

Foreword

The Oklahoma Biological Survey is in the process of making an inventory of the plant specimens that have made their way into the herbaria housed at our universities. They will eventually make that information available on the World Wide Web. All kinds of information will be available, electronically, from those dried specimens. They are a priceless treasure, recording our past and the efforts made to understand it. Putting that data on the Web will be a way of making it accessible to people who have no physical access to the herbaria, and little time to extract it.

Other kinds of plant information are stored in the minds of our members and scientists. Possibly, the files stored in computers will outlast them, maybe not. Who knows? One thing we do know: people have been interested in the flora of Oklahoma for more than a hundred years. Some of their observations have been recorded but, for the most part, not in published form. Believing that those records are important for the understanding of our current flora, The Oklahoma Native Plant Society has determined to bring some of those records to your eye in a more durable form.

For many years, Dr. U. T. Waterfall's *Keys to the Flora of Oklahoma* has been the only statewide source of identification keys. Few know that his first attempt to catalog the plants of Oklahoma was a master's thesis that includes a list of the plants he found in Oklahoma County in the 1930's. What a difference there is in Oklahoma County between that time and this! To put that survey into perspective, we are including a working copy of the Biological Survey's list for Oklahoma County, made in the year 2000. This journal intends to publish in each issue, a previously unpublished historic study, which may serve as a baseline for your own investigations into your local flora. We will also include recent studies, student papers, current plant lists, and essays of permanent value.

In the future, we hope to be able to publish either Little's or Bebb's catalog of plants of Muskogee County, and other such lists as may be discovered. For that purpose, we challenge the members of Oklahoma Native Plant Society to offer records and observations which they may have available. Not that there will ever be a complete record of the life in any one place, because life refuses to be reduced to a score-card, but because we believe that a knowledge of the plants of a specific location is a fundamental part of understanding other life that may be found there, including our own. You, our readers, will know of current or historic information that should be included in future issues. We hope you will share those with us.

Patricia Folley, President
Oklahoma Native Plant Society
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