



Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation
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About the Institute

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was dedicated in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971 the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography and the Library.

July 16, 1932

Mr. Mark Kerr,
Eastern California Museum,
Association, Independence, Cal.

Dear Mr. Kerr:

When at the herbarium of the University recently, I was shown your letter of May 11th.

You may be interested to know that while here for a year or two I am working, in spare time, on a monograph of the willows of California.

In connection with the revision many of the State's botanists are collecting willows extensively in order that the species, varieties and ~~the~~ distribution may be better known. Already two and perhaps three new species have been found and soon will be published. Some others have been discovered in the State for the first time, and many have had their ranges extended.

Should you wish to make any collections in that area they will be gladly received, identified, and studied. If I recall correctly, *S. laevigata* presents some peculiar forms in that Valley. The willows can be determined usually from foliage specimens alone, so if you are not familiar with the species and wish to collect leaf specimens now I will be glad to name them for you at any time. Of course, flowering or fruiting specimens are much better. Often old anents can be found still attached, or stuck in a fork of the branches, or lying among the trash under the plants. These always are helpful.

We are distributed many sets of willows to the herbariums of the world. The more valuable material we are trying to get in sets of 50 specimens. These go out on a printed University label (sample inclosed) but with the collectors name and number. We will be glad to distribute small or large sets of any you may collect in that section of the State.

If you send in samples for identification, and either tag or carefully record the location of the plants from which they came, I could tell you what are most desired and you then could collect sets at the time flowers or fruit were to be had. Probably some are in that condition yet.

We are making every effort to have the specimens show the different leaf forms found on the same plants, such as on fruiting branches, the seasonal shoots growing after fruiting, and the large-leaved water sprouts which occur sometimes on the bases of branches or trunks, or from the roots. Some times it requires 3 or 4 sheets to carry all the leaf expressions. It is best to put only the material from one plant under one number.

Most cordially yours,

Carlson R. Ball

Associate Professor and Director

Eastern California Museum Association, Inc.

Inyo County Court House
Independence, Cal.

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MARK KERR
Independence, Cal.
Acting Curator

July 26th 1932

Mr Carleton R. Ball
University of California Berkley

Dear Mr Ball

In reply to your letter of July 16th . I am compelled to admit that I am not familiar with the different species of willows ; so it will be necessary for me to send you leaf specemins as you sugest, and will note the location and approximate altitute. At present we have only one willow in the Museum Herbarium S. petrophil -a Alpine willow.

I am encloseing a photograph of a cactus which has grown a round shoot about 7 inches long, this shoot appeared some time after being transplanted from its wild or natural location of about 6000 feet elevation on Mount Whitney.

Would be very glad if you could let us know if this is a natural condition or not.

I could not find the sample University lable in your letter.

Yours Sincerely

Mark Kerr

Mark Kerr

(See over)

*Photo sent
Dr. David G. Smith
in SD 8/1/32*

August 5, 1932.

Mr. Mark Kerr,
Eastern Calif. Museum Assoc.
Inyo Co. Court House,
Independence, Calif.

Dear Mr. Kerr:

Your letter of July 25th received and noted. Sorry I neglected to inclose the sample field label. Will put one in here.

I note what you say about the willows. Will be glad to see whatever you are able to collect.

If your *salix petrophila* came from California it almost certainly was the variety *laespitosa* (Kennedy) Schneider, which has narrower leaves, hairy on the upper surface and the margins. The species has not been found in this state so far, tho the variety is very common in the southern Sierras, and has been taken as far north as Mt. Lassen.

I have referred your inquiry and photograph of cactus plant to Dr. David Griffiths, of the Bureau of Plant Industry, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, in Washington, D.C. He knows more about the habits of cacti than any living man and you should soon hear from him directly if he is in town. He may be out on a field trip just now.

Most cordially,

Carleton R. Ball,
Research Associate.

Independence California Box 187

May 12th 1935

Dr Carleton Ball
U.S. Dept. of Agric.
Room 5038 South Bldg.
Washington D.C.

Dear Dr Ball

Was very glad to hear from you.

Hope you like your new occupation.

If I ever go to Washington again I will surely look you up ;
but am afraid that may be quite a while , unless things take a
change.

Am not doing much of anything at present an occasional day or
half day at labor . Am spending a good deal of my time collecting
plants and puzzling out their names, but have to go easy as

I have had a spell in a hospital for varicose veins.

Am trying to start a private collection of plants ; as I am
not likely to have anything to do with the Museum under its
present management.

I hope you are well and keeping well as I am

Yours very sincerely

Mark Kerr

Mark Kerr

Program Planning Division

January 18, 1936

Mr. Mark Kerr, Box 187,
Independence, Calif.

My dear Mr. Kerr:

I have just found your letter of May 12 among some papers that accumulated here just after I returned from California. I have not heard of your being here so take it that you are still there.

Sperry the Museum connections there are no more satisfactory. Its too bad after all you had done to get the thing started and on its feet.

I have been so busy with my new work that there has been little time for willows, although I have determined many lots received here. I hope to get back to some real work with them before this year is gone. At any rate I have my entire collection in new steel standard herbarium cases, and safely arranged in my office, so that they are handy to use.

Professor Setchell came thro here on his way back from Europe but I was in the South at the time and so missed him entirely. None of the other botanists has come this way, so far as I know, than many other Californians have been in Washington.

With best wishes for the new year and for your work and play during 1936, I am

Most cordially Yours,

Carleton R. Ball
Exec. Secy., Coordinating Committee,
U.S.D.A., T.V.A., and Land-Grant Colleges.

