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ALISO

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The name of the journal, *Aliso*, is the word used by the early Californians for the sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), a tree associated with the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden. In other areas *Aliso* refers to alder (*Alnus* sp.).

INTRODUCTION

J. TRAVIS COLUMBUS

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Welcome to Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden's Thirteenth Annual Southwestern Botanical Systematics Symposium, *Evolution and Taxonomy of Southwestern Plants*.

On January 10, 1847, General Stephen Kearny's "Army of the West" took possession of Los Angeles, then a pueblo of about 1500 people, completing its mission: seizure of New Mexico and California from Mexico. A year later, upon the signing of the Guadalupe-Hidalgo Treaty, Mexico ceded to the United States most of the territory now included in Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah. Texas had already been annexed in 1845. These newly acquired lands came to be referred to as the Southwest.

Under Kearny's command was William H. Emory, a lieutenant in the Corps of Topographical Engineers. Emory was charged with collecting physical and biological data as the forces proceeded through the Southwest. These data included a collection of plants, sent to John Torrey, and drawings of cacti, sent to George Engelmann. Emory's report to Congress, *Notes of a Military Reconnaissance, from Fort Leavenworth, in Missouri, to San Diego, in California, Including Parts of the Arkansas, Del Norte, and Gila Rivers*, was published in 1848. Included were Torrey and Engelmann's determinations and descriptions of new species. Among the species described by Torrey were *Adenostoma sparsifolium*, *Chondrosium eriopodum* (= *Bouteloua eriopoda* [Torr.] Torr.), *Dieteria asteroides* (= *Machaeranthera asteroides* [Torr.] Greene), *Erio-*

gonum abertianum, *E. trichopes*, *Fraxinus velutina*, *Quercus emoryi*, *Spiraea californica* (= *Vauquelinia californica* [Torr.] Sarg.), *Stillingia spinulosa*, and *Tetradymia ramosissima* (= *Psathyrotes ramosissima* [Torr.] A. Gray). Torrey also positioned *Fouquieria* (Fouquieriaceae) in Polemoniaceae, a possible relationship that will be addressed in Mark Porter's talk.

Since these events of 150 years ago, many kinds of data and methods are now available to systematists and much has been learned about the flora of the Southwest. In this Symposium, the current state of knowledge on several plant groups will be presented. I thank Curtis Clark, Gerald Gastony, Jennifer Matos, Mark Porter, and Robert Wallace for accepting invitations to speak. I am also grateful to Billie Turner for agreeing to deliver the keynote address.

With 129 participants, this year's Symposium is the best attended yet. Special thanks go to Ann Joslin, coordinator of the event. My colleagues Elizabeth Friar, Mark Porter, and Roy Taylor were instrumental, especially during the early stages of organization. I also thank Curtis Clark, who set up the Symposium Web page; Sandra Columbus, who compiled data for the Web page; Molly Rightmyer, who provided artwork for the brochure, poster, and program; Garden graduate students, who assisted with various tasks; and Garden volunteers, who organized the bulk mailing of registration brochures. Finally, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is gratefully acknowledged for its generous support.