

2025

UNM HERBARIUM
MUSEUM OF SOUTHWESTERN BIOLOGY

ANNUAL REPORT

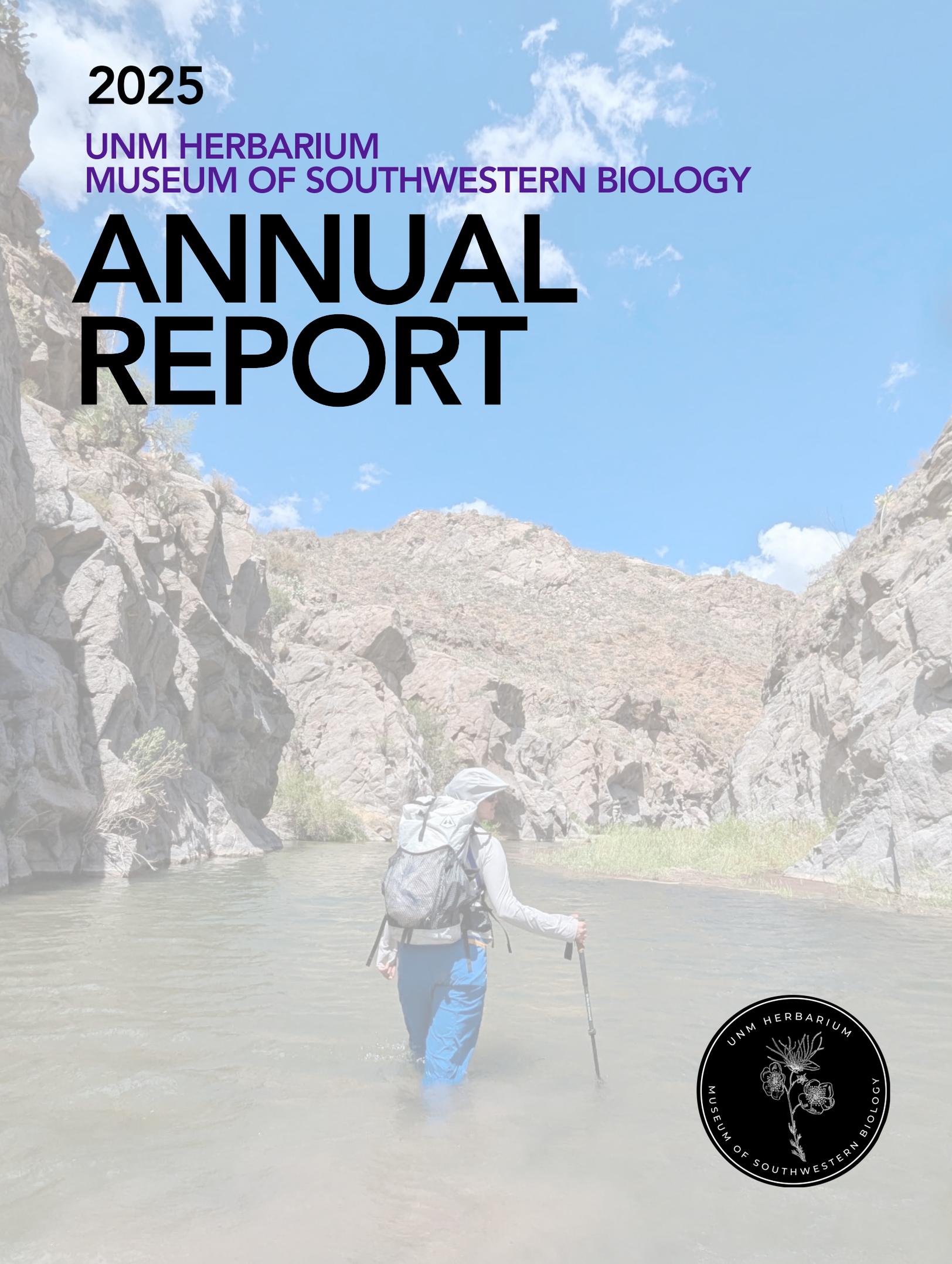


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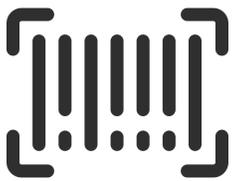
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Numbers and highlights from 2025



