

**The New England Botanical Club
Graduate Student Research Awards
2018 AWARD WINNER**

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**Morphology, Ecology, and Population Genetics of *Lactuca hirsuta*
(Asteraceae) on the Cape and Nantucket, Massachusetts, with special
consideration of *L. hirsuta* var. *sanguinea***

Lactuca hirsuta var. *sanguinea* (Bigelow) Fernald has been described in the past as a variety, has been cited in recent literature as a synonym for *Lactuca hirsuta* Muhl. ex Nutt. (Asteraceae) and not described as a separate phenotypic variety for *L. hirsuta*. I intend to study both *L. hirsuta* and the variety *L. hirsuta* var. *sanguinea* on Nantucket Island, the south shore of Massachusetts, and Cape Cod. I will combine comparative morphological and habitat studies with population genetic studies of this species and the variety by collecting spatial, morphological, temporal, and genetic data for the plants. The intended result is to collect data that helps to determine whether *L. hirsuta* var. *sanguinea* is a distinguishable variety and if it needs protection. With this information, conservation or land management groups can better decide where to focus attention and resources to better protect the overall diversity of this species and the potentially rare variety.

The New England Botanical Club offers each year up to \$3,000 total in support of botanical research to be conducted by graduate students. The awards are made to stimulate and encourage botanical research on the New England flora, and to make possible visits to the New England region by those who would not otherwise be able to do so. It is anticipated that two awards will be given, although the actual number and amount of awards will depend on the proposals received. The awards are given to the graduate student(s) submitting the best research proposal dealing with systematic botany, biosystematics, plant ecology, or plant conservation biology.