

### Rocky Mountain Herbarium hoping to **E X P A N D**

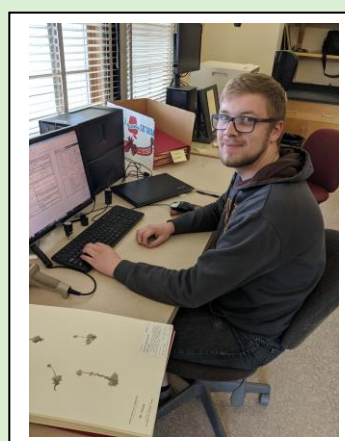
Everyone who reads this newsletter is no doubt aware that the Rocky Mountain Herbarium (RM) has outgrown its current space on the third floor of the Aven Nelson Building. Over the last few decades, classrooms, laboratories and graduate student offices that once shared the third floor have all been converted to specimen storage, and the need for sufficient space remains unmet. More than one-third of RM specimens are stored outside of specimen cases, primarily in cardboard boxes stacked on top of the cases. This temporary solution is untenable for many reasons: besides the difficulty of locating and accessing the specimens, and the potential to lose improperly stored specimens to various kinds of damage, there are possible safety concerns.

Fortunately, the RM may expand in a few years! With construction of the new Science Initiative building, many of the Botany Dept. faculty will relocate. The RM management team is currently developing a proposal to expand into both the first and second floors of the Aven Nelson building.

Stored in boxes on top of the herbarium cases are approximately 127,400 mounted specimens, and about 402,000 unmounted specimens. Based on an average of 1000 specimens per case, these specimens will require 531 cases for proper storage. In addition, we've estimated a need for 36 additional cases to relieve the overfilled condition of the cases we have. Moreover, we anticipate that the Beetle Grass Collection, currently housed in 34 cases in the College of Agriculture, will move to the RM. Meeting

those needs will require space for 607 cases, essentially doubling storage space from the 610 cases already crammed into the third floor. And that doesn't include room for growth...

This is not a done deal, as there is always competition for space on campus, but we hope to make a strong argument for both the RM's need, and the appropriateness of the Aven Nelson building as its home.



#### **RM Faces: Matthew Ratterman**

Just over a year ago, Matthew Ratterman reached out to B.E. "Ernie" Nelson for a tour of RM, and that meeting made all the difference today.

Matthew is a junior at University of Wyoming majoring in Rangeland Ecology and Watershed Management, with minors in Reclamation and Restoration, and in Soils. Matthew's coursework, under a professor who was thrilled to share information about plants, has been reinforced by skills gained at RM in barcoding, databasing and imaging plant specimens. They all contributed to his credentials for an upcoming summer internship.

He values the flexibility of RM work where he is always needed, but never tied down to a schedule that conflicts with test schedules. *Everyone benefits – thank you, Matthew!*

#### **UW Student Awarded for RM Service**

Cassie Heikkila has been awarded the College of Arts and Sciences Student Service Award for her four years of dedicated service to the RM! Her nomination states, in part, "During her tenure in the RM she has willingly and graciously taken on more and more responsibility, and has literally become Curator Ernie Nelson's herbarium manager." *Congratulations, Cassie!*

**ANNOUNCEMENT:** Please join the Rocky Mountain Herbarium, Biodiversity Institute, and UW Extension on May 19 for a plant walk and workshop focused on "Learning Plant Families." The walk is scheduled from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM at the "schoolyard" east of Laramie, and is free to attend. The workshop is scheduled from 1:30 PM to 4:30 PM that afternoon and includes a \$15.00 materials fee. Participants will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with several major flowering plant families. For more information and to register for the plant walk and/or the workshop, visit: [tiny.cc/PlantFamily](http://tiny.cc/PlantFamily).