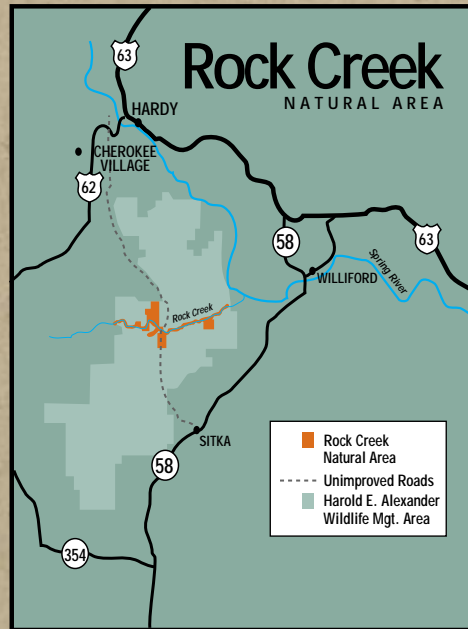


Added to the Arkansas System of Natural Areas in 1991, Rock Creek Natural Area is a place of special value for the high degree of plant diversity found there. The area boasts two high-quality aquatic communities.

Rock Creek Natural Area is located within the Harold Alexander Wildlife Management Area, owned and managed by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. Designation and stewardship of the natural area are through cooperative efforts of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission.

The Arkansas General Assembly created the Natural Heritage Commission in 1973. The agency's job is 1) to identify those lands and waters that retain the state's most valuable biological resources, 2) to acquire tracts of such lands for inclusion in the system of natural areas, and 3) to manage those resources for the benefit of future generations while promoting their appreciation and beneficial use.

For more information on the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, write to 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center Street, Little Rock, AR 72201; call (501) 324-9619; or e-mail [info@DAH.state.ar.us](mailto:info@DAH.state.ar.us) and check out our Web site at <http://www.heritage.state.ar.us/nhc/>



Rock Creek Natural Area is part of the Arkansas System of Natural Areas.



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FUNDED IN PART  
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TRANSFER TAX.

The Arkansas System of Natural Areas is administered by the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, a state agency within the Department of Arkansas Heritage.

# Rock Creek

NATURAL AREA

Comprising 415 acres,  
Rock Creek Natural Area  
has one of the highest  
concentrations of rare  
plants in Arkansas.



*Actitis macularia*  
(Spotted Sandpiper)  
(photo © T. Vezo/VIREO)

Rock Creek Natural Area is located on the Ozarks' Salem Plateau, a region that extends from northern Boone County east to Pocahontas and points south.

Nearly all of the surface rocks you will see at Rock Creek consist of dolomite and limestone. They were formed during the Ordovician Period of geologic time, which began 510 million years ago and continued for about 70 million years.

The natural area boasts two aquatic communities of outstanding quality. Bubbling Spring Run is an upland headwater spring, and Rock Creek is the upland stream. Both feature clear water and populations of rare plants.

Rock Creek Natural Area supports more than 40 populations of 24 rare plants. These plants are rare in Arkansas because they occur only along calcareous (calcium-containing) streams or in fens. A fen is a specific type of habitat which is at its southern limit in the Ozark Mountains.

An example of this type of rare plant is Riddell's goldenrod. It ranges from Ontario to northern Arkansas, but it has been found in Arkansas only at Rock Creek. Also, a species of skullcap, a member of the mint family, is restricted to the glades found in the Salem Plateau.

Two other rare plant species found here are the heartleaf plantain and the nutrush. The heartleaf plantain is easily recognized by

its heart-shaped leaves with distinct veins that arise from the midvein.

All four of these plants are listed by the Natural Heritage Commission as threatened.

Besides these rare plants, you can expect to see spectacular displays of wildflowers in bloom, especially in September.

Rock Creek Natural Area is held in public trust to maintain its unique and rare natural features. Access is through the Harold Alexander Wildlife Management Area, six miles south of Hardy.

When visiting this or any other Arkansas Natural Area, please remember to leave nothing but footprints and take nothing but photographs, with the exception of legally taken game and fish. Please limit travel within natural areas to foot traffic only. Motorized vehicles, horses, camping and construction of permanent hunting stands are prohibited in Arkansas Natural Areas.



*Solidago riddellii*  
(Riddell's Goldenrod)  
(photo by Bill Shepherd)