

EDITOR'S NOTE: THE 50TH VOLUME OF *THE MICHIGAN BOTANIST*

It is immensely gratifying to inaugurate the fiftieth year of publication of *The Michigan Botanist*! Reaching this milestone acknowledges that the study of botany in the Great Lakes region is alive and well. Although they are too numerous to acknowledge individually, the previous editors, business managers, and volunteers are all thanked for their efforts to ensure that this high-quality publication has persisted.

As would be expected, a few things have changed in the past 49 years, yet, many facets of the publication remain the same. In the first issue of *The Michigan Botanist* published in 1962, the Editorial board wrote: "With this publication, the Michigan Botanical Club launches into a new venture, the final direction of which it would be premature to predict with precision" (*The Michigan Botanist*, volume 1, issue 1, p. 3). Upon comparison of the content of that first issue to those of the last five years, it is clear that the original intention of the journal remains: we continue to publish content devoted to the diverse aspects of plant life including fungi, lichens, algae, non-vascular and vascular plants in the Great Lakes region. Furthermore, the editors stated "It may be expected that on conservation issues, *The Michigan Botanist* will reflect the interests of the Michigan Botanical Club". Without a doubt, the numerous publications documenting all aspects of the flora of the diverse regions of the Great Lakes has contributed to conservation efforts over the past 49 years. In these ways, it is likely that the direction the journal has taken is similar to that envisioned by the editors in 1962. Yet, on the other hand, in 1962 it would have been impossible to predict that *The Michigan Botanist* could exist in an electronic format and be dispersed to every corner of the globe! Therefore, it is with great pleasure I inform readers that MPublishing and the Michigan Botanical Club (MBC) announce the launch of an online, open-access component to *The Michigan Botanist* <<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mbot>>, the peer-reviewed journal published quarterly by MBC since 1962. This is the first time the full text of the journal has been made available online.

The initial launch consists of volumes 37–48 (1998–2009), with both older and newer issues available. Dues-paying members of MBC will continue to receive print copies of the journal, but going forward, the full text of each issue will also be made freely available online to search, browse, read, and download.

In closing, it is probably safe to say that *The Michigan Botanist* will continue to publish on all aspects of plant life in the Great Lakes region that will contribute to conservation efforts. Yet, I will echo the sentiments of the founding editors by stating that it remains impossible to predict what other directions *The Michigan Botanist* will take in the next 50 years.

—Todd J. Barkman