



Above: Yelena Kosovich-Anderson collecting moss above a waterfall in the Wind River Range.

Big Breakthroughs in Bryophytes

Rocky Mountain Herbarium (RM) is home to the largest collection of vascular plants in the Rocky Mountains and is the largest herbarium between St. Louis and the West Coast. But one of the **big** successes at RM in recent years involves a group of nonvascular plants, called “bryophytes.”

In the past, the only concerted effort to collect bryophytes across Wyoming was by C.L. Porter, whose collections supported his dissertation at the University of Washington, later published in *The Bryologist* (1933 and 1935). There were limited collecting trips by other bryologists from different parts of the country, and at one time, there were as many or more bryology specimens from Wyoming stored outside the state as in-state.

...And then, in 2007, Wyoming bryology entered the “Kosovich Era” when Yelena Kosovich-Anderson moved from Russia to Cheyenne, WY. She had completed her dissertation in 1989 working on the regional bryophyte flora in the Lake Baikal area. She had launched her Wyoming collections in 2003 when visiting the University of Wyoming through a Junior Faculty Development Program fellowship coordinated through the U.S. State Department.

In 2008, Yelena pursued her bryology profession and passion by collecting bryophytes in systematic studies on national forests and other public lands of Wyoming, in bryophyte floristic inventories resembling the vascular plant floristic inventories conducted through RM. Her studies marked collaboration between the U.S. Forest Service and Wyoming Natural Diversity Database to build basic knowledge of bryophyte diversity and species’ rarity in the state.

-Imagine working with a flora on a new continent! To date, Kosovich-Anderson has described one Wyoming bryophyte as new to science, many bryophytes as new to the Wyoming flora, and overhauled both distribution and habitat information, particularly elevation, as represented for bryophytes in the *Flora of North America*. The RM bryophyte accessions have grown by leaps and bounds with her collections despite the fact that

her work requires labor-intensive identification and processing of collections, greatly exceeding that for vascular plant collections.

Ten years later, Kosovich-Anderson assumed a curator role for RM bryophyte collections, an unpaid position. Thanks to all the days of her curation work, those collections now reflect taxonomic organization, use of current nomenclature, and consistent, proper specimen storage in packets of acid-free paper. Wyoming and the RM bryophyte collections currently housed in Room 303 are reaping the benefits of her time and expertise.



Charmaine Delmatier, Director of the RM Volunteer Program for the past two years, and star volunteer herself, has moved to Washington

State to begin the next phase of her life. *Thanks* for all your help at RM, Char, and very best wishes! Don’t forget to visit!

RM Event:

Discover Native Plants – Walk & Workshop

What: Hike on State Section east of town; **Native Plants Workshop** in Aven Nelson Bldg, Rm. 223

When: MAY 19; hike @ 9:30am, workshop @ 1:00

Who: RM & WY Extension Service

Registration is required for the workshop (\$20.00 cost) and encouraged for the hike (free). To register, and see meeting-place maps, go to:

<https://bit.ly/2vENuPx>



RM Faces:

Darcie Bacon

Darcie Bacon is a new transplant to Laramie and the RM. Originally from Minnesota, she came west as soon she graduated from high school, and has called many western states home since, most recently Colorado. Despite much travel, though, her favorite place remains her

grandpa’s ranch in South Dakota. Darcie loves the outdoors, and hikes and gardens wherever she goes. We hear she’s also an awesome baker.

What Darcie likes best about the RM is the historical significance of the specimens, and the stories they tell about the collectors and locations—even the old hand writing. Plus, it’s amazing to be surrounded by 1.3 million plants! Darcie says the atmosphere and the people in the RM have been warm, welcoming, and inviting. She felt at home right away! We’re glad you joined us, Darcie - thank you for being an RM volunteer!