

Foreward

It was a pleasure to learn that Anne Long's thesis on the distribution and ecology of the American smoketree, *Cotinus obovatus* was to be published in the this issue of the Journal of the Oklahoma Native Plant Society.

I was first introduced to Anne and the American smoke-tree in the spring of 1970 while a student in Dr. Harriet Barclay's ecology class. Anne was one of Dr. Barclay's last graduate students at the University of Tulsa. She was a frequent guest on many of our class fieldtrips, especially to the Redbud Valley Preserve in Eastern Oklahoma.

I fondly remember Anne and Dr. Barclay introducing us to *C. obovatus*, describing its characteristics and distribution to the class. Anne's research indicated that this species can often be found distributed atop many of Oklahoma's limestone bluffs, up and down the Arkansas, and other eastern Oklahoma rivers. To this day, I often look for the smoke-tree whenever I am near such a bluff on my many ONPS fieldtrips.

This tree is described by the U.S. Forest Service as a hardy species with beautiful fall foliage and few pests or diseases. They recommend it as a potential attractive native ornamental, but do admit that it is somewhat difficult to get established.

Anne Long's contributions to Oklahoma's flora was tragically cut short by cancer and one can only guess as to what her future contributions may have been. We currently live in some exciting times, with DNA analysis providing new insights into our knowledge of species relationships. This knowledge still needs to be supported by fieldwork in species distribution and ecology. Hopefully, there will be future graduate students and other researchers that will continue to carry on Anne's legacy and add to our knowledge of Oklahoma's unique geography, flora, and fauna.

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