Abutilon parishi



Added **3,699** new specimens

Over 3,000 new specimens were accessioned into the UNM Herbarium and are available on SEINet, our main online data repository (swbiodiversity.org) where we host **143,602** vascular plant specimens. Across our non-vascular databases we hold **4,995** specimens, totaling **148,597** specimens!



Visited by over **289** guests

There were 12 tours in 2025. Eight of the tours were for UNM groups, three of the tours were for public land management agencies and one tour for a local K-12 group. Additionally, we were visited by researchers, students, community members. *Since 1990 we have averaged 260 visitors a year!*



Students & Volunteers worked **3,309** hours

We host a special crew of rotating & long term volunteers at the herbarium who aid in specimen processing from mounting to imaging to filing and even cataloguing our reference book library. We are also lucky to host a rotating crew of paid undergraduate staff who are the backbone of the collection!



We received **1,240** specimen gifts

Actively gifting and receiving specimen gifts is one of the central mechanisms we grow the collection outside of our own active research associates, personnel and students contributions. Through 16 different institutions we were able to receive close to 2,000 specimen gifts we accessioned and continue to foster and build these relationships with herbaria worldwide.

Welcome our New Curator



Photo by Alexa Flores

★ Dr. Diana Gamba ★

The search for our new Curator took place in the early Spring and after a long search with many qualified candidates, the hiring committee chose our new Curator who began in January 2026, Dr. Diana Gamba.

