

An eclectic forum for dispersing practical information about planting and growing native plants.

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Welcome to the 15th volume of the *Native Plants Journal*. It's hard for me to imagine that so much time has passed, seemingly in the blink of an eye. My regular day job, working as a scientist for the US Forest Service, is pushing me to examine how we, as the providers of native plants for a myriad of good and essential reasons, will respond to the increasing threats of invasive species, land conversion, and changing climate. The bottom line in having healthy ecosystems in the future, both maintaining those we have and restoring those we've lost, is ensuring biodiversity. Our work is essential to that goal. Through our everyday activities in our nurseries and farms we can meet that challenge. As you start this year's crop, remember the important role you play.

I'd also encourage you to keep in mind that, although we are plant people, our work yields benefits to other creatures. Headline news reports the drastic demise of monarch butterfly populations blamed mostly on the eradication of Midwestern US milkweeds. Populations of North American bats are dropping rapidly because of an introduced pathogen. These unfortunate developments do, however, reinforce the need for high quality habitat, which is diverse in nature. It's our mission to meet that need, and, although I don't want it to sound glib, these maladies provide marketing opportunities for us. Suburbanites uninterested in planting "weeds" in their backyard gardens may do so if it helps the monarch butterfly. Okay, I'll step off my soapbox now.

I think we have another good issue! As you may have guessed, it has a couple of articles about how native plants can help threatened creatures. We also have some practical information about the germination requirements of some southwestern US forbs, identifying those squirrely squirreltails of the Intermountain West, the effects of media on outplanting performance of Florida wildflowers, selecting willows and poplars for use in New York City, and propagating redbay that are resistant to disease.

R Kasten Dumroese



On the cover: Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis* L. [Papaveraceae]). Photo by Betsy Strauch