The Merritt Lyndon Fernald Award
For Best Paper published in *Rhodora*
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presented to

Sean C. Robinson, Edwin H. Ketchledge, Brian T. Fitzgerald, Dudley J. Raynal, and Robin W. Kimmerer

for their paper entitled
“A 23-Year Assessment of Vegetation Composition and Change in the Adirondack Alpine Zone, New York State”


This paper presents an impressive, long-term perspective on vegetation change and the development of a general model for alpine succession. The authors made effective use of past data integrated with a solid field study, yielding results that were interesting in their implication that summit stewardship can produce effects in plant communities over relatively short time spans. The discussion of potential factors influencing succession was particularly well documented. This type of thoughtful discussion often provokes others to explore the questions in greater detail, and we suspect that this paper will have such an influence.