

ANNUAL REPORT – 2002-2003
PROGRAM DIRECTOR, BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Presented at the Botanical Society of America Council Meeting
July 27, 2003 • Mobile, Alabama

GENERAL PLANNING FOR BOTANY 2003

I worked closely with the BSA Meeting Manager, Johanne Stogran, on an array of planning issues.

PLANNING VISIT FOR BOTANY 2003

In early Fall 2002, I attended a planning visit at the site of the Botany 2003 conference in Mobile, Alabama. The meeting was very useful for planning Society functions, viewing potential meeting sites, and for meeting with the BSA Local Representative, Brian Axsmith, as well as with the program chairs and local representatives from other participating societies. We visited the Mobile Convention Center, Adam's Mark Hotel, and a variety of local botanical and scientific sites. The site visit was coordinated by the BSA Meeting Manager, Johanne Stogran.

COORDINATION OF THE SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM FOR BOTANY 2003

COMMUNICATION WITH PROGRAM CHAIRS AND SYMPOSIUM ORGANIZERS. The BSA Program Director coordinates the scientific program with the help of the sectional/participating society Program Chairs. The symposium organizers plan the sequence of presentations within their own symposia and then forward the symposia programs to the sponsoring sections for scheduling. To coordinate these activities, the sectional/society Program Chairs and the symposium organizers were sent several mailings that provided detailed instructions and a timeline for preparation and submission of their programs.

CALL FOR SYMPOSIA. The "Call for Symposia" for Botany 2003 was distributed in the BSA-wide Spring 2002 mailing and posted on the Botany 2003 web site. The deadlines for submissions were early-July and mid-September, 2002. Proposals were submitted on-line using the electronic submission form. Symposium proposals were forwarded to sectional officials for approval of sponsorship.

CALL FOR PAPERS. The "Call for Papers" for Botany 2003 was distributed in the BSA-wide Fall 2002 mailing and posted on the Botany 2003 web site. The "Call" was also sent to the Program Chairs of participating societies for their use. The deadline for submissions of abstracts was April 1, 2003, and this was extended until mid-April.

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS. The electronic submission process worked very well again in 2003, and all abstract submissions for Botany 2003 were made on-line. In part because of the Society's transition to a new Business Office and a new Executive Director, a new abstract site was developed and implemented. I worked closely with the BSA Executive Director, and two web programmers to develop the site. The site includes all of the functionality that we have previously had, as well as some new features (e.g., all relevant program information is now included with each abstract, program details are available to be browsed by relevant categories). Moreover, additional enhancements are planned for the future.

ABSTRACT VOLUME. The abstracts for Botany 2003 will be printed in a separate volume and included in the registration binder along with the final Program, which will be distributed on-site at the conference. This will be the third year that the Abstracts have published in this way, and not as a supplement to the *American Journal of Botany*. Moving the abstracts out of the *AJB* is one reason that the deadline was able to be pushed back. I worked closely with BSA Meetings Manager, Johanne Stogran, on the design and layout work for the volume, as well as the proofing. There will be 428 abstracts published in the volume; however, these do not represent all conference presentations (see 'Summary Information' below).

FINAL PROGRAM. The deadline for submission of sectional/participating society programs was late April 2002 (extended to mid-May). The Program Chairs deserve much credit for organizing and submitting their programs. The sectional/society programs, as well as all BSA-wide and conference-wide functions were organized into a comprehensive, conference-wide format. Session information was then submitted to the BSA Meeting Manager, Johanne Stogran, for room assignments. I then worked with Johanne on the design, layout, and proofing for the final Program.

NEWS COVERAGE. The news divisions of four national periodicals, *Science* magazine, *TheScientist*, and *Science News* were contacted with information about Botany 2003 and an inquiry about obtaining news coverage. At this date, reporters from *Science News* will be attending. A press release about Botany 2003 was also prepared for distribution to local and regional news outlets.

THE SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM FOR BOTANY 2003

All BSA disciplinary Sections have some function(s) scheduled at Botany 2003 except for the Mycological and Phycological Section. However, the Phycological Section did receive a limited number of abstracts and it was decided that these be transferred to other Sections. Detailed schedules for the sectional programs are presented in the final Program, and summary information for the number of presentations and sessions for the entire conference is presented below.

