

DEDICATION

DIETER H. WILKEN

The California Botanical Society dedicates Volume 59 to Dr. Dieter H. Wilken, Director of Conservation at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden. Born in 1944, Dieter grew up in Los Angeles. He attended California State University, Los Angeles, where he received his Bachelor's degree in 1967. He then moved to a Ph.D. program at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he worked under the direction of Dale Smith. Dieter earned his Ph.D. in 1971, and his dissertation was entitled *A biosystematic study of the genus Hulsea (Asteraceae: Helenieae)*.

Dieter's first faculty position was at Occidental College in Eagle Rock, California, which he held for two years before accepting a professorship at Colorado State University in 1973, a position that he held for twenty years. During his Colorado years Dieter became known as an expert on the flora of the Rocky Mountains. It was also during this time that he married fellow botanist Beth Painter.

Then, in 1991, Dieter was recruited to take over the management of *The Jepson Manual* Project. Dieter moved to UC Berkeley, where his combination of botanical acumen, ability to secure funding, and his ability to deal with the varied personalities of the authors shined. He also authored numerous treatments in the *Manual* (by my count he was the author or coordinator for ten families, plus author or co-author for another 46 genera), and he remains on the editorial board of *The Jepson Manual* Project today. After the first edition of *The Jepson Manual* was published in 1993, Dieter moved to his current home at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden (SBBG) where he is Director of Conservation.

Although Dieter studied the Asteraceae during his graduate years, he soon became interested in Polemoniaceae, no doubt influenced by his major professor. He eventually published on *Ipomopsis*, *Collomia*, *Allophylum*, and *Polemonium*. Today his Polemoniologist brethren (and sistren) consider him the reigning dean of the family. However, Dieter's interests are not limited to Polemoniaceae. As just one example, he co-authored with Dave Fross the 2006 book *Ceanothus*, a monograph of the genus.

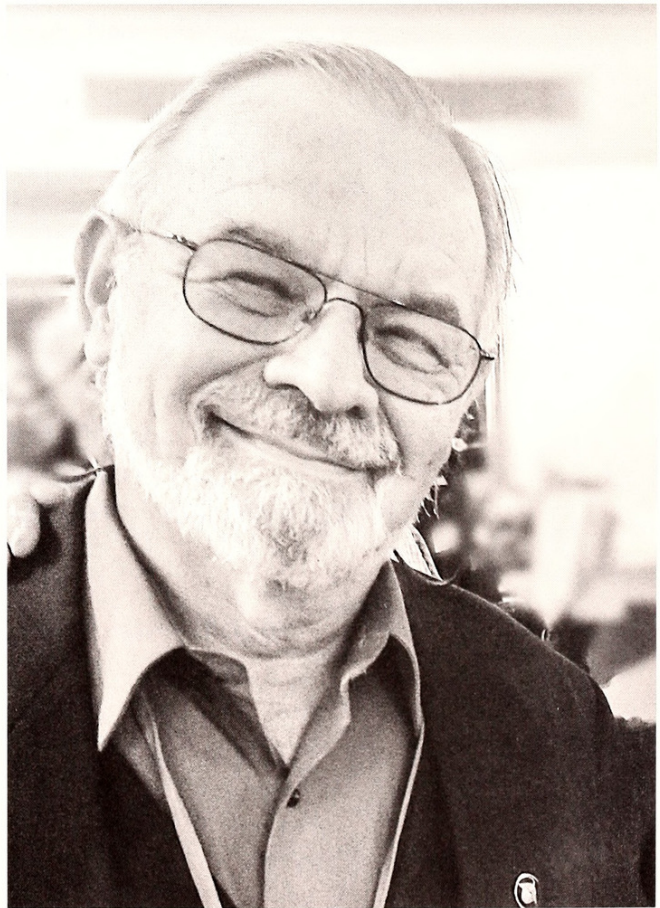
Dieter's research record (he published his first paper in 1967) has not only spanned an array of taxa, but has included floristics, taxonomic revisions, descriptions of new taxa, cytotaxonomy, palynology, chemosystematics, reproductive biology, and detailed monographic studies. In his role as Director of Conservation, he has also contributed valuable technical reports to various agencies. He is by all accounts a taxonomist's taxonomist.

Today Dieter's professional responsibilities include managing the SBBG conservation program, including acquisition and curation of *ex situ* plant materials; acting as liaison to various agencies; research on rare-plant biology; assisting the horticulture program on issues related to listed species; and managing the conservation collection and herbarium database. Dieter's colleague at SBBG, Dr. Robert Muller, commented on Dieter's other important role at the Garden in "interpreting the

complexities of botanical science for the interested layperson. He is a regular contributor to docent training and plays a critical role in providing background information to the education and horticulture programs. Of course, anyone who knows him can imagine the enthusiasm that he brings to it."

I first met Dieter when I was a young botany undergrad at UCSB and he was a (slightly older) graduate teaching assistant in Bob Haller's California Flora course. This energetic botanist, who commonly wore shorts that we dubbed "Dieterhosen," seemed to know the name of every plant, and it soon became clear that the students in Dieter's lab sections had a leg up on the other students in the course. Several years later, when I became Dieter's fellow lab mate in graduate school, the lab members would often go on weekend collecting trips. Too often, the rest of us rarely keyed anything; we simply went through our pressed material, and Dieter would tell us the names of every species (another lab member had christened him the "Walk-a-Munz"). Dieter himself was not so lazy; he learned the plants by keying everything he saw.

Anyone who has met Dieter knows that he is a most affable fellow, and given to tell stories in his own inimitable style. (He does a great impression of the eminent botanist Ledyard Stebbins describing chromosome



behavior during meiosis.) In grad school we would delight as Dieter would tell us a joke or describe a movie he just saw. These stories are often punctuated with what have been called "Dieterisms," similar in style to quotes made famous by Yogi Berra and Sam Goldwyn. A dedication such as this would not be complete without a few.

Once in a seminar Dieter told us that "the snow persists until it melts." Hmm ... How about, "this happens 99 times out of ten." Or, "I just noticed something that I've always known." But the most famous Dieterism comes from a letter to me in 1983, whereupon having found some new species in the Rockies, he wrote "I am continually amazed at the things that have yet to be discovered."

The following year the American Association of Plant Taxonomists meeting was held at Colorado State University, and Dieter was our local host. When he was formally thanked at the annual dinner, Dave Seigler presented Dieter with a poster of the "continually amazed" quote printed on parchment. After the laughter and hooting subsided, Seigler announced that if anyone was interested in getting a copy, he had a few extras (he

pulled out a large stack) that he'd sell for 25 cents each. The crowd rushed to the podium to buy the posters. Then Art Cronquist asked Dieter to sign his copy. Dieter obliged, and a line instantly formed, with a large contingent of the American Society of Plant Taxonomists waiting for Dr. Wilken's signature. I still have my copy in my office.

In this year when the second edition of the *Jepson Manual* has been published, it is fitting that we recognize Dieter's contribution as the principal editor of the first edition. Through his guidance and characteristic diligence, that volume was produced nearly 20 years ago and has served several generations of California botanists. So here's to you, Dieter, for all of your contributions to the study of the California Flora, and for your valued collegiality to the botanical community.

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