On the Cover: The cover shows a scanning electron micrograph of the abaxial leaf surface of a peppermint (Mentha × piperita) leaf. The evident spherical structures are peltate glandular trichomes, the sites of monoterpenoid essential oil biosynthesis and storage. In this issue, Rios-Estepa et al. (pp. 2105–2119) report on the utilization of an iterative approach that involves mathematical modeling and experimental testing to identify the determinants of essential oil composition and yield in highly specialized peltate glandular trichomes. Importantly, simulations of monoterpenes profiles are based entirely on experimental measurements and are performed without any curve fitting or other computational optimizations. The good fit between simulations and experimentally determined monoterpenes profiles indicates that the regulation of essential oil biosynthesis is now well understood at various levels of control, including environmental, developmental, and transgenic effects on transcript abundance, enzyme expression dynamics, glandular trichome size and distribution, and pathway feedback regulation. This opens up new opportunities for guiding metabolic engineering and molecular breeding efforts aimed at modulating monoterpenoid essential oil profiles. The cover image was taken by Dr. Glenn Turner using a FEI Quanta 200 F SEM in environmental mode at the Franceschi Microscopy and Imaging Center of Washington State University.

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Peter V. Minorsky

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