Dr Carleton R Ball

Independence Calif.

Box 187

June 1st 1937

U S Department of Agriculture.

Exec. Secy., Coordinating Committee

U.S.D.A., T.V.A., and Land Grant Colleges.

Dear D Ball

I am sending you
some willows from Willow Creek Saline
Valley Inyo Co. They seemed different
so I pressed a few and am sending
them in another package.

Digitized by Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation
It was too hot to stay in that
part of the country very long. Nearly
all the small plants were dried up.

Hope you are well and keeping
well as I am.

Sincerely,
Mark Kerr

(over)

Extension Service,
U.S. Dept. Agriculture,

June 14, 1937

Mr. Mark Kerr,
Box 187, Independence,
Inyo County, California.

Dear Mr. Kern:

On my return to Washington, I find your letter of June 1 and accompanying package of willows.

This plant is *Salix exigua* Nuttall, a very variable species. Numerous varieties have been published. Your plant seems most closely related to the variety that occurs in the Imperial Valley and eastward across Arizona and part of New Mexico. It is distinguished in part by its very long leaves. I mean the ordinary leaves on the flowering branchlets.

I do not think it has been described yet, but I am not sure. It will take a lot of digging into literature and herbariums to make sure. It probably is nearest to *S. exigua stenophylla* (Rydb.) Schm. but the type specimen of that is so immature that no one can be sure what the variety is. I want to study all available specimens from the type area and see what they look like when mature. Then if there is only one form there, we can guess what the type would have looked like if more mature.

The water sprout you send had the largest leaves I ever have seen on one of the long-leaf or sandbar willows. They are at least 9 inches long. I may have some from *S. melanopsis* which are as large but have not time to look for them now, as I am leaving again. I am especially glad to have these enormous sprout leaves, as it helps me make more accurate descriptions of varieties.

I am busier than ever and have done little to willows in the last two years except determine the material sent in. Hope to do some real work on them again next winter.

Hope everything is going well with you. Dry seasons are not new in that area, so I don't worry about that.

By the way, where is Saline Valley? In or between what ranges?

Acting Curator
Eastern Calif. Museum Association
Imperial County Court House
Independence Calif.

Independence Calif.
Box 187
March 30 1941

Dear Dr Ball

Many thanks for the
leaflets of the new willows.

I was especially interested in the
"Diamond" willow as I well remember
the specimen you showed me
at Berkeley some years ago.

I hope you are well as I am
We have a large Japanese town
7 miles south of us here now
and most of the young men
including the our Indian friend
have joined the army otherwise
things here are just the same
as ever. Sincerely
Mark Kerr

April 6, 1942

Mr. Mark Kerr,
Box 187,
Independence,
California.

Dear Mr. Kerr:

It was like old times to get your letter of March 30 and I am glad to know that you are well as ever and interested in what is going on round about. I have been following the newspaper accounts of the removal of the Japanese from the coastal area. It seems too bad that there could not have been a thorough investigation of individual families before action was taken. I knew a lot of Japanese families when I was in California and they were just as fine Americans as any white folks that I knew. Undoubtedly there were others, but it does not seem to be exactly the American way to penalize everybody for the actions or beliefs of a few.

In 1935, the year when I left California, the desert bloomed beautifully in April. This winter I saw colored motion pictures of a real desert blooming in Arizona and southern California in either 1940 or 1941, I think the latter year. It was more gorgeous than anything I have seen myself.

With personal regards, I am

Cordially yours,

Carleton R. Ball,
Executive Secretary

3481 Jocelyn St., N.W.,
Washington 15, D.C.

Mr. Mark Kerr,³
C. H. A7, B1 49, P.O. Box 933,
Honolulu, T.H.

26 January, 1950

My dear Kerr :

I certainly did enjoy hearing again from you, and to know that you still are climbing mountains and getting color movies of what you see. If and when you do come back to the States, you will be in real demand with those movies.

sew
Separately I am sending four of my recent papers which are still available. The one of distribution problems will cover part of your old stopping grounds and the one on uses of willows may have some interest, even in Hawaii, where there are no native willows. I don't know whether my write-up of *S. petiolaris* convinced Dr. Fernald that the species was American and should be retained in the new edition of Gray's Manual, but I wrote him and asked him to do it for the sake of American students. He did not reply.

I have completed the treatment of the willows for the new edition of Britton and Brown Illustrated Flora (35 native species; 5 introduced) and have personally selected the material from which the illustrations will be drawn. The editors have agreed to draw the parts to scale, so that student may have an accurate picture.

Have just completed the willows of Idaho for the State College at Pocatello. There were native species in that, mostly occurring in California.

Now I am driving ahead on the willows of Alaska and Yukon, including tributary parts of B.C., to appear in Dr. Anderson's Flora. When these three are all done, it will mean that about two thirds of the species for my monograph will be done, so far as new descriptions and careful study of distribution is concerned.

The hardest part of this work is determining what really are the thing which others always are publishing as new species or new varieties, and which usually are not. It takes a lot of time and hard work.

Next, I think that I shall take up the willows of the whole western U.S., and Mexico. The Idaho flora covers at least half of them. When I get at that job, my mind will run out to the fine help that you gave over the years when you were collecting the mountain and desert willows of southern California. You certainly did help me out in good shape.

With all good wishes to you ~~and~~ in your work and in your play, I am

Most cordially yours,

Carleton R. Ball