



Timothy J. Motley (4 June 1965–28 March 2013) and his passion for Ethnobotany and Pacific Islands flora[#]

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Abstract

Timothy Jay Motley was born June 4th, 1965, to Roy and Joan (née Schaeffer) Motley, in Paxton, Illinois, USA. He grew up on a farm in east-central Illinois, and attended Armstrong-Ellis Grade School. He entered Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, Illinois, where he completed a Bachelor of Science in 1987 and a Master of Science in Botany in 1989, having written a dissertation on Sweet Flag (*Acorus calamus*). In 1996 he earned a Ph.D. in Botany at the University of Hawaii, Manoa; his dissertation on evolutionary and reproductive biology of *Labordia* (Loganiaceae). While in Hawaii, he developed a particular interest for the Pacific islands flora and for ethnobotany, two passions that he pursued for the rest of his life. Shortly after finishing his doctorate, he worked at The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) as Post-Doctoral Research Associate (1997–1998), Assistant Curator (1998–2004), Acting Chair (1999–2000; 2001–2002), and Project Head of Conservation Genetics in Island Systems (1998–2006) in the Lewis B. and Dorothy Cullman Program for Molecular Systematics Studies. While working for NYBG, he travelled widely in regions where his projects would take him, mostly in the South Pacific, and visited the Kingdom of Tonga, Rapa Iti, Bora Bora, Papua New Guinea, Guam, Pohnpei, Fiji, Mauritius, Reunion, Vanuatu, Philippines, Jamaica, New Zealand, New Caledonia, Hawaii, and Tahiti. In 2006, he was hired as the J. Robert Stiffler Distinguished Professor of Botany and Associate Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences, Old Dominion University, and as the Director of Science at the Norfolk Botanical Garden, Norfolk, Virginia. During this period, he continued his expeditions to study and collect plants in the South Pacific and beyond, including Ecuador, the Galapagos Archipelago, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, Mexico, the Louisiade Archipelago, and yearly field trips to underexplored regions of China. Sadly, after suffering a sudden cardiac arrest, he passed away on March 28, 2013, at age 47, at the peak of his career, leaving his wife, young son, and numerous colleagues and friends. His numerous ongoing projects, which are currently being continued by his graduate students and colleagues around the world, assure that his scientific legacy, his loving character, and his integrity will never be forgotten.

Key words: Plant systematics, molecular phylogenies, *Hedyotis*, *Labordia*, Rubiaceae, Spermaceae, Loganiaceae, Hawaii, Rapa Iti, Austral Islands

Timothy Jay Motley, known as “Tim” by his friends and colleagues, was born on June 4th, 1965, to Roy and Joan (née Schaeffer) Motley, in Paxton, Illinois, USA. He was the youngest of three brothers, after Gavin, and Jeremy. Tim grew up on a farm in East Central Illinois, between the small farming towns of Armstrong and Rankin, surrounded by corn, soybeans, and wheat. Tim enjoyed playing with his brothers, and together they created their own adventures around the farm. They did most of the typical things country kids do – climbed trees, explored buildings, fished, tried to catch and make pets of any small animal that happened to cross their path. One benefit they had was that their grandparents, two uncles, and an aunt lived on another farmstead only a quarter mile away, so they had another large space only a short walk or bike ride away in which to play. Tim developed an independent streak and his well-known sense of humor at an early age. Being the youngest, Tim got to do many things that his older brothers did, but, unfortunately for him, that meant he also had to help on the farm with chores at an earlier age. Despite having asthma, he cut weeds out of the soybean fields, baled straw, and helped feed the hogs in the evening. He learned how to drive tractors and pickup trucks before he was old enough to get his driving permit. Doing the hard work on the farm probably helped solidify both his work ethic and enjoyment of working independently.

Tim attended Armstrong-Ellis Grade School through 8th grade, at Armstrong, Illinois. As a young boy, he spent his mornings on school days waiting at the end of the long driveway (or sometimes running the 100 yards) to catch