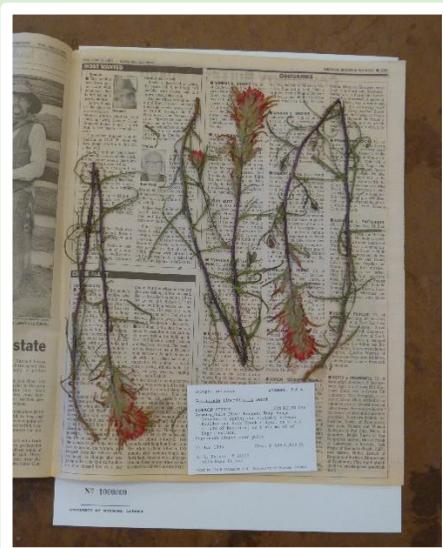




1,000,000th specimen

The RM will be mounting specimen number 1,000,000 in January! The specimen selected is a *Castilleja linariifolia* (Wyoming Indian paintbrush) collected by Curator Ernie Nelson in 1993, in Lincoln County. The mounting will occur during the January Board of Trustees meeting, and will feature our own Madison Dale, wielding her skills before the illustrious audience. Once the glue is dry, this honored specimen will be framed for permanent display; its first public appearance will be during the Millionth Specimen Event. Stay tuned for more information on this spectacular event.



A bit more on the selected species and specimen:

Castilleja linariifolia is, of course, the Wyoming state flower. Its range includes 11 western states, extending as far west as the Channel Islands. Wyoming is at the eastern edge of its range—in fact, Wyoming Indian paintbrush is not found in the eastern plains of Wyoming, nor in parts of the Bighorn Basin. To find out exactly where to see *C. linariifolia* in Wyoming, check out the RM database.

Dr. Grace Raymond Hebard of the University of Wyoming, “a force to be reckoned with,” proposed this species to be the Wyoming state flower, at a time when many states were adopting flower symbols. Another UW person, Dr. Aven Nelson, strongly opposed the selection because: Indian paintbrushes are not common throughout the state; there are too many varieties and only an expert can tell them apart; they are parasitic, feeding on the roots of other plants; there was no widespread support for the plant; and the fringed gentian chosen by Wyoming schoolchildren was a sentimental favorite.¹

Apparently, Dr. Hebard did not let the sentimentality of schoolchildren dissuade her, and the state legislature adopted *Castilleja linariifolia* as the state flower in January 1917.

Wyoming Indian paintbrush has another, older connection to Wyoming: the species was described by George Bentham in 1846 from a specimen collected in 1842 by John Fremont, with locality identified only as Wyoming; Rocky Mountains.

The millionth specimen is one of 17,446 collected during an inventory of the Salt River and Wyoming Ranges conducted by Ron Hartman and Ernie in 1992-93 for the US Forest Service. Ernie was assisted by his son Russ, about 12 at the time. According to Ernie, Russ feared being captured by “werevoles” during this trip. Fortunately, he escaped every time; unfortunately, he failed to collect a voucher, so that observation remains unverified.

1. https://www.netstate.com/states/symb/flowers/wy_indian_paintbrush.htm. December 4, 2019



RM Faces: Madison Dale

Madison Dale came to RM from Laramie, where she has lived since she was small. Now a UW student, she is majoring in Biology, with a Spanish minor. Her curiosity for different experiences brought her to the Herbarium, where she asked to be a volunteer plant mounter. It took little time before she was offered a job, and now, she not only wows everyone with her skill, she also oversees the work of eight undergraduate volunteers. Things that Madison likes about working at RM: her coworkers, and helping to reduce the backlog of unmounted specimens. And reduce the backlog, she has! We appreciate your dedication, Madison—thank you.