

Columbia College in the City of New York

DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY

Feb. 10 1893

Dear Mr Kennedy

I shall deliver to the Express tomorrow the set of Naiadaceae for which you subscribed.

The parcel contains 78 sheets of European and N. American sp. + var., very fairly representing the Potamogeton family, though not, of course, embracing the rarest forms of which I have only one or two specimens myself.

I say fairly represents the Pot. family, but the species are so outrageously variable that it would require a dozen or more sheets to each species to give any complete idea of them.

I have been studying them for nearly 20 years, but even now I meet with forms occasionally about which I am puzzled. They have the same trouble

in England. Mr Fyfe, whose name you
will notice on some of the labels, spends
all his ^{summer} time in the Cambridgeshire fens
where he lives, dabbling for pond weeds.
He turns up the strangest things imag-
inable, and is constantly making
out "hybrids," as he calls them, some of
which he names as new species - Though,
in many cases they seem to me only ex-
treme forms of old species. He writes me
that most of the British species need
at least 50 sheets to represent the va-
rious forms! I don't go quite so far
as that, as we should all despair of
ever knowing a species, if they vary so
much & so widely as all that. Still
I warn you if you pursue the study,
as I hope you will with opportunity, that
you must not always set a plant down
as that particular species because it looks
like one in my set. The fruit characters
are, as a rule, the best test of a species.

Very cordially yours

Thomas Moring.



Morong, Thomas. 1893. "Morong, Thomas 10 Feb 1893." *George Golding Kennedy correspondence*

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