Total number of presentations.....	479
Talks.....	381
Contributed papers.....	332
Symposium presentations	45
Special lectures and addresses	4
Posters	98
Regular submissions.....	98
Recent Topics	18
Discussion Sessions	3
Total number of sessions	45
Contributed Papers	34
Symposia / Colloquia	6
Special Lectures	2
Posters	1
Discussion Sessions	3

THE FORUM PROGRAM FOR BOTANY 2003

The BOTANY 2002 conference held in Madison, Wisconsin included the inaugural education/outreach FORUM. Approximately 1,000 plant biologists attended the overall conference, and 300 of these traveled to Madison early to attend the FORUM. Attendees completed evaluation forms of the FORUM program and found it to be a valuable and refreshing addition to annual conference. The Program Committee was also delighted with the FORUM program and the enthusiastic response of the attendees. Therefore, BOTANY 2003 includes the second FORUM, in what is planned to become an annual event.

This year's FORUM begins on Friday evening, July 25, with early registration and a welcoming reception. The main FORUM program occurs on Saturday, July 26, with a Keynote Address by Dr. Bruce Alberts, President of the National Academy of Sciences, titled "Science Education and the National Science Education Standards: The Challenges Ahead," and 14 one-hour sessions, including two on funding opportunities available at the National Science Foundation (NSF). The individual sessions are grouped within six topical themes, or 'threads,' that span the FORUM program, and these have been scheduled such that those from the same thematic thread don't overlap at the same time slot. A range of topics will be addressed in interactive panel and roundtable discussions, breakout groups, as well as informational sessions.

On Sunday, July 27, the FORUM is formally linked to the annual scientific meeting via workshops and field trips, for which attendees register separately. Eight hands-on workshops are

available as two-hour, half-day, and full-day events. One workshop is sponsored by the Deep Gene Research Coordination Network and is free to registrants.

Although the principal focus of the FORUM is undergraduate education and related outreach, K-12 teachers have been encouraged and have the opportunity to participate, and several hands-on workshops are targeted for K-12 educators.

The FORUM is sponsored in part by the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Deep Gene Research Coordination Network Project Kaleidoscope (PKAL), and the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR), and their support is greatly appreciated.

FUTURE ANNUAL MEETINGS

2004 – SNOWBIRD, UTAH. Botany 2004 will held at the Snowbird Conference Center in Snowbird, Utah from July 31 to August 5, 2004. In addition to the BSA, other societies participating in the conference will include: the American Byrological and Lichenological Society (ABLS), the American Fern Society (AFS), and the American Society of Plant Taxonomists (ASPT). The theme for the conference is “Alpine Diversity: Adapted to the Peaks” and a logo has already been designed. In addition, Dr. Rita Colwell, Director of the National Science Foundation, has accepted our invitation to deliver the Plenary Address.

Calls. The “Call for Symposia,” “Call for Workshops,” and “Call for Field Trips” for the 2004 Annual Meeting were distributed in the BSA-wide Spring 2003 mailing and posted on the Botany 2004 web site. Copies of these “Calls” were also sent to the Program Chairs of participating societies. Deadlines for submissions of on-line proposals are as follows: Symposia (July 15, 2003 for the Paleobotanical and Systematics Sections, and September 15, 2003 for all other Sections); Workshops and Field Trips: (October 15, 2003). The “Call for Papers” will be distributed in the BSA-wide Fall 2003 mailing, as well as posted on the web site.

2005 – AUSTIN, TEXAS. Botany 2005 will be held in Austin, TX from August 13 to 19, 2005. The Hilton Austin Hotel will be primary conference site. 2005 is also the year of the next International Botanical Congress (IBC), and this may affect our annual meeting registration nos.

2006 – Location not yet finalized. This is the BSA’s Centennial year, and we were initially planning on holding the conference at one of the Society’s founding institutions. However, these turned out to be cost prohibitive. We are now thinking about St. Louis as a possible site, as this is the new home for our Business Office. In addition, special programming will be included in the conference to celebrate the Society’s 100 years, and we will be inviting a number of other affiliated and ‘offspring’ societies to meet with us. Besides the regular Program Committee, the BSA has established an ad hoc Centenary Committee; this Committee will need to work closely the Program Committee on several key issues.

2007 – Site not yet determined, but we may have a parallel meeting with the American Society of Plant Biologists.

LONG-TERM CONFERENCE PLANNING

On May 28-29, 2003, I met with the BSA Executive Director and Meetings Manager to discuss long-term planning issues for the annual Botany conference and to develop some strategic directions. We had a very productive meeting in Kirksville, MO, and detailed report has been submitted to the Executive Committee. More information will be forthcoming.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeffrey M. Osborn