The Merit Award committee this year was composed of the following members:

Thomas L. Rost (Co-chair)
Ruth Stockey (Co-chair)
Bruce G. Baldwin
Spencer Barrett
Susan Kalisz

The process for this year started very slowly so that at the time of the deadline only one person had been nominated. The committee agreed to extend the deadline and call for more nominees. The results of the final selection are appended below.

The merit award committee has analyzed the 7 nominees for the 2012 Merit Award and has agreed on the following:

3. Snow – Yes
4. Olmstead – Yes
5. Gensel – Yes
6. Judd – Yes

This year because of the unusual response to the call for nominations and the decision to re-open the nominations, the committee felt that there should be some formal instructions to the committee to guide future actions. The committee prepared the following instructions and now submits these to the Council for re-drafting and adoption for the use of future committees. Note that one member of the committee felt strongly that there should be only one or two merit awards granted each year.

Submitted 6-12-12
Thomas L. Rost (for the committee)
Enclosure: Draft instructions for the Merit Award Committee

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Thomas L. Rost (for the committee)
Enclosure: Draft instructions for the Merit Award Committee
The Botanical Society of America Merit Award is the highest honor the Society can bestow. Awardees are chosen based on their outstanding contributions to the mission of the Society. The award is bestowed on recipients who have demonstrated excellence in basic research, education, public policy, or who have provided exceptional service to the professional botanical community, or who may have made contributions to a combination of these categories.

Committee membership:
The committee typically consists of five members appointed by the President of the society for a two year term and should represent the breadth of the disciplines in the society. The Chair of the committee is appointed by the President for a one year term.

Committee duties:
Typically in February of each year the Society will send a call to all members asking for nominations for the Merit Award. The deadline for receiving complete nominations is normally March 15th, but in special cases the deadline may be extended if suitable candidates for the award are not received. In an instance where the deadline is extended, this is done by order of the society President with consent of the majority of the Merit Award committee. One or more recipients may be made each year, although under unusual circumstances the award might not be made. It is expected that the members of the society will submit nominations for this award. Members of the Merit Award committee may also nominate candidates for the award, or write supporting letters, but in those cases the committee member must recuse themselves from discussion of and vote on that candidate to avoid any conflict of interest.

Nominations for the Merit Award must include a detailed nomination letter that spells out the contributions of the candidate to botanical science. Each nomination should include at least four supporting letters and a recent CV of the candidate. Normally a person nominated will not be informed of her/his nomination, but this is usually not practical since a recent CV is needed for the nomination. Once a suitable candidate is selected the committee will prepare a short statement outlining the qualification of the awardee(s), and then inform the President of the Society.

Drafted by the Merit Award Committee April 2012:
Thomas L. Rost (Co-chair)
Ruth Stockey (Co-chair)
Bruce G. Baldwin
Spencer Barrett
Susan Kalisz