
LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

In my last soliloquy from *Journal* Issue Number 4, I expressed the great relief in seeing the onset of spring and finally some warmer weather. It now seems so long ago that the "endless winter" predominated over us in this part of the world. This feeling comes to the front of our minds as we languish in the balmy days of the long summer sun. We quickly forget that feeling of intense cold and are once again surprised by the intensity of the sun.

Though I did not intend to go into great depth about weather and convenient memory that we humans have (or should I say lack of memory), it has been a year of tremendous learning to see the effects of this particularly cold winter on the flora and fauna around us. I ask myself the question, as an avid plant collector and lover of nature's great diversity, whether or not I will try particular species that did not fair well in our recent cold extremes? My curiosity prevails, in this instance, and once again, that convenient lack of memory; so I will try that plant again, being the experimenter, the artist, the collector that I am. As with every year I will be surprised by the different results and the unpredictable weather.

Now as the sun's rays lower in their angle and the nights become cooler we see the acorns developing on the trees (alas *Quercus rubra* is already dropping its acorns). We prepare for harvest and yet another wonderful season of Autumn. The days of the First International Oak Conference draw nearer and so we must prepare for probably one of the greatest exchanges of acorns. We hope that all members who plan to attend the Conference will make an effort to collect from species in their area and make the seed exchange a truly memorable one.

Indeed, as every day goes by, the excitement increases. I can hardly believe that I will have the privilege of meeting the many people I have corresponded with over the few years. Even those members from abroad, who make this organization truly "international," have made a considerable effort to attend this pioneer conference. Beside the great wealth of information presented by the lectures on the first day, there will be many important decisions which will affect the future of this Society taking place on the second day, at the Member's Meeting.

I try to picture how everything will take place and what everyone will look like, and just as in predicting the weather such a task is impossible. When we anticipate such event, we are more than likely surprised if not overwhelmed by all the events taking place. Indeed, we wish we could savor just one minute of this sheer enjoyment of this moment for when our lives are not as full.

Once again we would like to thank those members who have participated, contributing information and articles to the *Journal*. It is one step towards making this organization diverse in its topics and interest. As editor, I would like to see our Society become more involved with conservation and the protection of the many important oak habitats around the world. In this light, there is great need to summon information from many of our members abroad, whose participation in the recent months has dwindled. So please, members everywhere keep your activity levels high by sending pictures, photographs, articles, surveys, and stories about the oaks around you. A healthy organization relies upon the focus and determination of its membership.

M. Nigel Wright
I.O.S. Journal Editor