August 6, 2017

SUBJECT: Nomination of Dr. Dieter Wilken for California Native Plant Society Fellow

Dear Linda Chipping and the California Native Plant Society Fellows Committee,

It is with great pleasure that I write in collaboration with a number of supporters (letters attached) to nominate Dr. Dieter Wilken for the California Native Plant Society Fellows Program. A pillar of California botany since the time of his graduate work at the University of California Santa Barbara in the late 1960s, it is not an exaggeration to state that Dieter has contributed more toward the appreciation and conservation of the California Flora than most living botanists. In this letter I summarize Dieter’s accomplishments and contributions by focusing on three major themes: 1) exemplary efforts to increase understanding and appreciation of the California flora; 2) dedicated service to California’s rarest plants through the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden and the California Native Plant Society Rare Plant Program; and 3) superlative outreach through social media. I conclude by providing the specific details requested in the Nomination Procedures. Before discussing these topics, I start with a brief biographical sketch.

Like the plants that he knows so well, Dieter Wilken is himself a California native, born in East Los Angeles in 1944. He graduated with his undergraduate degree in biology from California State University, Los Angeles in 1967. During his undergraduate program, he completed a senior thesis on seasonal dimorphism in mulefat (Baccharis salicifolia [B. glutinosa]) under the supervision of Dr. James Henrickson. Published in 1971, Dieter’s study demonstrated that B. glutinosa and B. viminea were seasonal forms of the same plant species, a finding that overturned the prevailing taxonomic view of the day. By the time he was pursuing his doctoral degree at the University of California, Santa Barbara, he was already an
accomplished botanist. His lab students in Dr. Bob Haller’s legendary UCSB two-part plant course referred to Dieter as “Walk-a-Munz”, owing to his in-depth knowledge of local native plants (see Bob Patterson’s letter of support, attached).

Since graduating with his Ph.D. in 1971, Dieter has worked tirelessly and continually toward the understanding and conservation of native plants in western North America, including California. He is a broadly trained systematist and a world expert on several plant groups, including the charismatic California-lilacs (Ceanothus, Rhamnaceae), showy Ipomopsis (Polemoniaceae), and the subject of his dissertation, the genus Hulsea (Asteraceae). During his time in Colorado following his doctoral work (1973-1993), Dieter championed the transcription of specimen label data into a digital format when computers first became available. While this is commonplace now, Dieter was a national trailblazer in specimen digitization, a focus he brought with him to the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden; the Garden’s herbarium is now nearly completely digitized, thanks to Dieter’s forward-thinking!

*Increasing understanding and appreciation of the California flora*

Dieter’s transition back to California occurred at the beginning of an important period of state-wide and regional floristic work that resulted in a tremendous increase in the understanding and appreciation of the California Flora. Dieter’s interests, training, and experience allowed him to play a pivotal role in this floristic renaissance. Upon leaving Colorado, Dieter was hired to serve as the Project Manager for the Jepson Manual project. As described in Bruce Baldwin and Tom Rosatti’s letters of support, the project was badly behind schedule, suffering from budget shortfalls, and at risk of total collapse. Dieter was able to right the ship through his leadership, fund raising, direct action on treatments, and stubborn commitment to finish the project. The first edition of the Jepson Manual was published in 1993 and was immediately an invaluable resource for learning about and appreciating California native plants. As accessible and it was comprehensive, the book served enthusiasts and professional botanists alike; it would later form the basis for The Jepson Desert Manual (2002) and the second edition of The Jepson Manual (2012), on both of which Dieter served as a primary editor. Dieter also published two other important books, one with David Fross on one of California’s most celebrated shrubs, Ceanothus (2006), and the other a complete, book-length flora on the plants of Santa Cruz Island coauthored with Steve Junak et al. (1995). I would suspect that one or more of these critical floristic resources sit on the desks or shelves of nearly all botanists in the state, a powerful testament to the role that Dieter played in fostering appreciation and understanding of our state’s flora. What I find most impressive is that he worked on these important books while publishing in the primary literature and leading applied rare plant conservation on the Central Coast and across the state through the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden and the California Native Plant Society.
Conserving California’s rarest plants