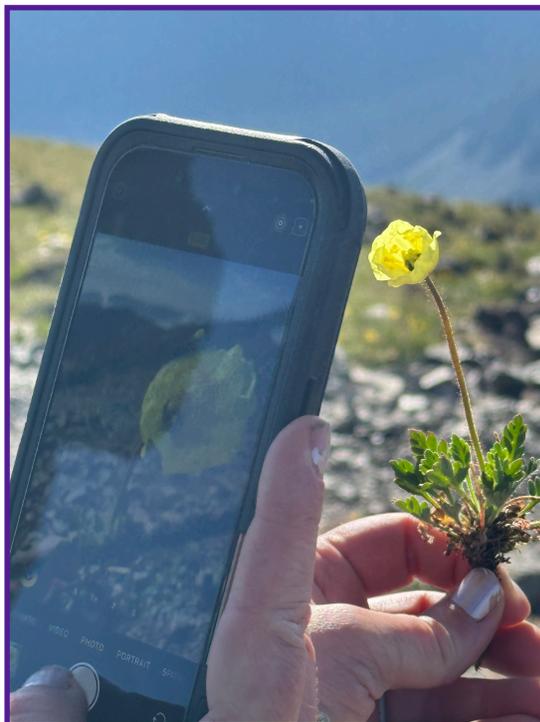
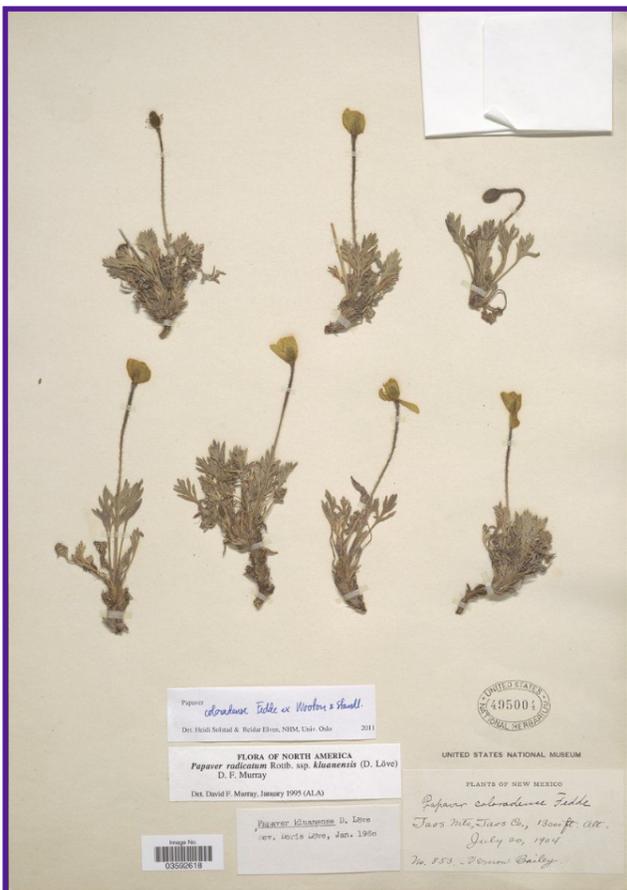
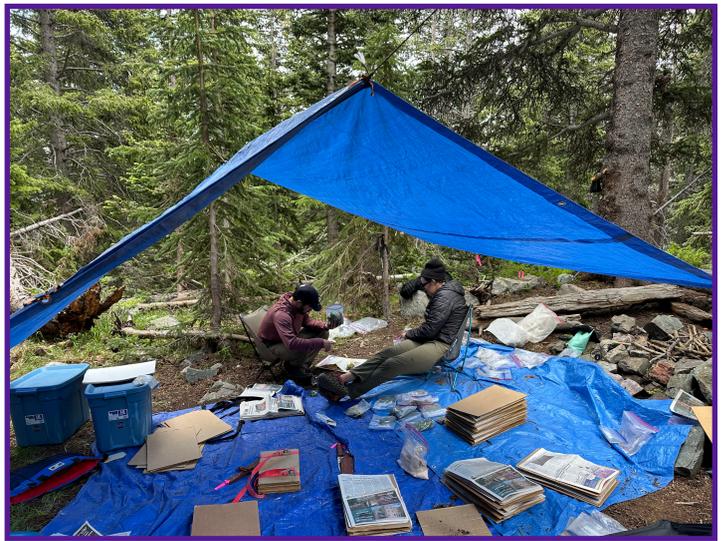
Diana comes to us from Pennsylvania where she recently finished up her postdoc at Penn State University. However, she is originally from Colombia, where she got her original botany training. Diana is a botanist interested in understanding mechanisms that maintain plant diversity and drive evolution under climate change. She is interested in wide-spread plants that endure multiple environmental challenges across their geographic range, but also by rare plants that are seemingly restricted to one or few geographic locations.

She is looking forward to undertaking her research in New Mexico, given its great biodiversity and its very well connected community of botanists and utilize these connections to facilitate more community and more collection growth. While she has a few projects currently underway, involving weed genomics, as well as peripheral species range genetic dynamics, she has many goals for the herbarium, and the most important one being, GROWTH. Gamba is excited to build off the efforts Hannah Marx and Harpo Faust with the annual collection foray and identification of under-collected areas. She is now here and busy establishing her lab at UNM and will be making a new strategic plan for the collection in the coming years.

Ongoing Research

Alpine

Alpine work continued in 2025 with a collaborative trip to the Wheeler Peak area, a part of the international Western North America Alpine Plant Surveys. The UNM contingent is now led by Harpo Faust with Joseph Kleinkopf and Hannah Marx, both now at Cornell. They were joined by Peri Lee Pipkin of the Albuquerque BioPark, Cristina Salvador and her intern of the Santa Fe Botanical Garden, Emily Griffoul and her intern of the Betty Ford Alpine Gardens, and Peter Harris of New Mexico Backcountry Horseman packed them in and out. Another great year, where to survey next?



