Annual Report of the Ecological Section – 2010
A Summary of the Ecological Section’s Activities in 2009-2010

1. Business Meeting conducted during Botany and Mycology 2009 meetings, at Snowbird, Utah. Topics at this meeting included:
   a. Call for and discussion of ideas for Symposia for Botany 2010 meeting, noting a limited number will be scheduled. Also they need to be 1/2 day with 6 speakers. Two ideas - habitat fragmentation and species interactions (Diane Byers) and conclusions from long-term ecological data sets (Claudia Jolles).
   b. Student Awards
      1) Travel award winners for Botany and Mycology 2009 were recognized:
         Kelsey L. Dunnell, of North Dakota State University, and Amanda M. Kenney, of University of Texas.
         We also thanked the judges: Jeff Walck, Rebecca Drenovsky, Heidi Dobson, Margaret Dewall and myself. Note this was Jeff Walck's last year as a judge and he was replaced by Phil Gibson.

      2) A limited number of students were competing for the paper and poster presentation awards. Some students were added to the list to be judged in response to an e-mail from Diane Byers to all of the students. The number for 2009 was 4 students for posters and 8 students for presentations but this is still low. A few students did not respond to the e-mail and thus were missed. Suzanne Koptur suggested students were shy and everyone needs to encourage students to sign-up to be judged. Joe Armstrong said there have been problems with other aspects of the site (volunteering box) and changes need to be made. Diane Byers suggested having students send her an e-mail directly in addition to checking the box (to be judged). (note for 2010 in a note to the section - I recommended that all students wanting to be judged to send me an e-mail. I did not receive any messages. However, more students have requested to be judged for both the poster and paper presentation awards (both were at 14 before a couple were cancelled).

   c. Vice-chair election to be held. Jeff Walck is at the end of his term, thus early in the summer Diane Byers called for nominations. We have two people (Phil Gibson and Susan Cordell) nominated so elections will be held via e-mail in August/Sept). -- Note: Phil Gibson won this election and we have welcomed him as our new vice-chair.

   d. Scheduling conflict with section's meeting and poster session. We discussed moving our section's meeting time to Breakfast, Lunch or 4:00. It was concluded among the attendants that the current time (after paper presentations) was strongly preferred. It was suggested that we contact the scheduling committee and request that one evening be available for meetings (no posters or BSA banquet).
e. Networking Beyond Meetings - Janice Coons proposed a group to work on a webpage/facebook page of information on section members' research and contact information. This idea was seconded by Suzanne Koptur. Others interested were to contact Janice.

f. Ways of increasing attendance at Botany meetings by Ecologists and Fund Raising. The following ideas were discussed: contacting local Universities; increased fund raising with more student travel awards. Discussion continued but focused on fund raising for more awards with the following suggestions: silent auction suggested but as problematic - raffle potentially a better alternative - Joe Armstrong's comment, increase section dues, sponsorship by companies such as Licor (Rebecca Drenovsky) or Forestry Supplies (Phil Gibson's comment), formation of a subcommittee to gather ideas (Diane Byers).

g. Topics from the Council Meeting. Should we have abstracts or just titles? Mixed but most wanted abstracts. Laura Galloway encouraged attendance at the business meeting.

2. Student Awards for Botany and Mycology 2009

Travel Awards ($400 each)

**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."

Presentation Awards ($150 each)

**Jesse Lincoln** of Grand Valley State University for his poster titled "*Ailanthus altissima* increases nodulation in *Trifolium pratens*: a novel weapon for an invasive species."

**Meredith Jabis** of Northern Arizona University for her paper titled "Pollinator-mediated gene flow fosters genetic variability in a narrow alpine endemic, *Abronia alpina* (Nyctaginaceae)."

3. Our section sponsored or co-sponsored 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)
4. At Botany and Mycology 2009 our section had 44 papers, 20 posters and others in topics sessions.

5. In Botany 2010 we will be sponsoring or co-sponsoring three symposia.
   a. Plant invasions in a time of environmental change. Organizers: Rebecca Drenovsky, and Brenda Grewell. ($1,000 support)

   b. Plant/Pollinator Interactions in Fragmented Landscapes. Organizers: Diane Byers, Krissa Skogen, and Suzanne Koptur. ($1,000 support)

   c. A Historical Perspective on Botany in the Rhode Island Area. Organizer: Marissa Grant (name only)

6. In Botany 2010 there are 115 papers or presentations in the ecological section sessions.

7. The student travel awards to attend Botany 2010 at $400 each were given to:
   Tanya Cheeke, Portland State University, Portland, OR - Advisor, Dr. Mitchell B. Cruzan - Botany 2010 presentation: "Transgenic Bt maize: An evaluation of nine different Bt maize isolines on arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi."

   Keith Bowman, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Syracuse, NY - Advisor, Dr. Dr. Robin Kimmerer - Botany 2010 presentation: "The influence of the diaspore (propagule) bank and diaspore rain on bryophyte (moss) community composition in northern white cedar swamps" and "Bringing mosses into the K-12 classroom."

Respectfully Submitted, Diane Byers July 25, 2010