Dieter is passionate about plant conservation in California and has worked tirelessly toward the preservation of California’s rarest and most vulnerable plants as one of his core missions for the last 25 years. While many academically-oriented botanists dabble, Dieter has been an outspoken leader in the conservation field, especially on the Central Coast, Channel Islands, and more broadly through the California Native Plant Society.

At the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, Dieter founded and ran all aspects of the Garden’s rare plant program from 1993 to 2013. His rare plant program focused on three major tasks: data aggregation, interaction with stakeholders, and focused studies on individual rare plant taxa. The value of regional taxonomic knowledge of rare plants, which usually includes a critical data aggregation and management component, cannot be overstated. For the Central Coast and Channel Islands, there is no one more knowledgeable about regionally important rare plants; Dieter has sought out, encountered, and studied many of them. With this hard-earned expertise in hand, Dieter interacted with many regional stakeholders, including all major landowners such as the National Park Service, The Navy, The Nature Conservancy, and the Los Padres National Forest, to provide valuable insight that could be translated into direct conservation action. Dieter has also studied many of these plants to assess the underlying causes of rarity. These studies, often focused on reproductive biology, have targeted some of California’s rarest plants, such as the federally listed species: Arenaria paludicola, Berberis pinnata ssp. insularis, Boechera hoffmannii, Chlorogalum purpureum, Dudleya nesiotica, Galium buxifolium, Gilia tenuiflora ssp. hoffmannii, Layia increscens ssp. villosa, Malacothamnus fasciculatus var. nesioticus, and Nasturtium gambelii. In 2008, Dieter received the Center for Plant Conservation’s Star Award for his demonstrated concern, cooperation, and personal investment in protecting rare plants through this work at the Garden.

Dieter has also provided his expertise and knowledge toward the conservation of the state’s rarest plants through the California Native Plant Society. He is a perennial contributor to the CNPS Rare Plant Forum, the primary vehicle for soliciting information from experts for decision making pertaining to the CNPS Rare Plant Inventory (e.g., listing and delisting of taxa). If Dieter has knowledge of a plant in question, he will enthusiastically provide his well-reasoned opinion! Beyond this service, in 2008 Dieter became a founding member of the CNPS Rare Plant Program Committee (see Jim André’s letter of support, attached), a service role that he maintained until early 2017. Through this committee, Dieter evaluated hundreds of plants for CNPS listing and in fact worked with Jim André and other subcommittee members to standardize and formally describe the process for listing a plant through CNPS (until then the process was more informal). André describes Dieter as “our most experienced advisor on California’s rare plants,” a role that few could dispense with as much wisdom, patience, and good humor.
Excellence in Outreach Through Social Media

Public outreach is a vital component of conservation work, and outreach through social media platforms such as Facebook has supplanted so-called traditional approaches in some cases. As a scientist at a private non-profit dedicated to plant conservation, I can attest that this worth-while form of outreach, while simple in theory to perform, can easily be relegated to the margins of one’s schedule and then pushed off entirely when other tasks seem to burn more hotly. Nevertheless, social media platforms have become an important forum for the exchange of ideas, where a modest investment of energy can have disproportionately large effects.