One of the many exciting finds was locating *Papaver coloradense*, found for the first time in NM since 1904!

Where in the world is our Collections Manager?

Grace McCartha Natural Heritage Program of New Mexico, Zuni Pueblo



I am lucky as Collections Manager to actively collect & I take that part of my job seriously! In 2025 I got to meet up with some of my favorite botanists across the state of New Mexico. Thanks to everyone who came along and supported these collections, many notable records unfurled this year and are coming out in a paper soon! Below are just a few highlights from the season.

Bob Sivinski, Canjilon Lakes



Peri lee Pipkin, Albuquerque Bio Park, Middle Box Gila



Saff Killingsworth, Xerces Society, Turkey Creek



Hannah Marx & Joseph Kleinkoph, Cornell University, Wheeler Peak



With Kelly Allred (NMSU) & Russ Kleinman (WNMU), Brazos

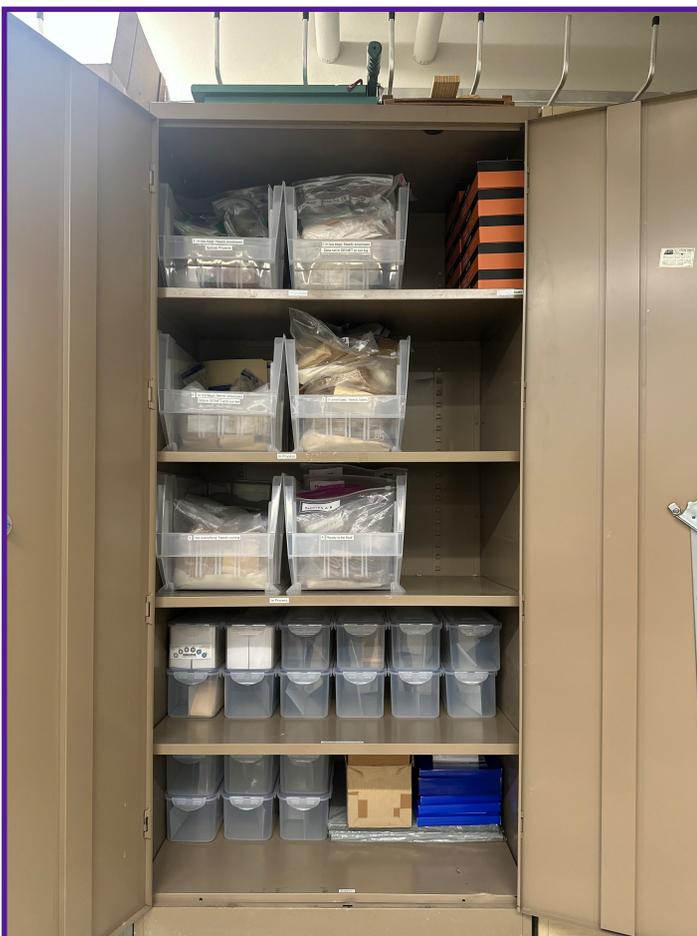


Collection Highlight 🔍

While we have been able to accomplish a lot in 2025, most notably the full accession of the legacy Arsene specimens, the full accession of all Marx lab specimens, and the continued returning of overdue specimen loans (over 1,000 specimens!), a bright light has occurred in collection development.

While the establishment of the Silica Leaf Tissue Library began a few years past, it has now come to be a more established aspect of the collection. With over 3,000 leaf tissue samples, more stream lined work-flows, the specimens are now easier than ever to access and we are getting nearly as many requests for leaf tissue as we are for destructively sampling specimens.

What is a leaf tissue sample? Instead of sampling tissue from an herbarium sheet for genetic sampling once its mounted and apart of the collection, researchers are now preemptively sampling a small piece of leaf tissue and preserving it in silica as an extended form of the collection. This helps us avoid destructively sampling and additionally helps get better reads of genetic data with the quick drying of silica.



