

Rolla Milton Tryon

August 26, 1916 - August 21, 2001

Memorial

by Dr. Richard P. Wunderlin

It is with sadness that I note the passing of a very remarkable member of the Florida Native Plant Society. Rolla M. Tryon, born in Chicago, received an A.A. and B.S. at the University of Chicago, a Ph.M. at the University of Wisconsin, and an M.S. and Ph.D. at Harvard University. After receiving his doctorate in 1941, he taught at Dartmouth College, University of Wisconsin, University of Minnesota, Washington University, and then Harvard University from 1958 to 1987. He traveled throughout the world pursuing his passion for ferns. He served as president of the New England Botanical Club and American Fern Society. He was associate editor of the *American Fern Journal* and *Rhodora*, and held positions in many other professional botanical societies. He received the Merit Award from the Botanical Society of America in 1984. Rolla is the author or co-author of many books, including *The Ferns and Fern Allies of Wisconsin*, *The Ferns and Fern Allies of Minnesota*, *The Ferns of Peru*, and *Ferns and Allied Plants*, with special reference to *Tropical America*, the latter co-authored with his wife Alice. He published over a hundred scientific papers on ferns, including monographs or revisions of the genera *Pteridium*, *Doryopteris*, *Selaginella*, *Notholaena*, *Dennstaedtia*, *Pityrogramma*, *Cyathea*, and *Sphaeropteris*.

In December 1988, Rolla and Alice made an unannounced visit to the USF Herbarium. Favorably impressed, the next month Rolla informed me of his decision to move to the Tampa area, bringing with him his fabulous library of fern and biogeographic literature. Shortly after arriving at USF, Rolla and Alice helped form the Institute for Systematic Botany and endowed the Tryon Lecture Series in the Biology Department. Rolla remained very active in research at USF and continued to publish scientific papers on ferns. He was very active in the Suncoast Chapter of FNPS. Rolla was a very remarkable person who made significant contributions to our knowledge of ferns, was internationally acclaimed, and willingly shared this knowledge with many.