

**The Merritt Lyndon Fernald Award
For Best Paper published in *Rhodora*
Volume 118, 2016**

presented to

**Robert S. Capers and Nancy G. Slack
for their paper, "A baseline study of alpine snowbed and rill
communities on Mount Washington, NH"**

This year's recipients of the New England Botanical Club's Merritt Lyndon Fernald Award are Robert S. Capers and Nancy G. Slack for their paper published in *Rhodora* 118 (976): 345-381.

The Fernald Award Committee notes that "Capers and Slack provide a very nice analysis of rill and snowbed communities on Mt. Washington. The authoritative inclusion of both phanerogams and cryptogams, the numerous years of field work, and the multiple observations within a year to get good data on the duration of snowpack on the different sites, exemplify the quality of this study. The statistical analysis is used in a way that enhances the interpretation of the field observations. Capers and Slack have done their work in a way that is designed as a baseline to be built upon in the future, and they have documented a snow melt gradient that suggests predictions of which particular sites may be most vulnerable." The committee also states that "if more studies were designed this way to become resources or opportunities for future workers, we would all be in a better position to understand the nature of rapid change in time and space."