

**The Merritt Lyndon Fernald Award
For Best Paper published in *Rhodora*
Volume 115, 2013**

presented to

**Jeremy C. Nettleton, Arthur C. Mathieson, Carol Thornber,
Christopher D. Neefus, and Charles Yarish for their paper,
“Introduction of *Gracilaria vermiculophylla* (Rhodophyta,
Gracilariales) to New England, USA: Estimated Arrival Times and
Current Distribution”**

This year’s recipients of the New England Botanical Club’s Merritt Lyndon Fernald Award are Jeremy C. Nettleton, Arthur C. Mathieson, Carol Thornber, Christopher D. Neefus, and Charles Yarish for their paper entitled “Introduction of *Gracilaria vermiculophylla* (Rhodophyta, Gracilariales) to New England, USA: Estimated Arrival Times and Current Distribution” published in *Rhodora* 115 (961): 28-41 (January)

The study employs herbarium specimens, extensive fieldwork, and molecular analysis to determine the distribution and timing of introduction of an invasive Asiatic red alga. In the Northwest Atlantic, it was first collected in Virginia during 1998; in New England, it was first recorded from Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island in 2007. The work was made more challenging by the fact that this taxon closely resembles a native congener, so the molecular analysis was that much more important. The research highlights the challenges—and the urgency—of early detection of invasive species.