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California Botanic Garden Herbarium & Botanical Research Institute of Texas Library to Launch Innovative Plant Digitization Project

Claremont, CA—April 28, 2022 The National Science Foundation's Infrastructure Capacity for Biological Research program has awarded The California Botanic Garden Herbarium (RSA) and the Botanical Research Institute of Texas Library (BRIT) nearly \$1 million to curate, digitize, and expand access to the materials of renowned American botanist Sherwin Carlquist.

This innovative four-year collaborative project, "Advancing the Extended Specimen Network: Curating and Digitizing the Sherwin Carlquist Collection," aims to create an Extended Specimen Network with Carlquist's collections. The extended specimen network "extends" beyond an individual specimen or collection to create additional physical preparations and digital resources including field notes, *in situ* images, genetic samples, and more.

While the archival materials will be primarily handled at BRIT, the California Botanic Garden Herbarium will be working with biological materials including herbarium specimens, fluid-preserved specimens, wood specimens, and wood anatomy microscope slides. "In curating, digitizing, and linking Carlquist's collections, this project will enable an important collaboration between two institutions and two separate but interconnected disciplines. This collaboration will in turn shepherd a new paradigm in the way in which natural history collections and archives communities envision, implement, and utilize extended specimen networks," noted Mare Nazaire, Herbarium Curator and the project's Principal Investigator.

In addition to creating the Extended Specimen Network to increase access to Carlquist's collections, the project goals include recruiting participation from students at different levels in their academic career with a special emphasis on providing opportunities for populations traditionally underrepresented in natural history collections and library sciences. The project will also culminate in a public exhibit hosted at each institution.

Sherwin Carlquist (1930-2021) is best known for significant contributions in plant systematics, wood anatomy, and island plant diversity, including numerous books and over 300 research papers covering such topics as anatomy and systematics in many plant families, evolutionary and ecological theories in plant anatomy and structure, floral development, morphology, and island biogeography. Carlquist has also made significant contributions to taxonomy. His long and distinguished career included extended affiliations with Pomona College, Claremont Graduate University, and the California Botanic Garden (formerly Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden) as resident Plant Anatomist, as well as a position at UC Santa Barbara.

The California Botanic Garden Herbarium is recognized throughout the world for its strength in documenting the diversity, distribution, variation, and ecology of more than 6,500 California native plant species. The combined Herbarium of California Botanic Garden and Pomona College is a museum-quality collection of vascular plant specimens. With current holdings totaling over 1,250,000 specimens, the Herbarium is one of the largest in the Western United States and third largest in California.

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