

## The *Lotus* Newsletter 1986 (No. 16) to 2001 (No. 32)

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When I started my *Lotus* career in 1980, I was very fortunate to have access to the *Lotus* Newsletter volumes that Dr. Bill Grant had published since 1970. I used those volumes 1-10 to get a perspective of the breadth of current *Lotus* research conducted internationally. After I had been in *Lotus* research for a few years, Dr. Grant indicated that he was looking for someone to take the editorial reins for a while. In 1985, Dr. Robert McGraw and I worked very closely on *Lotus*, even though he was located in Minnesota and I was located in Missouri. So we mutually agreed to share the editorship. Our first volume was the 1986 volume 16. We continued to co-edit the three volumes (vols. 16 – 18), before I took the sole responsibility for the next 13 volumes (vols. 19 – 32).

Our first attempts at editorship resulted in no real changes to the format as conceived and delivered by Dr. Grant. But sometime in the mid-1980s, the electronic revolution started with word processors, personal computers, laser printers, and magnetic disks. These new innovations gave us the chance to take contributions and bibliographic searches and restyle them into a common format. The changes that technology allowed were incorporated in the published volumes until 1995. In 1996 the costs of publishing and mailing concurrent with the widespread acceptance of the World Wide Web, instigated the web-based publication maintained at the University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri (<http://www.psu.missouri.edu/lnl/>). From 1996 until 2001 (Vols. 27-32), the *Lotus* Newsletter was published on the web although I also managed to add previous volumes (Vols. 23-26). I believe the move for the *Lotus* Newsletter in 1996 from printed to electronic form was a difficult transition for many *Lotus* researchers and libraries. As humans, we like having hard evidence of our work or communication. Receiving the most recent printed copy of the *Lotus* Newsletter annually reaffirmed a bond among the *Lotus* researchers that I believe was lost with the electronic version. That bond was never stronger than when the 1<sup>st</sup> International *Lotus* Symposium was organized.

As editor of the *Lotus* Newsletter, I was privileged to observe the wide breadth of the research that was conducted around the world. Using that perspective, I chose to try to get the international body of *Lotus* spp. researchers together in order to share our research and insights. The outgrowth of our combined energies was the 1<sup>st</sup> International *Lotus* Symposium that was held in St. Louis, Missouri, 22-24 March 1994. A natural outgrowth of the

symposium was a compilation of the research into a special publication “Trefoil: The science and technology of *Lotus*” published in 1999 by the Crop Science Society of America.

The cover illustration was changed starting with *L. edulis* in Volume 23. The illustrations used through Volume 32 were created by María Alejandra Migoya who works with Ana Arambarri in Argentina. They were most gracious in letting me use the illustrations. Maria’s illustration of *L. corniculatus* also graces the cover of “Trefoil: The science and technology of *Lotus*.”

The advances in *Lotus* science are documented in the pages (printed or web) of the *Lotus* Newsletter. The most common *Lotus* spp. reported were *L. corniculatus*, *L. glaber*, and *L. uliginosus*, usually involving agronomy, pathology, and physiology. Other, lesser known, *Lotus* spp. received ample attention from reports on evolution, taxonomy, and germplasm collections of the *Lotus* spp. Within the volumes of the *Lotus* Newsletter, you will find the first indications of a biotechnology revolution that would eventually identify *L. japonicus* as a model genetic system syntenic to other organisms.

One of the strengths of the *Lotus* Newsletter is the extensive bibliographic listing published every year. Many *Lotus* researchers work at locations or institutes where access to recent literature is difficult. The bibliographic listing provides a citation and abstract, if available.

I sensed a tangible loss when I was reassigned from *Lotus* research into soybeans in 2001. I miss the interaction and camaraderie with the many *Lotus* researchers I met and communicated with as editor for the *Lotus* Newsletter. The *Lotus* spp. comprise a fascinating genus, but no more fascinating than the cadre of scientists that has researched and compiled their knowledge about *Lotus*.