The California Native Plant Society Facebook page is extremely active, with a total of 21,474 current members as of 6 August 2017. This busy page, which I typically scan daily, is loaded with California native plant enthusiasts ranging from the newly initiated to the seasoned veteran. Throughout the course of a season, posts will range from common questions on commonly encountered native and non-native plants to difficult questions relating to seldom seen natives. Frequently -- perhaps daily when he is not travelling -- Dieter provides patient, thorough, and seemingly ego-free answers to these posted queries on the CNPS Facebook page. Initially, this would seem to be a somewhat shallow interaction on the topic of California plants; after all, people of all ages and levels of experience post to Facebook. It is for precisely this reason that Dieter’s guidance is so important! Although not without a number of other experts, the CNPS Facebook page is made a much stronger and more factually accurate resource with Dieter’s regular involvement. In what other place could one receive direct information and feedback from the Project Manager of the first edition of the Jepson Manual, an Editor on the second edition of the Jepson Manual, and one of the godfathers of specimen digitization? Because relatively few true masters of the California flora participate in this way, Dieter’s regular involvement has a noticeable, positive effect on this busy social media platform, which in turn must have a noticeable, positive effect on its 21,474 current members.

Truly a modern-day solution to shrinking botany budgets on university campuses and dwindling support for taxonomy, what a wonderful way to contribute one’s knowledge and expertise! I hope others will follow Dieter’s lead in this low cost, but potentially high yield form of outreach.

In this letter I have tried to convey a small fraction of the impact that Dr. Dieter Wilken has had on the appreciation and conservation of the California flora as well as his contributions to the California Native Plant Society. For these stated reasons and countless unstated, Dieter is most highly deserving of being named a Fellow of the California Native Plant Society. I hope in considering Dieter’s long career of service to California plants as well as CNPS that you agree with me! If you would like clarification or further information, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at (805) 682-4726 x 124, or by email at mguilliams@sbbg.org.

Cordially,

C. Matt Guilliams

Ken and Shirley Tucker Plant Systematist
Curator of the Clifton F. Smith Herbarium
1. Name, address, and phone numbers of nominee and nominator(s)

Nominee:
Dr. Dieter H. Wilken
Research Associate, former Director of Conservation
Santa Barbara Botanic Garden
1212 Mission Canyon Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93015
(805) 682-4726

Nominators:
Dr. C. Matt Guiliams
Ken & Shirley Tucker Plant Systematist
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James M. André
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Dr. Bob Patterson
Professor of Botany
San Francisco State University
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Dr. Thomas J. Rosatti
Specialist Emeritus, Editor (Ret.), Jepson Flora Project
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Dr. Jennifer Thorsch  
Director Emeritus  
Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration (CCBER)  
University of California, Santa Barbara  
Santa Barbara, CA, 93016  
thorsch@ccber.ucsb.edu

2. The nominee’s offices held, areas of service or organizational roles  
Please reference this letter as well as the attached CV.

3. The nominee’s project of work or goals accomplished  
Please reference this letter as well as the attached CV.

4. The nominee’s age and years of service in specific offices, roles, or activities  
Please reference this letter as well as the attached CV.
Dieter H. Wilken
2627 State Street No 2
Santa Barbara CA 93105
piet.wilke@gmail.com
805-448-8190

Resume

CURRENT POSITION

Director of Conservation, Santa Barbara Botanic Garden (2009-present; part-time)

Responsibilities: Manage conservation program, including acquisition and curation of ex situ plant materials; serve as liaison to Center for Plant Conservation, California Department of Fish and Game, and US Fish and Wildlife Service, and California Consortium of Herbaria; conduct research on rare plant biology; assist Garden horticulture program on issues related to listed species.

ACADEMIC TRAINING: B.A. Botany (1967), California State University at Los Angeles; Ph.D. (1971) Biological Sciences, University of California, Santa Barbara.


PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES: American Society of Plant Taxonomists, California Botanical Society, International Association of Plant Taxonomists, Linnean Society of London (Fellow), American Association of Museums (museum assessment and accreditation teams), Southern California Botanists


**Awards:** 1987. Honorary Life Membership conferred by Colorado Native Plant Society, for distinguished service; 2008. Center for Plant Conservation Star Award, for demonstrating concern, cooperation, and personal investment to plant conservation. 2013. Dedication of the journal Madroño Volume 59 for professional service.


