



Bluestem

Plant Biology
Ecology &
Evolution

THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANT BIOLOGY, ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTION

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS

This is the last Bluestem for 2018/first for 2019, and gives me a chance to update you on some of our many student, faculty and alumni achievements. Notable events and successes this year include:



Bill Hammond in Paris at the end of his month-long fellowship in France

The invited trip to France this fall by grad student **Bill Hammond** (Adams Lab) as a laureate of the “Make Our Planet Great Again” short-stay program of French president Emmanuel Macron. During the month he was there, Hammond used equipment unobtainable anywhere else in the world to gain valuable data on his doctoral work on measuring how trees die.



Garret Sill and Professor Andrew Doust, Head of Department

The commencement at the Oklahoma City University School of Law this fall of Plant Biology major **Garret Sill**, who wants to be involved in plant varietal rights and the protection of intellectual property.



Kelli Norton, with her experiment on the effects of heat stress on flowering in millet

The awarding of a science policy internship to senior **Kelli Norton**, to work on science policy issues at the Brockport (The College at Brockport State University of New York) this spring.



Tom Cason (center), with his wife, Barbara (left), and long-time friend Alice Richardson

The visit of our nominated distinguished alumnus **Tom Cason**, who emphasized to students the value of his plant biology training in building up Kingston Services, one of the largest environmental consulting companies in the world.

The department is interviewing next month for a new assistant professor to take a lead role in the new pre-pharmacy and pre-forensics degree options, focusing on the specialized plant compounds that are often used by humans for health, beauty and industry. However, long-time faculty member Dr. Gerald Schoenknecht is leaving us to take up a permanent position at the National Science Foundation as a program officer. We will seek to replace him next fall.

We continue to revise our curricula and courses for all our Plant Biology options, to emphasize content and soft skills that will enhance the marketability of our graduates. As part of that emphasis, we have a **fundraising goal** this year of being able to give every grad student and undergrad student involved in research in the department the opportunity to present their work at a scientific conference during their time at OSU. For this reason, please consider donating to:

- our [Botany Excellence Fund](#), where we are a third of the way to raising \$25K to establish a secure cash flow for future scholarships,
- the [Botany Scholarship Fund](#), which is specifically for undergraduate student scholarships,
- or the [McPherson Fund](#), which enables us to contribute to graduate student costs for research and conference presentations.

We wish you all a productive and happy New Year, and please feel free to drop me a line or to come and see us sometime!

— Best, Andrew Doust (Head of Department)



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