



Director's Note

It is great to be starting year two as the Director of the RM. I now feel like we are back and moving full steam ahead! The RM had a fun and productive summer, and we're looking forward to a year filled with activities and events that will hopefully bring more of you to campus and into the herbarium.



We are launching our first ever **Giving Day campaign!** UW Giving Day is a 24-hour event held from noon-to-noon Oct. 19th and 20th.

With a generous Challenge Gift from Doug and Deniz Stark, matched by the UW College of Agriculture, Life Sciences, and Natural Resources, 20 donors will unlock \$5,000 to support RM research, teaching, and outreach activities! This is a fantastic opportunity for the RM, and we look forward to your support in helping us achieve this goal!

Dave Tank, Director

Summer activities in the RM

The summer brought a welcomed, and much-needed increase in research, teaching, and outreach activities in the RM that had us interacting with many of you across the state.

In early June, Curators Ernie Nelson and Ben Legler led a workshop on plant collecting at the 2022 Wyoming Native Plant Society meeting in Thermopolis. The following week, RM joined the 2022 Wyoming BioBlitz at

Guernsey State Park. Ben, Ernie, and Director Dave Tank co-taught two plant identification workshops focused on Wyoming's largest plant families and led participants on a series of plant surveys at locations around the park. Over 150 plant species were recorded during the surveys!



Ernie (shown) and Ben oversaw the processing of nearly 100 specimens by professional, amateur and student botanists at the WyNPS workshop.

The Rocky Mountain Herbarium also partnered with UW Extension and the Biodiversity Institute to lead two plant walks in the Laramie area – the first at the UW Red Buttes Environmental Lab, and another in the Pumpkin Vine area near the Colorado state line. Both walks allowed participants to explore the late spring/early summer flora of the area, while learning from the experts at the RM.

This summer also brought the return of field-based teaching to the RM. For two weeks in June and July, with the help of Ernie and Ben, Dave taught his Advanced Field Botany course based out of the UW main campus. Field days targeted a diversity of habitats



and plant communities in areas throughout the Medicine Bow National Forest, while classroom days focused on identifying the collected specimens. We made 341 collections and explored the region from the Laramie Valley to the top of Brown's Peak.



Dave, Ben and Advanced Field Botany students in the beautiful Snowy Range.

Ben also began research on a joint project with colleagues at the University of New Mexico, University of Washington, Western Washington University, and Royal British Columbia Museum to examine patterns of plant species diversity, community structure, dispersal dynamics, and the effects of climate change across the alpine zone of western North America. Undergraduate student and RM intern Joshua Mattson assisted Ben in gathering preliminary data that will serve as the basis for a collaborative proposal to the National Science Foundation.

Finally, this summer brought the return of in-person scientific meetings! Dave, Ben, and UW Botany/RM PhD students Malia Santos and Caroline Brose all attended the 2022 Botany Meeting in Anchorage, Alaska in August. Ben, Malia, and Caroline all presented their research. Ben gave an invited talk in a symposium dedicated to his

collaborator and fellow moonwort (*Botrychium*) expert, Dr. Don Farrar. Dan Turck, PhD student at the University of Idaho that Dave continues to advise, also presented on their work unraveling the evolutionary history of the inland temperate rainforest of the northern Rocky Mountains and associated subalpine plant communities. For more information on each presentation—please ask!

RM Faces: Encore Appearance of Frank Blomquist



The Rocky Mountain Herbarium has been a special enclave for students, researchers, agency partners, and volunteers of all stripes. Frank Blomquist is that rare individual who is All-of-the-Above.

Frank relished his Botany Department coursework when he first stepped foot into RM as a Plant Taxonomy student of Ron Hartman. Since then, his work in Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Rawlins and Lander Field Offices put him in working relations with RM that included supporter of floristic theses, researcher, and Seeds for



Success supervisor, ensuring that plant populations as potential seed sources for reclamation were documented by voucher specimens submitted to RM.

Agency partners do not automatically act as researchers, but Frank's curiosity took him down that path. One of his most noteworthy discoveries was an unidentified species of *Penstemon* that he photographed in the Ferris Dunes in 1996. With the help of RM, Amy Roderick Taylor (past RM floristics graduate student) and Wyoming Natural Diversity Database botanists, his discovery was documented as Blowout penstemon (*P. haydenii*), Wyoming's only endangered plant species.

Frank retired from BLM in 2021. When unforeseen circumstances had him spending chunks of time in Laramie, he took that as his ticket to volunteer in RM. He has spent days at a time mounting plants, reinforcement for student workers, while relishing the current buzz of RM activity. ...And we relish your presence and pervasive contributions, Frank!



Blowout penstemon, *P. haydenii*. Photo credit: W. Fertig

Up-coming events

Curatorial Techniques Nights at the RM

October 20, 6:30-8:30 pm: Mounting
December 8, 6:30-8:30 pm: Technique TBD

You are invited to come learn first-hand what types of work go into taking a specimen from the press to the cabinets and beyond. Space is limited at these workshops, and registration is required. Visit the ['Events' tab](#) on our website for more information and to register.

Save the date!

January 26, 2023, Berry Center auditorium

Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Aven Nelson Building

Presentation on the life and times of Aven Nelson, founder of the Rocky Mountain Herbarium and 11th President of the University of Wyoming, by Aspen Brown, UW Department of History

Stories from the Stacks exhibit

Tours of the Herbarium

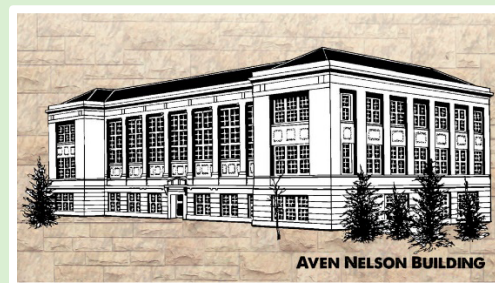


Photo Credit: UW Centennial Celebration, 1986