**Other Experience.** 1995-2013. Conducted studies of reproductive biology, including breeding systems, seed germination, and development of propagation protocols of and for federally listed species, including *Arenaria paludicola*, *Berberis pinnata* ssp. *Insularis*, *Boechera hoffmannii*, *Chlorogalum purpureum*, *Dudleya nesiotica*, *Galium buxifolium*, *Gilia tenuiflora* ssp. *hoffmannii*, *Layia incresscens* ssp. *villosa*, *Malacothamnus fasciculatus* var. *nesioticus*, and *Nasturtium gambelii*. 
California Native Plant Society
Fellows Committee
2707 K Street, Suite 1
Sacramento, CA 95816-5130

February 6, 2017

Dear Committee Members:

I am honored to provide this letter in support of the nomination of Dr. Dieter Wilken as CNPS Fellow.

I first became acquainted with Dieter in the late 1990s, while collaborating on sections of the Jepson Desert Manual and during status reviews of rare plants in eastern California and Nevada. I found Dieter to be willing to engage and share his expertise in rare plant conservation, during efforts that involved the federal agencies, CNPS (Mojave Chapter) and the native plant societies in neighboring states.

In 2008 I was appointed chair and senior advisor to the Rare Plant Program at CNPS and my first task was to construct the Rare Plant Program Committee (RPPC), a ten-member committee comprised of California’s leading taxonomists and rare plant biologists. Much to my delight, Dieter accepted the invitation to join the RPPC, and I have since developed a rich professional alliance and friendship with Dieter.

Last month, Dieter stepped down from the RPPC to focus other professional aspirations and to balance his time commitments. During his nearly decade-long tenure with the RPPC, Dieter served as our most experienced advisor on California’s rare plants, providing an invaluable fluency in taxonomic research that was critical in determining the listing status of hundreds of rare species. Perhaps Dieter’s greatest accomplishment was his work on a subcommittee tasked to codify the CNPS rare plant listing process. I very much appreciated his creativity, thoughtfulness, and stubborn adherence to scientific integrity in developing this core mechanism for maintaining the Rare Plant Inventory, now recognized as the signature function of CNPS and a gold standard worldwide. I know I speak for everyone in the Rare Plant Program in saying it was a great honor to serve with Dieter.

While my personal experience working with Dieter at CNPS has been primarily in the Rare Plant Program, it is quite clear that his influence spans the many CNPS programs. His encyclopedic knowledge of the California flora, mentoring qualities with young botanists, and tireless work on behalf of rare plant conservation throughout the state, is a lifelong and unparalleled contribution to the
Society. For this reason, it is with ease and sincerity that I give my highest recommendation for Dieter Wilken as CNPS Fellow.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

James M. André
Dept of Biology, University of Calif., Riverside;
Director, UC Granite Mountains Desert Research Center
jim.andre@ucr.edu/(760) 733-4222
31 January 2017

Dear Colleagues:

I am greatly pleased to write this letter in support of Dr. Dieter H. Wilken’s recognition as a Fellow of the California Native Plant Society. I have known Dieter since the 1980s, when he was serving as the Managing Editor of the original Jepson Manual Project at the Jepson Herbarium. I was serving as an author of treatments for the 1993 Manual at the time and interacted with him extensively, both remotely and during visits to the Jepson Herbarium. Since then, we have collaborated on various floristic initiatives, including The Jepson Desert Manual (2002), The Jepson Manual, second edition (2012), and The Jepson eFlora (four revisions to date), as co-editors of the Jepson Flora Project.

Dieter’s contributions toward fulfilling the stated criteria for CNPS Fellows of “furthering appreciation and conservation of California’s native flora” have been wide-ranging and extensive. I can speak mostly to his work in the interface between academic and non-academic botany of California; that is, in translating the efforts of plant systematists and ecologists into floristic resources that provide plant conservation biology and public education in general with scientifically sound botanical information on California’s native and naturalized plants. Dieter’s role in that process has been far more impactful than conspicuous, largely because he has not sought to advertise his accomplishments and the essential role that he has played in the recent development of California floristics.

