

## Annual Report of the Ecological Section – 2009

### A Summary of the Ecological Section's Activities in 2008-2009

1. Business Meeting conducted at UBC, Vancouver, CA at Botany 2008. Topics at this meeting included:
  - a. Introduction and recognition of the students receiving travel awards for Botany 2008 (presentation awards were announced at the BSA banquet)
  - b. Recognition and thanks to Tim Bell and Carl Weekley for serving as travel award judges for the past three years. I requested volunteers for serving as judges in 3-year terms. Our new judges are: Rebecca Drenovsky (rdrenovsky@jcu.edu at John Carroll University), Heidi Dobson (dobsonhe@whitman.edu at Whitman College), and Margaret Dewall ([mdevall@fs.fed.us](mailto:mdevall@fs.fed.us) with US forestry, Southern Research Station). The continuing judges are Jeff Walck and myself.
  - c. For the presentation awards (oral and poster) very few students appeared to have requested to be judged. However, there was a problem with the list of students to be judged, as many that requested to be judged were not on my list. Since several of the students had already given their oral presentations, we decided only to judge posters using a new list. For the student presentation awards at Botany 2009, since very few students were on our list, I have directly contacted all students (via e-mail) to ask if they meant to compete for a presentation award (Ecological Section). This increased the number of students to be judged, thus there appears to be a problem somewhere.
  - d. Thanked Margaret Dewall for her three years of service as Ecological Section Secretary and Program Manager. Suzanne Koptur moved that we open nominations for this position. We called for nominations during this meeting and later via e-mail for nominations. Election, if necessary would be via e-mail.
  - e. Council meeting topics
    - 1) High cost of print copies of the journal. Encouraged electronic subscriptions.
    - 2) Limit to the number of symposia to 12 for the entire meeting. Group expressed concern as the section often co-sponsors many symposia. Would there be a limit on the number a section could co-sponsor? Many wanted to be sure the section has 1-2 symposia. If there is a limit what would be the criteria for choosing symposia?
    - 3) Recommendation that all section memberships be free for students. Now lower postdoc membership rates and developing country rates for BSA. Suzanne Koptur noted that anyone can give student gift subscriptions.
  - d. Call for symposium ideas for Botany and Mycology 2009. Request early submission to section for full consideration and assistance in strengthening application.
  - e. Fundraising: we have student travel fund, dues, donations to section and money from BSA. Our expenses include: student travel awards, student presentation awards, symposia at BSA meetings, and snacks for social/meeting. Call for fund raising ideas. One from myself: a silent auction where the funds could be used for student research awards.
  - f. Call for ideas to increase number of presentations. Inviting local people to meeting.

2. Students receiving travel awards for the 2008 meeting in Vancouver were:

**Katie Becklin**, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO - Advisor, Dr. Candace Galen "The good, the bad, and the costly: Effects of shading and drought on the costs and benefits of mycorrhizae." (\$50)

**Jocelyn Campbell**, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC - Advisor, Dr. Cindy Prescott "Expanding the realized niche for cyanolichens in wet-temperate forests of interior British Columbia." (\$150)

**Andrew Simpson**, California State University, Chico, CA - Advisor, Dr. Kristina A. Schierenbeck - Botany 2008 presentation: "Multiple causal factors influence propagule size gradients in *Arctostaphylos* (Ericaceae)." (\$300)

**Meghan Skaer**, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, CA - Advisor, Dr. Hall Cushman - Botany 2008 presentation: "Evaluating the Effects of Cattle Grazing on a Coastal Prairie in Central California." (\$300).

3. Students receiving presentation awards at Botany 2008 meeting were:

Best Student Poster

**Iman Sylvain**, of Howard University, for her poster, "Comparison of Seedling Fitness in the Hyperaccumulator, *Alyssum murale* Waldst and Kit. (Brassicaceae) in Soils With and Without Nickel." Her co-author was Mary McKenna. (\$150)

4. Our section sponsored or co-sponsored three symposia at Botany 2008

- a. Pollination to Population Structure - How Understanding Reproductive Biology Can Inform Conservation of Rare Plants. Organizers: Vivian Negrón-Ortiz and Amy Faivre (\$400 support)
- b. Polyploidy: Genetics, Evolution, Systematics and Ecology. Organizers: Keith Adams and Jeannette Whitton (\$400 support)
- c. Bryophytes and Lichens of North America: Diversity, Function and Importance. Organizers Katherine Frego, and Arthur L. Fredeen, (\$400 support)

5. At Botany 2008, 80 presentations were given in multiple paper and poster sessions.

6. Our section will be sponsoring or co-sponsoring two symposia at Botany and Mycology 2009

- a. Phylogenetic and functional patterns of host plants and their associated fungi: implications for symbiotic co-evolution, community interactions, and ecosystem processes. Organizers: Louise Comas, Amy Tuininga and Hilary Callahan. (\$960 support)
- b. Environmental Climate Change : The role of marine and aquatic photosynthetic organisms in the global carbon cycle. Organizer: Anitra Thorhaug. (\$240 support)

7. We will be giving two travel awards for Botany and Mycology 2009.

**Kelsey L. Dunnell**, North Dakota State University, Fargo, ND - Advisor, Dr. Steven E. Travers - Botany 2009 presentation: "Early flowering of plants in the Northern Great Plains linked to increasing spring temperatures over 100 years."

**Amanda M. Kenney**, University of Texas, Austin, TX- Advisor, Dr. Thomas E. Juenger - Botany 2009 presentation: "Selection on water-use efficiency (WUE) in *Ipomopsis aggregata* - an analysis of the functional relationships among WUE, other ecological traits, and fitness."

8. At Botany and Mycology 2009, our section has 44 papers and 20 posters.

9. We will be creating an ad-hoc committee for fund raising ideas and to facilitate actions on the ideas.

Respectfully Submitted, Diane Byers July 19, 2009