

Botanical Society of America
Systematics Section Annual Report for 2021-2022
Section Chair: Anna Monfils
Section Secretary: Harvey E. Ballard, Jr.
Submission Date: 21 June, 2022

This is my fourth annual report I have provided in my role as Chair for the Systematics Section. My Chair position expired at the 2020 BSA Annual meeting. I continued on in my current position as Chair of the Systematics Sections so we could hold an election for officers at the 2021 annual Botany conference. Per the bylaws, I appointed a nominating committee, and we reached out to the community to invite nominations. No nominations were forthcoming and targeted requests were declined. We had a meeting of the Systematics Section on Friday, the 23rd of July, 2021. This was the first meeting of the Systematics Section within the last 9 years. While the membership was supportive of continuing the Systematics Section, we were not successful in nominating a willing candidate for Chair.

In 2021/2022, Harvey Ballard, Jr. continued in his dual role as BSA Section Secretary-Treasurer and ASPT Program Director. He will finish his third term in his position as program director in 2022. The new program coordinator for ASPT will be Linda Brown. I recommend we nominate Linda Brown as the BSA Section Secretary-Treasurer. I would like to take this opportunity to provide my sincere gratitude to Harvey Ballard, Jr. He is the author on the majority of the annual report and has single handedly developed the Systematics program for the years I have participated as Chair of the Systematics Sections. He has been supportive colleague and a pleasure to work with over the last several years.

My role as Chair of the Systematics Section expired in 2020. In the absence of willing nominees, I have served two extra years in my role as Chair of the Systematics Section. Over the last two years I have worked with Harvey and reached out to leadership at both BSA and ASPT to define and refine the role of the Systematics section and request assistance in identifying a new Systematics Section Chair. The position remains unfilled. I will be stepping down from this position (effective July 5, 2022) to fulfill competing obligations. My last duty will be submitting the final report that includes notes and materials on the practice of this committee. If a new Chair can be identified, I am happy to provide support as past-Chair and assist in any transition into the Chair role.

A) Activities of the 2021-22 year

Botany 2022 will be the first Face to Face meeting since 2019. The notes relative to the annual meeting draw heavily from the ASPT Program Director Annual Report for 2021-2022 provided by Harvey Ballard, Jr.

Currently, we have five specialty topic categories for contributed talks besides the broader “Systematics” category, which is phylogenetically organized. These are “Biodiversity Informatics & Herbarium Digitization”, “Biogeography”, “Floristics & Taxonomy”, “Macroevolution”, and “Phylogenomics”. We also set aside the contributed talks aimed at the ASPT Cooley Award as one “Cooley Awards” half-session. This year, the total number of contributed systematics-related papers and posters was nearly equal to last year and significantly above the last two years; the number of contributed talks was significantly greater than previous

years, while posters were down significantly. Talks identified for ASPT Cooley Award consideration were down to a half-session from a whole session last year and two sessions two years ago. Four of the five “specialty” topics saw noticeable increases in contributed paper abstracts this year over the three previous years, while macroevolution held steady. General “Systematics” talks were down a bit.

Last year we created 24 half- and full sessions to accommodate 166 systematics-related contributed talks, while this year we created 16 half- and full sessions for 185 talks. Last year we hosted 80 systematics-related posters in the poster sessions, and this year we have 54. We are hosting 6 symposia and 8 colloquia. While more papers are being presented, and quite a few presenters are speaking in different sessions (including different organizational sessions), the conflicts were almost non-existent this year.

	Total '22 ('21, '20, '19)	Talks '22 ('21, '20, '19)	Posters '22 ('21, '20, '19)
Biodiversity Inform./Herb. Digit.	32 (22, 18, 24)	21 (11, 14, 13)	11 (11, 4, 11)
Biogeography	37 (31, 27, 29)	31 (23, 13, 15)	6 (8, 14, 14)
Floristics/Taxonomy	38 (39, 19, 23)	25 (20, 11, 10)	13 (19, 8, 13)
Macroevolution	24 (22, 16, 21)	21 (19, 12, 17)	3 (3, 4, 4)
Phylogenomics	55 (64, 34, 35)	45 (37, 29, 25)	10 (27, 5, 10)
Systematics (incl. Cooley)	53 (68, 64, 78)	42 (56, 37, 53)	11 (12, 27, 25)
TOTAL FOR “SYSTEMATICS”	239 (246, 178, 210)	185 (166, 116, 133)	54 (80, 62, 77)

B) Defining the role of the Systematics Section

We held a Systematics Section meeting at the 2021 Annual Botany Conference. While the intention was to elect a new Chair for the Systematics Section, no willing candidates were identified. We did engage in a discussion of the objectives of the Systematics Section.

Attached is the *BSA Systematics Section Annual Meeting Agenda; By-laws; and Current Practices*.

Respectfully submitted by Anna Monfils

**Botanical Society of America
Systematics Section
Annual Meeting Minutes
2:00 pm Eastern
July 23, 2021**

Section Chair: Anna Monfils

Section Secretary: Harvey E. Ballard, Jr.