As to my last point, Dieter was arguably the key player in the successful publication of the original Jepson Manual (1993), which made identification of California plants --- including rare and endangered taxa --- much more accessible to botanists of all backgrounds and capabilities. He was recruited into the Jepson Manual Project at a time when editor Jim Hickman’s health had declined too much for Jim to be able to see the project through to completion without the aid of a project manager who could essentially take over the primary role of editing as well as authoring content that was unassigned or was assigned to authors who were unable to produce treatments of their genera or families in a timely way. Without going into details, that new managing editor also would need to negotiate a political situation at Berkeley that endangered the project’s viability.

Dieter soon had the Jepson Manual Project back on firm footing and made a heroic effort to ensure that the project was completed with available funding. As one of the authors who was recruited after default of a previously assigned author, I am well aware of the effective way that Dieter facilitated completion of the Manual in a scientifically rigorous fashion. He was operating both in the trenches, single-handedly preparing treatments for completely orphaned genera or families, and serving as a very helpful, hands-on editor to contributors of treatments to the Manual. Having been the lead editor of the second edition of The Jepson Manual, I marvel at
what Dieter achieved in order to pull together the original Manual, which was done essentially from scratch (that is, without a pre-existing edition), long after Munz wrote his California Flora and Supplement. Dieter’s adherence to the wishes of Hickman and then-Jepson Curator Larry Heckard, to keep the glossary and treatments user-friendly to non-academic botanists, and to keep the book to a single volume despite extensive illustrations, resulted in a Manual that made all of California’s vascular plant diversity accessible to professional and non-professional botanists for the first time. That accessibility was of pivotal importance to expanding the ability of others to enjoy and preserve California’s flora, by allowing for easier identification of native and naturalized plants across the state. In large part, Dieter Wilken is the person who made that possible. Since 1993, Dieter has quietly continued to participate as an editor of the Jepson Flora Project. I have been grateful for his counsel and wisdom, as well, as the various initiatives of the Project have been formulated and pursued.

On top of his service in the communication of floristic knowledge to Californian botanists, Dieter also has been a big contributor to the advancement of fundamental scientific understanding of our flora. His systematic work in the Asteraceae, Polemoniaceae, and Rhamnaceae has been of benefit to classification of our native plants, including many rare taxa, and he remains a primary expert on some of our most complex genera, such as Ceanothus. He is very much a scientist in the spirit of one of the founders of CNPS (and one of its earliest fellows), G. Ledyard Stebbins, who made important academic accomplishments to California botany and also served to inspire and educate people of all backgrounds in California plant diversity and its conservation.

In important contrast to Ledyard Stebbins, Dieter is a relatively modest individual whose labor on behalf of California botany has not been recognized formally to the extent that is warranted. From that perspective, Dieter is even more deserving of recognition as a CNPS Fellow. I wholeheartedly endorse his nomination.

Sincerely,

Bruce G. Baldwin
W. L. Jepson Professor and Curator
Fellows Committee
CNPS

28 December 2016

Dear Colleagues:

I write in support of the nomination of Dr. Dieter H. Wilken to be elected a Fellow of the California Native Plant Society. I have known Dieter since 1968 and we remain colleagues and close friends.

Dieter is a botanist's botanist. By the time he was an undergraduate at CSU Los Angeles he was already an accomplished student of the California flora. As a graduate student at UCSB Dieter was the hands-down most knowledgeable taxonomist (including the faculty, I would guess) when it came to knowing the greatest array of California plants. How many people know that Dieter's nickname in grad school was the "Walk-a-Muntz?" When we would return from a lab collecting trip, to save time we wouldn't sit down and key the specimens, we'd simply get Dieter to look at each one and name it. But Dieter not only knows the plants in the field by name, he understands the nuances of variation and evolutionary relationships of these plants, and has actually used numerous techniques to elicit these relationships. And Dieter has never been just a one-taxon taxonomist. He has conducted research and published on a broad spectrum of taxa — Compositae, Polemoniaceae, Ceanothus, to name just a few. Neither is he locale-centered; he is an all-California botanist.

