

Foreword

This year, our 10th year of publication, is marked by our entry into the World Wide Web. We've been working with Digital Services at Oklahoma State University's Edmon Low Library to make the *Oklahoma Native Plant Record* available to everyone, globally. We are ready for the new age of botanists who have grown up in the digital age and expect to be able to submit articles without picking up a pencil or putting a stamp on an envelope. Some of us will be challenged to think and communicate differently, as we re-tool our offices and struggle to learn electronic text, graphics, and statistics programs. We ask for your patience as we make the transition and offer our help as you continue to submit, review, and read our articles.

We have a very useful historical article this year, "The Identification of Some of the More Common Native Oklahoma Grasses by Vegetative Characters". It is the Master's thesis of William Franklin Harris, who graduated from Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College (now OSU) in 1949. He submitted this as his Master's thesis the following year. Though a commonly used key to the grasses of Oklahoma, it is overdue for publication. Hopefully this version, updated by Dr. Ronald J. Tyrl, recently retired botanist from OSU, will inspire new taxonomists.

Dr. Bruce Hoagland and Ms. Amy Buthod, from the Oklahoma Biological Survey, have given us a new checklist for one of the most popular regions of the state, Ouachita National Forest. Since Thomas Nuttall's visit in 1819 the area has been inventoried numerous times, but only three floristic lists have been published for this vast and diverse area. This list of species collected at the Camp Tom Hale Scout Reservation is an extension of their 2009 study in the Cucumber Creek area, which is 66 km SE of this site. It is intended to enhance the knowledge of plant distributions in the Ouachita Mountains in LeFlore County and to be used as an educational tool by the Boy Scouts of America.

Ms. Mary Gard is a graduate of Oklahoma State University. Her preliminary research on the toxicity of *Tephrosia virginiana* plants in Oklahoma provides insight to their historic use by Native Americans to stun fish to facilitate their capture. While some of the findings of previous studies were similar, this new study also raises questions that she intends to address in future research.

Dr. Bruce Smith, our local native fern expert, has provided us another educational and enjoyable article. This year it is on ferns found in the more arid regions of Western Oklahoma. Again, he has detailed photos which illustrate Oklahoma species of this important, but often overlooked, taxon.

Because the purpose of the Society is to encourage the study of native plants, the *Record* has an obligation to its readers to be a resource for study. To that end, our "Critic's Choice" essay this year is written by Dr. Ron Tyrl. His stories are proverbially erudite, holding our attention and giving us an intriguing piece of his knowledge that keeps us wanting more. Acknowledging the importance of taxonomic identification tools, like Patricia Folley's field guide for Oklahoma wildflowers (forthcoming from Iowa Press), he underscores the importance of keys for learning those species that aren't often photographed. He provides us with an historic perspective on the format styles and use of keys like those of Harris and Linnaeus.

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