### **Highlights of volumes 16 – 32.**

Volume 16. Several authors reported on botanical or chemical characteristics with interests in the origin, evolution, and adaptation of *Lotus* spp. Other papers reported physiological and reproductive observations on *L. glaber*, *L. corniculatus*, and *L. uliginosus*.

Volume 17. In 1986, rust was reported as being a new disease on *L. corniculatus* and *L. glaber* in Argentina. Several reports covered germplasm evaluations, genetic studies, and gene nomenclature.

Volume 18. Several reports reviewed the agronomic importance of *L. glaber* and *L. corniculatus* in Argentina. Cytogenetic and agronomic reports were received from Canada and Italy. Plant bug pests affecting *L. corniculatus* seed production were recognized in another report.

Volume 19. A considerable number of reports demonstrated the breadth of *Lotus* research across North and South America. Reports covered chemical defenses, reproduction, pollination, physiology, and agronomy topics.

Volume 20. Reports on evolution of *Lotus* spp. in the French Alps and a plant exploration in Morocco offered new insights into *Lotus* speciation. Other reports covered tannins, taxonomy, germplasm, physiology, and agronomic topics.

Volume 21. Two reports covered tissue culture successes making somatic hybrids between *Lotus* and soybean (Japan) and herbicide tolerance selection (Canada). These were the first *Lotus* contributions in the new area called “biotechnology.” Agronomy, evolution, and flavonoid research rounded out the remaining reports.

Volume 22. More biotechnology reports were made in this volume and one was suggestive of *L. corniculatus* becoming a model plant system for genetic studies. Research in Australia was highlighted, but reports from Argentina, United Kingdom, Japan, Canada, and the United States demonstrated the international efforts on *Lotus* spp.

Volume 23. Additional reports from Australia were presented in this volume. Biotechnology reports on transformed *L. corniculatus* were received from China and the United Kingdom, while Japan reported on the somatic hybridization of *Lotus* and rice. The distribution of *L. japonicus* in Korea was reported. Agronomy, pathology, and flavonoid research rounded out the remaining reports.

Volume 24. Two reports outlined the use of PCR and RAPDs for *Lotus* research. A number of reports came from Uruguay and Argentina. Three reports described flavonoid or tannin research. Pathology, agronomy, and germplasm research rounded out the remaining reports.

Volume 25. This volume was published after the 1<sup>st</sup> International *Lotus* Symposium was held in St. Louis, Missouri, 22-24 March 1994. The symposium gathered the attention of most *Lotus* researchers and that attention carried over to this volume. A number of reports on *L. glaber* can be found in this volume. Research topics on *Lotus* spp. pathology, agronomy, biotechnology, genetics, and physiology comprise the reports.

Volume 26. This was the last volume published in a hard-copy format. Research topics on *Lotus* spp. germplasm, and *L. corniculatus* and *L. glaber* pathology, agronomy, biotechnology, genetics, and physiology comprised the reports.

Volume 27. Moving the *Lotus* Newsletter in 1996 from printed to electronic form was a difficult transition for many *Lotus* researchers and libraries. As humans, we like having hard evidence of our work or communication. The number of contributions declined when the printed version ended. Still, reports on genetics, agronomy, taxonomy, and biotechnology were received.

Volume 28. The majority of the reports came from Argentina and pertained to *L. glaber*, but some included *L. corniculatus* or *L. uliginosus*. A report from the International Association for Plant Taxonomy report the nomenclature changes for *L. glaber* (previously *L. tenuis*) and *L. uliginosus* (*L. pedunculatus*).

Volume 29. *Lotus* disease and insect feeding reports were contributed from Uruguay and Argentina. Plant physiology and chemistry rounded out the remaining reports.

Volume 30. Few reports were received, but all were from Argentina and generally pertained to *L. glaber*. A report on *Lotus* spp. taxonomy based on seedling comparisons was included.

Volumes 31 and 32. Only two reports were received for these volumes. One pertained to cultivar differentiation in *L. glaber* and the other to the dispersal of *L. japonicus* in Korea.