Onwards & Upwards to your favorite Graduate Students



Bryana Olmeda defended & passed their masters defense in March 2025! As well, they recently submitted their manuscript, 'A Vascular Flora of the Brokeoff Mountains, Otero County, New Mexico' and it is currently in review. They are surely missed at the herbarium, but keep an eye out as they continue to work as a field botanist throughout New Mexico!



In July of 2025, everyone's favorite herbarium Phd student, **Joseph Kleinkopf**, left us to follow our former curator, Hannah Marx, to Cornell where he will finish his degree. He sends messages often looking fondly back at his four years at the herbarium, but has just two years in Ithaca before he finishes. His work on *Erigeron*, Southern Rocky alpine, and silica tissue libraries amongst his participation in the Museum Studies program does not go unseen. Good luck Joseph!





Collection Outreach



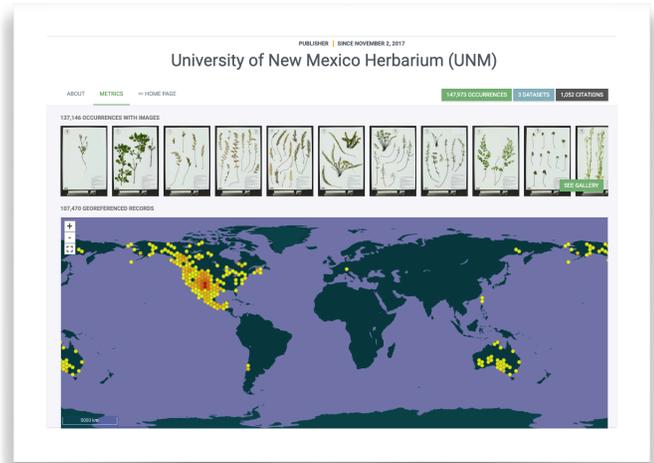
While we took a break in some of our more forward facing outreach like ID nights and the foray, we still maintained positive community impact. We were able to host a multitude of tours, a multitude of classes and even host a book sale! On top of this, our Collection Manager hosted two visiting seminar speakers, a part of the Biology Department speaker series.

Top: Our librarian volunteer, Anette Colbert, at the November 2025 Herbarium book sale at the Native Plant Societies Albuquerque Chapter. Below: Lee Taylors fall 2025 Fantastic Fungi class accessioning fungal specimens into the collection.



Engage with our collection

You can access our collections online!

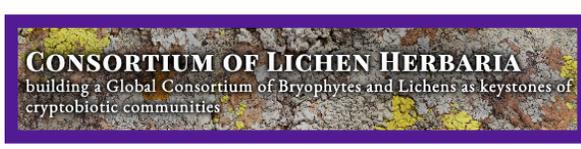


The majority of our holdings are on SEINet. This contains our vascular plant specimens, while the Lichen, Bryo and Myco Portals contain our non-vascular collections.

We use 4 symbiotia based portals to house our specimens digitally, and they all push to a global biodiversity aggregator GBiF.



