

CALL FOR SESSIONS

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH FORUM

BOTANY 2003

JULY 26-31, 2003

MOBILE CONFERENCE CENTER
MOBILE, ALABAMA

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

BOTANY 2003 represents the annual meeting of four professional societies, including the American Bryological and Lichenological Society (ABLS), the American Fern Society (AFS), the American Society of Plant Taxonomists (ASPT), and the Botanical Society of America (BSA). The conference will be held in Mobile, Alabama from July 26-31, 2003, and the theme for BOTANY 2003 will be "Aquatic and Wetland Plants: Wet & Wild."

In addition to the regular program, which will run from Sunday through Wednesday (July 27-30), BOTANY 2003 will include an expanded format. The second FORUM focusing on botanical education and outreach will be held on Saturday, July 26, and it will be linked to the annual scientific meeting on Sunday, July 27, via workshops and field trips.

This *Call* is for the topical sessions to be presented at the FORUM on Saturday. There are separate *Calls* for Workshops, as well as for Abstracts and for Discussion Sessions at the annual scientific meeting.

FORUM OVERVIEW

The BOTANY 2002 conference 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. The Program Committee was delighted with the attendance and with the FORUM program. A summary of the program is available online (<http://www.botany2002.org/>). Attendees completed evaluation forms of the FORUM program, and they also found it to be very valuable and a refreshing addition to annual scientific meeting. Therefore, BOTANY 2003 will include the second FORUM.

"...Teaching students about plant biology is as critical to the future of the field as is research and must take its proper place as an equally laudatory endeavor for botanists. Equally vital are activities that communicate the excitement of plant biology to students and teachers involved in K-12 education and to the general public..."

This passage from the *Botany for the Next Millennium* Report (BSA, 1995) emphasizes the important role of education and outreach, at all levels. However, there continues to be a reduction in the number of Botany courses taught at the undergraduate level, many Botany Departments and programs have been eliminated nationwide, and the National Research Council no longer recognizes Botany as a valid graduate education program. Despite this, the global significance of plants continues to grow. It is therefore vital that botanists and their professional societies work to ensure that plants are represented in the undergraduate and graduate curriculum, as well as in science outreach initiatives.

The FORUM will begin on Friday evening with early registration and an informal reception. The main sessions will occur on Saturday. Although some informational sessions will be included, the program will primarily include interactive panel and roundtable discussions as well as breakout groups focusing on a range of topics. Sunday's offerings will include a hands-on workshops. Two-hour, half-day, and full-day workshops will be organized so that attendees can participate in more than one workshop, and/or participate in field trips, also being planned for Sunday. The *Call for Workshops* has already been posted on the conference web site (see below).

The principal focus of the FORUM will be undergraduate education and related outreach; however, K-12 teachers are also encouraged to participate. In addition to hands-on workshops focusing on undergraduate topics, several workshops, and perhaps field trips, will be specifically targeted for K-12 teachers.

All members are invited and encouraged to attend and present at the FORUM.

SATURDAY SESSIONS

TOPICAL 'THREADS' – Individual sessions will be grouped within topical themes, or 'threads'. The six general threads being considered are listed below, and each is followed by several example session titles. Organizers will be able to submit their own session titles as well as select the most appropriate thread for their session.

1) *Emphasizing Botany across the Curriculum* – Sessions on what is the vital content to cover, and what's at the cutting edge within disciplinary areas (e.g., systematics, development, etc.), "How to promote plants if you are the only botany faculty member in a department," "Developing interdisciplinary courses/curricula," "Educating pre-service teachers about plants"

2) *Designing Investigative Laboratories* – Sessions on 'model,' or best-practice, labs (e.g., "Using Wisconsin Fast Plants to study plant development," "Using instructional technology to examine photosynthesis")

3) *Engaging Undergraduates in Research* – "What are the challenges of mentoring undergraduate research students," "Publishing with undergraduates in peer-reviewed journals," "Using your courses to feed your research program"

4) *Developing Effective Teaching and Mentoring Skills* – "How to become a teacher-scholar," "How to review manuscripts and grant proposals," "Tips on balancing your academic time," "Graduate student training programs: The do's and don'ts"

5) *Supporting Effective Teaching and Learning* – Sessions on funding (e.g., information about grant sources, tips on writing proposals and grant management); "Managing a university greenhouse or herbarium," "Tips for Chairs and Deans," "How to best prep an Introductory Lab," "How to assess the effectiveness of an advanced course"

6) *Reaching Out beyond the Ivory Towers* – "Linking up with botanical gardens and arboreta," "Linking up with teachers," "Linking up with the media," "Designing and implementing workshops for teachers," Sessions on best-practice initiatives.

SESSION TYPES – Four types of sessions will be included in the FORUM program, and these are listed below. Organizers will be able to select the most appropriate type of session for their topic.

1) *Informational Session* – A presentation by one to three speakers in which specific information is conveyed. Informational sessions should leave a minimum of 20 minutes for questions and answers.

2) *Breakout Session* – An introduction by one to three facilitators followed by time for in-depth discussion or an organized activity that engages the audience. Two thirds of the time period should be devoted to discussion and interaction. A breakout session often culminates in a commitment: group recommendations or personal agendas for future implementation.

3) *Panel Session* – Two to four panel members including a moderator, each of which may give a brief introduction, followed by discussion among them and with the audience. Half of the time period should involve audience participation.

4) *Roundtable Session* – A roundtable is a freewheeling discussion, usually with multiple viewpoints. The discussion is facilitated by a moderator, but there are no formal speakers. The moderator sets the stage for the discussion by providing one or two provocative questions. Virtually the entire session is interactive.

SUBMISSION OF SESSION TOPICS (DEADLINE: APRIL 1, 2003)

Session proposals should include the following: 1) a title, 2) name(s) and contact information for all organizers and presenters, 3) a brief summary of the Session that includes relevant background and significance of the topic, and 4) selection of the most appropriate thread and session type.

Submission of session proposals should be conducted online at the BOTANY 2003 web site: <<http://www.botany2003.org/>>. Copies of the proposals will be sent electronically to the sender and the FORUM Planning Committee. The deadline for receiving session proposals is **April 1, 2003**.

The number of 45 minute sessions that will be able to be accepted will be contingent upon the size and scope of the overall program. Because session submissions may overlap and space will be limited, proposals for Sessions will be evaluated by the FORUM Planning Committee, which includes representatives from all societies participating in BOTANY 2003. Session organizers will then be notified in May 2003 about their sessions.

QUESTIONS

Questions about the FORUM should be directed to members of the Planning Committee (see web site) and/or to the BSA Program Director: Jeffrey M. Osborn, Division of Science, Truman State University, 100 E. Normal Street, Kirksville, MO 63501-4221. Tele: (660) 785-4017, Fax: (660) 785-4045, E-mail: <josborn@truman.edu>.

A Registration Brochure for BOTANY 2003 will be mailed to members of participating societies in spring 2003, and it will be available online at the conference web site.