Foreword

This issue of the *Oklahoma Native Plant Record* contains articles describing the vegetation of the past and present in Oklahoma, and one that sheds light on the potential for an invasive species to further affect the native vegetation of our state.

Based on plats, bearing tree data, and line summaries from the Public Land Survey, Bruce Hoagland, Rick Thomas, and Daryn Hardwick from the University of Oklahoma describe the historical land cover along the Deep Fork River in Okmulgee County circa 1897. These records indicate the bottomland forests, Cross Timbers forests and woodlands, and tallgrass prairie in this area were already starting to be transformed by agricultural activities.

Abby Crosswhite and Adam Ryburn from Oklahoma City University conducted a vascular plant survey of the John Nichols Scout Ranch in a suburban area of Canadian County. They report that a diversity of habitats on this property (upland forest, mixed grass prairie, bottomland forest, riparian areas) provide refuge for many species no longer found in the surrounding agricultural and residential areas.

Bruce Smith provides a checklist of the woody plants he and his students at McLoud High School have identified in the McLoud oak-hickory forest near their campus. He also provides a trail map and a guided tour of the forest, in which he illustrates how to identify many of the woody plants by their leaves, buds, and bark; encourages the reader to notice the lichens, slime molds, and insect larvae on the plants; and describes the size structure of the forest. I encourage you to stop by McLoud and use his trail guide to help you enjoy and appreciate this native forest.

Eric Duell and Karen Hickman from Oklahoma State University investigate the ability of kudzu (*Pueraria montana*) to sexually reproduce in Oklahoma at the western extent of its range. Although kudzu primarily spreads by rhizomes, sexual reproduction increases genetic diversity and results in seeds that can be dispersed by animals and water, thus potentially increasing its range. Information on the relative importance of asexual versus sexual reproduction in kudzu in Oklahoma can help us monitor and manage this invasive species.

This issue's Critic's Choice essay was written by Paul Buck for the Botany Bay section of the Spring 1998 *Gaillardia*. In his essay, Paul visits a bottomland forest and describes the life he sees there on a cold and windy winter day. As this issue goes to press, we are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, and many people are finding the time and opportunity to notice more of the myriad of interactions in the natural world, something Paul always beautifully encouraged us to do.

Please consider publishing your work in the *Oklahoma Native Plant Record*. It is listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals, is abstracted by the Centre for Agricultural Bioscience International, and can be accessed by researchers around the world.

Gloria Caddell
Managing Editor