

Ecological Section Report – 2004

Our section awarded checks and banquet tickets to the winners of the best student paper and poster awards at the Botany 2003 meetings in Mobile. Jenise Snyder of Florida International University won the Best Student Paper award (the decision of three non-FIU judges, by the way!) from the Ecological Section for her talk (coauthored with J. Richards) entitled “Spikelet phenology and floral compatibility of sawgrass, *Cladium jamaicense* (Cyperaceae) in the south Florida Everglades” (very appropriate considering the theme of the meeting – wet and wild). The best student poster award went to Christina Coleman, Auburn University for her poster “Herbivore defense as an explanation for hyperaccumulation: Relative heavy metal toxicity to diamond back moth (*Plutella xylostella*)”, co-authored with Robert Boyd. Thanks to Theresa Culley, Margaret Devall, and Jeff Walck for judging the talks, and to Hallie Sims and Stan Rice for judging the posters.

We received 37 contributed paper and 19 poster abstracts (a total of 56 abstracts submitted) for the 2004 Snowbird meetings, and Joe Colosi has organized these into 3 contributed papers sessions and one poster session. Student papers have been placed in one session, to facilitate judging; this seemed to work well the last two years. He also scheduled the student papers long enough before the end to allow the judges some decision time! This year our section is co-sponsoring only one symposium with four speakers (The Convention on Biological Diversity). I urge members of our section to consider organizing symposia for our next meeting, so that the Ecological Section has a greater presence in the scientific direction of the meeting.

Our Botany 2003 business meeting was attended by 25 people. We agreed to change our tenure of officers to continue for three years per term, but to stagger the filling of these offices. It was decided that this year we would replace the Chair for a 3-year term, and the Vice-Chair for a 2 year term; next year we will choose a new Secretary/Treasurer (Program Chair) for a 3-year term, so that every year after that we will elect one new officer, with two experienced officers already on board. Elections this year chose new section chair Janice Coons, and vice-chair Carl Weekley. These two will take office following this year’s business meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Koptur