Dieter's first academic jobs, at Occidental College and Colorado State University, respectively, earned him a reputation as a valued teacher and mentor as well as a productive researcher. Then he was recruited to manage the new Jepson Manual project in the late 1980s. Overseeing the writing of a manual with around 200 contributing authors must have been a bit like the proverbial herding of cats; Dieter handled it with efficiency and aplomb, and contributed many treatments himself. Shortly after completing his TDA at the Jepson, he transferred one last time to his current home at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden.

Throughout his professional career Dieter has been not only a plant systematist but an actively involved conservation biologist (the two go hand in hand). He has made numerous contributions to preservation efforts and is widely regarded as a valuable resource on issues of the conservation of the California flora.

Dieter has always been very generous with his time, despite his frequent claims of "being too busy." Dieter has contributed to numerous floristic treatments outside of California. When I was serving as editor of Madroño, I could always rely on Dieter for a critical yet sensitive review of manuscripts. It came to the point that I began to feel guilty asking him to review so many manuscripts. And any time I sent a student Dieter's way to get input on some aspect of their research, Dieter was always available.

Dieter Wilken epitomizes the classic California botanist. When I look at the list of CNPS Fellows it is easy for me to imagine Dieter's name among them. It has been my honor to have Dieter as a mentor, colleague, and pal throughout my career. He is most worthy of CNPS fellowship.

Sincerely,

Bob Patterson
Professor of Botany
San Francisco State University
9 February 2017

Fellows Committee
California Native Plant Society
c/o Linda Chipping
1530 Bayview Heights Drive
Los Osos CA 93402

Dear Members of the Fellows Committee:

As Scientific Editor of The Jepson Manual, I'd like to support in the strongest, most enthusiastic way possible the nomination of Dr. Dieter H. Wilken as a Fellow of the California Native Plant Society. I can't think of a person who has made more outstanding contributions "to furthering appreciation and conservation of California native flora" than Dieter, for me in his role as Project Manager of The Jepson Manual Project.

When I joined the project in December of 1987, at a point about half-way through the ten years it was supposed to take to complete The Jepson Manual, I was presented with a treatment of a single family, including 16 genera and about 75 taxa below this rank (species, subspecies, and varieties), that I was told represented the first and only family treatment that had been brought through to final, publishable form within the project, and asked to evaluate it. In plain terms, it was utterly unacceptable for publication anywhere. I could enumerate and discuss the problems, but it would be unpleasant and I think tangential to the purpose of this letter. I was also shown documents that had been written within the project about the project, for purposes of garnering public support in addition to funding, as well as to attract specialists from around the world to provide floristic treatments for The Jepson Manual of the taxonomic groups in which they had expertise. These too were in terrible shape, featuring abundant grammatical errors, misspellings, awkward compositional style, and inaccurate to downright incorrect statements. That the project had addressed treatment of only about 75 lower-level taxa, out of well over 7000 in the flora of California, after five years of a ten-year project, and that the result of these efforts was so poor, was almost too depressing and daunting to contemplate.