Bryo Portal

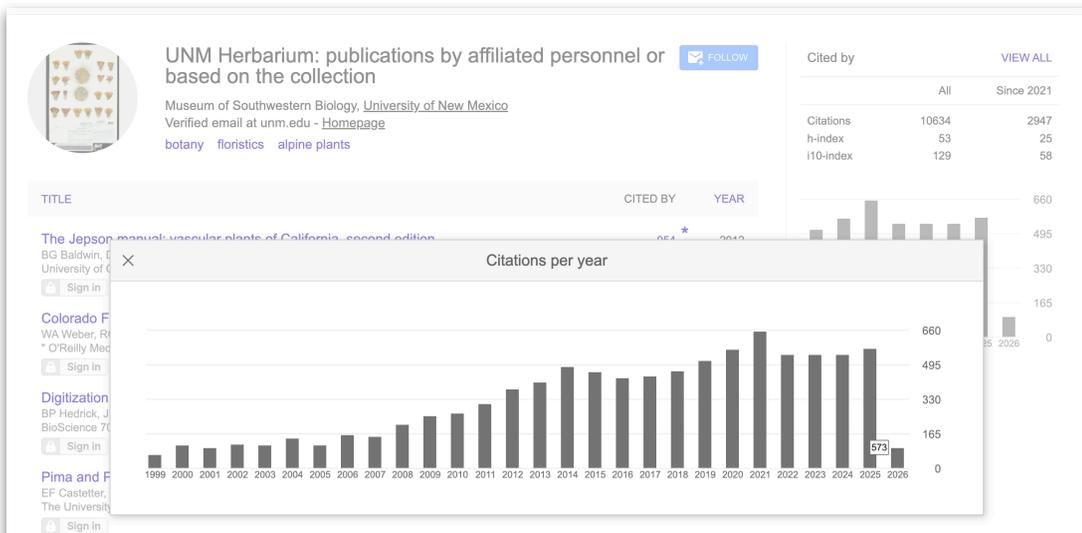


Lichen Portal

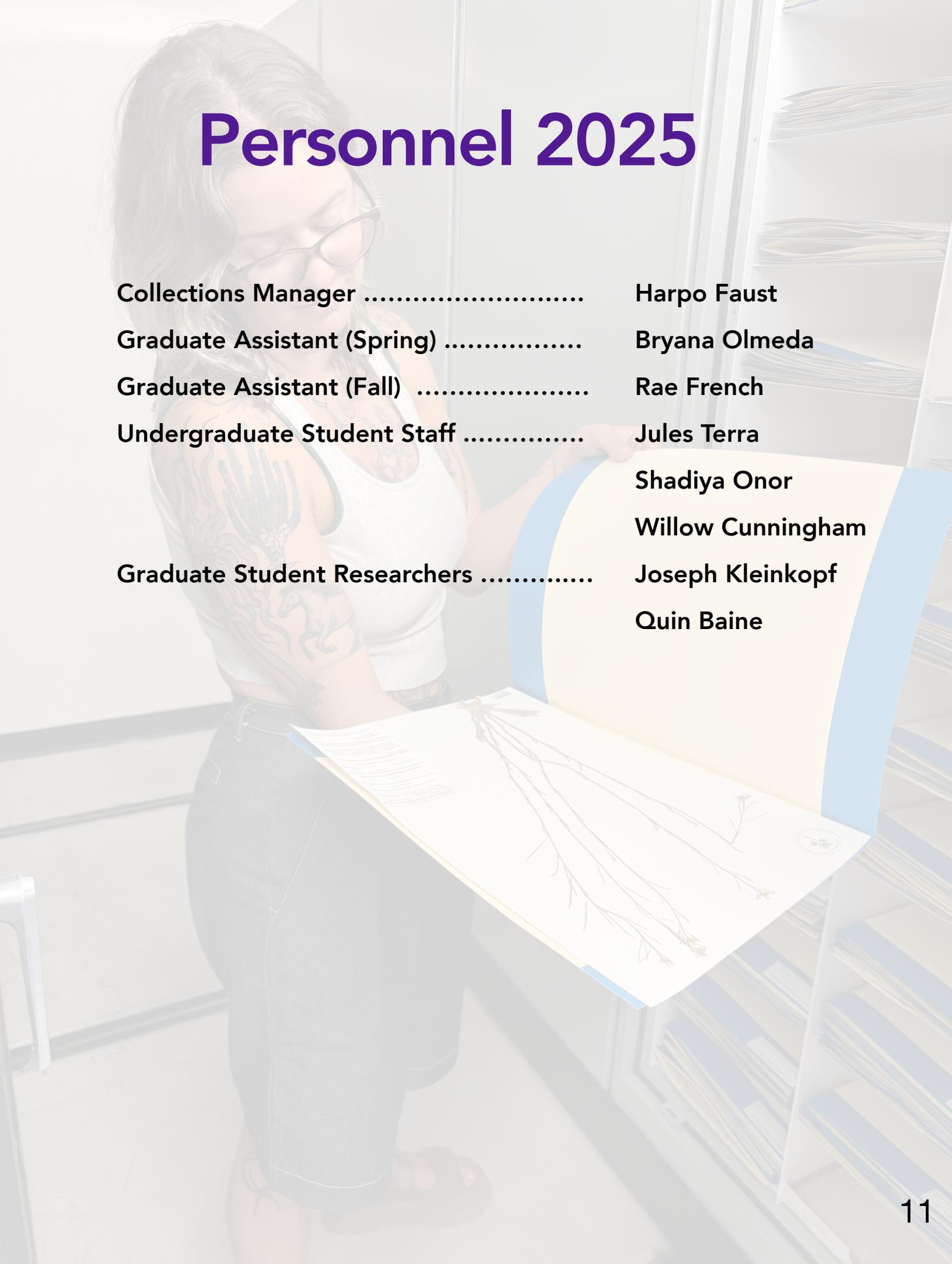


Myco Portal

While we try and send out publications from our personnel to the regional list serves, we can certainly do better with sharing the work that comes out of the collection. However, both Gbif and Google Scholar help us in tracing scientific impact of the collection by tracking every publication that utilized specimens from the UNM Herbarium.



Personnel 2025

A woman with long dark hair, glasses, and tattoos on her arms is looking at a botanical specimen in a herbarium. She is holding a large sheet of paper with a pressed plant specimen on it. The background shows shelves filled with stacks of papers or specimens.

Collections Manager	Harpo Faust
Graduate Assistant (Spring)	Bryana Olmeda
Graduate Assistant (Fall)	Rae French
Undergraduate Student Staff	Jules Terra
	Shadiya Onor
	Willow Cunningham
Graduate Student Researchers	Joseph Kleinkopf
	Quin Baine

Extended Family

Research Associates

Bob Sivinski

Yvonne Chauvin

Grace McCartha

Erika Rowe

Martin Purdy

Steve Reed

Peri Lee Pipkin

Library Associate

Anette Colbert

Volunteers

Joanne McEntire

Diane Jimenez

Dana Price

Emily Sican

Jaiden Rodgers

Savannah Martinez

Sarah Duckworth

Lola Roelofs

Miriam Hernandez

Amari Becker

Thank You

All of this work could not be done without the support of the botanical community here in New Mexico. We want to extend gratitude to the many students, volunteers, associates, foray participants, researchers, biologists and botanists who have helped maintain this herbarium from the past to the present.

As times grow more and more unknown, we understand how difficult it is to give. A very special thank you to those who donated to our herbarium in 2025. Your support helps us continue to maintain this incredibly important collection and we would not be able to continue without your contributions.

2025 Donor Highlight



Diane Cress
Reggie Fletcher
Brandt Magic
Janice Martenson
Jim McGrath
Lee Reegan
Steve Reed
John Holt Robertson
Bob Sivinski
Tom Stewart
Barbara Thiers

Support the UNM Herbarium

This year we are asking that contributions are made to our division fund, linked below, to help fund student workers in the collection, as it is our most pressing need. With an uncertain future, your gifts directly help us maintain this collection, by funding student staff salary.

Donations are best made on our website linked below to our foundation. You can also scan the QR code below.

Alternatively if you are interested in donating a field truck or starting a research endowment in your name, contact us directly.

Thank you to the generous botanical community in the wonderfully biodiverse state of New Mexico.

Please consider donating!



More Information

<http://www.msb.unm.edu/divisions/herbarium/index.html>

Contact Us

Email Dr. Diana Gamba: dgamba@unm.edu

Email Harpo Faust: harpofaust@unm.edu

Call the Herbarium: (505)-277-1360