all ages to give voice to their views of the environment," Marvin Schwartz, Ozark Society Foundation Chair, said. "The award winner may express a sense of wonder or a sense concern. We are seeking a unique voice that raises environmental understanding and speaks to readers' hearts and minds." The Sassafras Award is open to full-length unpublished manuscripts or collections well as published work within the past three years. If unpublished work is selected, it may be considered for publication by the Ozark Society Foundation. The submission period will be April 1, 2021 through July 31, 2021. The Sassafras Award winner will be announced in January 2022.

More information on the Sassafras Award and the submission process is located at www.ozarksociety.net.

Established in 1975, the Ozark Society Foundation supports and promotes conservation, education and recreation activity in the Ozark-Ouachita region. The Ozark

Society Foundation has produced more than two dozen publications on the natural environment and conservation issues, including canoe and hiker guidebooks, natural and cultural histories, and field guides.

The Sassafras Award refers to the Ozark Society Foundation logo, which is a sassafras leaf. Its three lobes are symbols for the organization's goals of education, recreation, and conservation.

Ozark Society Foundation is partnered with the Ozark Society one of the oldest regional conservation organizations in Arkansas. The Ozark Society was founded in 1962 to preserve wild and scenic rivers, wilderness, and unique natural areas in the Ozark-Ouachita region and surrounding lowlands. Ozark Society's efforts to protect the Buffalo River from dams proposed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers led to congressional designation of the Buffalo as the first National River in the nation. Today, Ozark Society chapters in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Missouri continue the work of natural resources conservation, education, and recreation in their areas.