- I. Presentation of 2019-2021 report from the Botanical Society of America (BSA) Systematics Section Chair A. Monfils
- II. Discussion of potential candidates for 2021-2023 Chair of Systematics Section; identified candidates declined nomination
- III. Discussion on the By-Laws and role of the BSA Systematics Section
- IV. Discussion on the BSA Systematics Section

Botanical Society of America
Systematics Section
By-laws

ARTICLE I. *Purpose*

The objectives of this organization shall be:

- I. To promote general interest and encourage research and teaching in systematic botany.
- II. To establish closer contacts between botanists concerned with systematic research and teaching.
- III. To cooperate whenever desirable and possible with other organizations in achieving these ends.
- IV. To act in whatever capacity it may find expedient as an organization of systematic botanists.
- V. To arrange a suitable program on systematic subjects in connection with the annual meetings of the Botanical Society of America, Inc. This program shall take any form deemed desirable for that meeting.

ARTICLE II. *Officers*

- I. The officers shall be a Chair and a Secretary-Treasurer.
- II. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Section, appoint all committees, serve as representative of the Systematic Section on the Council of the Botanical Society of America, Inc., and perform all other functions customary and prescribed for that office. The term of office is two years.
- III. The Secretary-Treasurer shall keep the records of the Section, carry on all necessary correspondence, be responsible for the collection of dues and handling of funds belonging to the Section, and arrange the programs of the sectional meetings. The term of office is three years.
- IV. Officers shall be elected at a regularly scheduled business session of the Section, announced as to time and place in the regular printed program of the annual meeting of the Botanical Society of America, Inc. They will assume office at the close of the annual meeting.
- V. Candidates for office shall be presented by a nominating committee of three which shall be appointed by the Chair.

ARTICLE III. *Meetings*

- I. The regular business meetings of the Section will be held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Botanical Society of America, Inc.
- II. The Section may arrange special meetings whenever desirable.

ARTICLE IV. *Membership*

- I. There shall be two classes of membership as provided for in Article VIII (paragraph 1) of the Bylaws of the Botanical Society of America, Inc.
- II. Any member in good standing in the Botanical Society of America, Inc., may become an active member of the Section upon notice to the Treasurer of the Botanical Society of America, Inc., and the Secretary-Treasurer of the Section. The Secretary-Treasurer shall maintain the active membership roll of the Section by requesting, from the Treasurer or

the Manager of Publications of the Botanical Society of America, Inc., a list of those members in good standing of the Society who have indicated their affiliation with the Systematics Section.

- III. The Section may, at its discretion, confer associate membership in the Section on persons who are not members of the Botanical Society of America, Inc. Associate members may not hold office in the Section, nor are they entitled to receive, gratis, publications of the Botanical Society of America, Inc.
- IV. Members of the Section shall pay yearly dues which can be used to defray incidental expenses of the Section. Changes in the amount of these dues shall be authorized by vote at the annual business meeting of the Section.

ARTICLE V. *Amendments*

These Bylaws may be amended by a three-quarters vote of those voting members present at a scheduled business meeting.

**Botanical Society of America
Systematics Section
Current Practice and Timeline**

Timeline:

September: Nominations for the chair of the BSA systematics section (per 2018 experience).

November: Call for Section request for additional funding

December: Vote for symposia and request to commit funds to symposia and colloquium

March: Annual Budget Reports provided by BSA

July: Annual Report submitted to council

Job description and expectations as stated in the nomination (edited for clarity):

As described in an email from the former Chair - The Chair is a liaison between BSA and ASPT. There is a lot of overlap in membership and most systematics related things are handled through ASPT, but the BSA Systematics Section has a few responsibilities mostly related to programming at the Botany meeting.

The tasks for the Chair are:

- 1) Review proposals for symposia and colloquia for the upcoming meeting and allocate funds to those that are selected (this is done in conjunction with ASPT)
- 2) Prepare a report for the BSA directors on the previous and upcoming meetings (Adapted from the ASPT program director, Harvey Ballard's report)
- 3) Attend the BSA council meeting on the Sunday of the Botany meeting
- 4) Attend the BSA business meeting

Nomination and process for elections (practice based on 2018 process):

Two candidates are nominated and a BSA Systematics Section wide election is held. Each candidate is asked to provide a single paragraph that includes, a) current position and as much of the candidate's employment & educational history as makes sense to the candidate; b) research interests; and c) a sentence or so about why a candidate is interested in serving.

Funding

The systematics section has an endowment and budget decisions are made by the Chair (from November 2018 to July 2022 funding decisions were made in consultation with the Section Secretary/Treasurer). The most recent year report provided by Director Heather Cacanindin was provided in March 2021. At the end of FY2020 (9-30-2020), the Systematics Section had \$28,309.28. As of March 1, 2021 the account grew \$1025; annual dues contributed \$730 and other funds consisted of \$295. The grant grew by \$1025 in 2021. As of 3-1-2021, the account totals \$29,334.28.

Historically, the funds have been used to support symposia, with a lesser amount (or none at all, if decided by the Chair) going toward colloquia. Some funds have been used to

support student applications for pre-conference field trips (though this has not been done since 2016).

Selection of symposia to fund

The chair has been deciding which symposia/colloquia to support, in consultation with the Treasurer/Secretary of the Systematics Section. Harvey Ballard, Jr. has served in this role for three terms and provided context in what ASPT is doing. Starting in 2022, Linda Brown will occupy this role. Annually, funds are generally split between 2-3 symposia that seemed most likely to be of interest to systematists and different from symposia funded in years prior.

Meetings

Dating back to 2016, there is no evidence of a Systematics Section meeting. A virtual meeting was held in July 2021 to elect a new Chair. A successful nomination was not identified.

General information

The section is autonomous and it is up to the section to determine the role they want to have moving forward.