I made my assessments and concerns known, in no uncertain terms yet with considerable trepidation and reluctance, but they were met only with resistance and lack of understanding — not to mention anger — by other members of the project. Feeling helpless, outnumbered, and overwhelmed within the project, I took my problems elsewhere, to administrators at UC Berkeley as well as to members of the faculty there and elsewhere who had expertise in the area of floristic botany. After a long, difficult time, including a deeply probing study of the project by the "Management Analysis Group" on the Berkeley campus, it was decided that a Project Manager needed to be hired in order to mediate disagreements between me and the rest of the project, to write promotional materials and grant proposals for the project, to help with the scientific editing of taxonomic treatments submitted by botanists outside the project, and to help prepare treatments of taxonomic groups for which no outside author had been found.
A number of very highly qualified people interviewed for the position, but Dieter was clearly the best choice and accepted the job shortly thereafter. In my opinion, he is the primary reason there is a Jepson Manual today, and that it comes as close as it does to meeting the standards of excellence required in a work of this magnitude and importance. Dieter is disciplined, dedicated, hard working, and persuasive in addition to being an excellent writer, communicator, and first-rate botanist. It was these traits that allowed him to obtain the funding necessary to complete the project, and to raise standards within the project to the point that something scientifically and factually acceptable could be produced.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Rosatti  
Specialist Emeritus  
Editor (Ret.), Jepson Flora Project  
University and Jepson Herbaria  
1001 Valley Life Sciences Building #2465  
University of California, Berkeley  
Berkeley, CA 94720-2465  
phone: 510-685-6031
31 January 2017

Fellows Committee
California Native Plant Society
c/o Linda Chipping
1530 Bayview Heights Drive
Los Osos CA 93402

Dear Fellows Committee:

I am very pleased to submit this letter in support of Dr. Dieter Wilken’s nomination as a Fellow of the California Native Plant Society.

In 2009, the Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration (CCBER) at the University of California Santa Barbara received funding from the National Science Foundation to improve the infrastructure and curation of our vascular plant and algae collections. The funding included the installation of a new compact storage system and the compete reorganization of the collection including updating nomenclature, annotating specimens, and curating important collections contributed by faculty and students during the past half century.

We were able to hire Dr. Dieter Wilken who served as the Curator/Taxonomist for the three-year project. The Santa Barbara Botanic Garden graciously allowed us to employ Dr. Wilken for one day a week to assist us with the project. The project staffing included the PI, Dr. Wilken, a data manager, two graduate students and one undergraduate student who assisted with labeling, refolding and databasing. In addition, we launched a new curatorial internship program to recruit and train interested undergraduate students to assist with numerous curatorial activities. The internship was very successful and all project staff participated in the internship by giving lectures and mentoring the students.

Dr. Wilken participation and expertise were crucial for the success of the project. His knowledge of taxonomy and especially California flora, connections throughout the botanical community, and willingness to share his time and knowledge with project staff and students ensured that the project stayed on track and was completed with the highest degree of accuracy and efficiency.
In 2010, the California Consortium of Herbaria was awarded NSF funding for a collaborative proposal entitled *Harnessing the power of herbaria to understand the changing flora of California: A biodiversity hotspot in peril*. The goal of the project was to support the national effort to predict, understand and monitor the effects of climate change through the databasing of over 338,600 specimens of California plants and georeferencing of 500,000 specimens. CCBER, the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, and the Herbarium at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo formed the Central California node on the collaborative proposal.

Dr. Wilken once again served as the lead taxonomist on the proposal for both SBBG and CCBER providing guidance to project staff and students hired to assist with the databasing and georeferencing of the specimens. Collectively the three institutions databased 39,943 and georeferenced 49,319 target taxa. The data was contributed to the California Consortium of Herbaria (CCH). The combined number of records returned in general searches from December 2014 to October 2015 for our three institutions was 10,237,987.

The completion of the two NSF funded projects did not stop Dr. Wilken’s involvement with the CCBER Herbarium. He continues to volunteer his time to update nomenclature, answer questions, and assist with ongoing databasing of specimens.

Dr. Wilken has dedicated his life and professional career to being an exemplary botanist and mentor to colleagues and students. He has made outstanding contributions through his work at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden and UCSB to furthering appreciation and conservation of California native flora.

I believe Dr. Wilken is highly deserving of being recognized as a Fellow of the California Native Plant Society.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Thorsch