ROCKY MOUNTAIN Herbarium

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Imaging RM Specimens – *IMAGINE THAT!*

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Rocky Mountain Herbarium (RM) expands by leaps and bounds, not just quantitatively in number of significant specimens, but in new ways by making specimen images available on-line. At present, there are ~130,000 RM specimen images that you can access through the RM on-line database (rmh.uwyo.edu). Priorities have included imaging type specimens, the National USFS Herbarium, and project-related RM collections as supported through grants and project funding, in collaboration with UW Libraries.

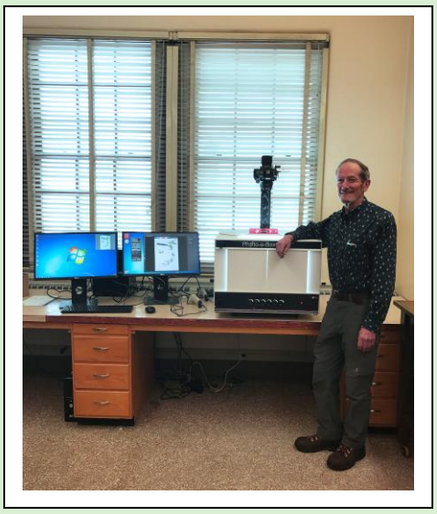
As of this year, the RM Herbarium has a dedicated Imaging Lab operating in Rm. 309 (northwest corner of the same floor) to promote this initiative. Imaging and data basing botanical specimens are now common practices in herbarium and other natural history collections throughout the world. Current trends continue to demonstrate the importance of our physical collections for georeference, DNA, phenological studies and more. Although the physical collections are essential, the digital collections are now available online and integrated into regional, national and global collections with an emphasis on making biodiversity information easy to find and use. As a result, users have access to the data and images of many of the region's specimens, opening the door to new applications.

The imaging process begins after a specimen has been entered into the RM database. Then it is barcoded and that is entered into the database. Specimens are placed in the lightbox, the image is taken using a mounted camera and the barcode is scanned. Overnight the images are processed and images become available on the RM Herbarium online portal. Thanks to volunteers, the rate of imaging has recently been greatly accelerated.

Above: Ernie Nelson led plant ID workshop, and Ron Hartman watched (above). Photo by Charmaine Delmatier.

Successful Plant ID Workshop

A public plant ID workshop was hosted on 26 January for the first time by Rocky Mountain Herbarium, tackling native conifers of Wyoming. It was preceded by an open house, with about 50 attendees, including current volunteers, U-WY faculty and staff, and interested public…some who became ***new*** volunteers – hurray for all!!!



Left: Dave Mullens in the new Imaging Lab

Volunteers in the Spotlight: Dave Mullens

Born in Laramie, Dave Mullens graduated from the University of Wyoming in Electrical Engineering in 1966. He went on to a very successful career with John Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory, the Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics, and Boeing with the military's Airborne Warning and Control System. He is now retired and one of the RM original volunteers who began in January 2016. Dave enjoys the enthusiasm in the herbarium and the freedom to work around his own schedule. He has been instrumental in expanding and developing the imaging lab where digital photos of each plant specimen are taken.

A total of **5190** volunteer hours were logged in the first full year of the RM Volunteer Program - - Volunteers, You SHINE!