

ASPB News



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PLANT BIOLOGISTS

Volume 39, Number 2
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Steve Huber

President's Letter

Walk the Talk to Spread the Word Communicating Plant Biology to the General Public

Life is about choices. Resources (for most of us) are limited, and every day we must each make decisions about where and how we spend our time, efforts, and money. Likewise, federal and state governments face the continual challenge of prioritizing needs, which is especially important in times of economic downturn when immediate and “pressing” problems tend to receive heightened attention and increased resources.

One pressing problem many plant scientists worry about is the sustainable production of sufficient (and sufficiently nutritious) food for a rapidly growing global population, especially in light of ongoing climate change. Although plant biology extends well beyond agriculture, for many in the general population the most frequent opportunity to interact with

plant biology is at the grocery store, where there's always a rich diversity of safe and relatively inexpensive food. So where's the problem we so urgently need to fix, one might ask. Changing this public perception will require innovative platforms and the efforts of all ASPB members as “citizen advocates.” We not only *can* help the public recognize there are *many* potential problems and challenges just ahead that require our action now, but also we *must* do

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Do you have ideas about how we can use social media to foster dialogue with the public? If so, I would like to hear from you—see the last paragraph for details!



Plant Biology 2012

Austin, Texas July 20-24

See page 3 for travel discounts and hotel accommodations

The *ASPB News* is delivered online as well as in print. Members will be alerted by e-mail when a new issue is posted. The *ASPB News* welcomes member feedback. Contact the editor at nancyw@aspb.org.

ASPB Executive Committee & Staff

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ASPB News: June 5, 2012

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Plant Biology 2012

Austin, Texas July 20-24

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PLANT BIOLOGISTS

Make Your Travel Plans Early!

Where to Stay

Plant Biology 2012 will be held at the Austin Convention Center. Attendees will receive special discounted room rates at conference hotels. Please note that discounted rates are available until **June 15, 2012**, or until the block is exhausted, whichever comes first. Hotels are located about eight miles (15 minutes) from the airport. For reservations, click Housing at http://my.aspb.org/?page=Meetings_PB12Housing.

Getting to Your Hotel

Taxis from the airport to the downtown area and hotels cost about \$25. Super Shuttle costs around \$13 one-way, and bus service costs about \$10 one-way. We suggest visiting the websites provided below for additional information and pictures of each facility:

Hilton Austin (headquarters hotel)
<http://tinyurl.com/8y7zcqk>

Hilton Garden Inn (Austin downtown)
<http://tinyurl.com/7ebvf2c>

Courtyard Marriott
(students and postdocs only)
<http://tinyurl.com/86faowt>

Residence Inn Marriott
(students and postdocs only)
<http://tinyurl.com/78akjsw>

Special Airline Discounts

ASPB has arranged discounts for Plant Biology 2012 attendees with several airlines that serve the Austin Airport:

American Airlines

When making your reservations, call American Airlines at 1-800-433-1790 from anywhere in the United States or Canada and refer to Promotion Code 1372BM. Or go to American Airlines online, choose More Flight Search Options, and insert the above promotion code in the appropriate box.

Continental or United Airlines

Call United Meetings at 1-800-468-7022 and provide the Z Code ZKVV and Agreement Code 160144.

To avoid a service fee and receive an additional 3% discount, book your reservations online at <http://www.continental.com>. Enter both your Z Code ZKVV and Agreement Code 160144 in the Offer Code Box.

Delta Airlines

When making your reservations at <http://www.delta.com>, give Ticket Designator Code NM8M9.

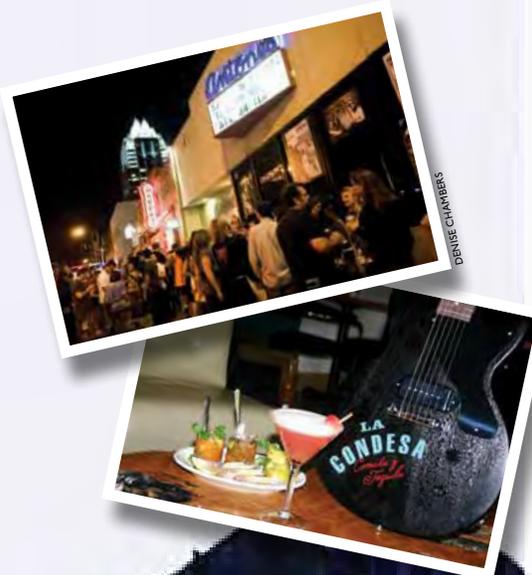
Austin Like a Local

Austin is a great city, but like every city you visit to attend a meeting, much of it will be missed as you concentrate on just figuring out how to get from your hotel to the convention center and how to find the rooms where sessions are being held. By the time you begin to get a feel for the town itself, you're packing your bags to go home.

But let us give you a few tips so that you actually can experience Austin—the Live Music Capital of the World®—in whatever free time you have during PB2012.

From grub to tunes, find out where to go from those who know best—the people who live there. Visit <http://www.austin360.com/blogs> and you'll feel like a native. That's true Texas hospitality!

PHOTOS COURTESY OF AUSTIN CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU



*We look forward to seeing you
in Austin July 20-24!*

Austin
LIVE MUSIC CAPITAL OF THE WORLD®



All the Details in the Palm of Your Hand!

Plant Biology 2012 Goes Mobile

Beginning April 25, 2012, you can download the Plant Biology meeting mobile app to your smartphone, tablet, laptop, or desktop. The meeting app can be used across a variety of operating systems, including Apple iPhone, Google Android, RIM Blackberry, and Windows mobile devices. It is also compatible with iPad, iTouch, and all Windows Mobile-based Tablets. So leave your program book in your room: we're going mobile!

These Features at Your Fingertips

- Complete schedule of symposia, minisymposia, workshops, and special events, including links to speaker information
- Day-by-day complete timeline of the conference—including poster hours and exhibit hours—all in one place and easy to find
- Abstracts and their respective locations in the exhibit hall
- Alerts about upcoming events and any changes made during the conference
- Informal dinner and lunch gatherings hosted by attendees or speakers
- Local resources, including restaurants, where to find the famous Austin food trucks, shopping, parks, and more—everything that's around the convention center and beyond

- Maps of the convention center and nearby locations
- Exhibitors
- The Career Center
- Hotel information, including reservations if you have not made yours before April 25
- Attendee list so that you can look for your colleagues during the meeting

Plan ahead and make the best use of your time at the event. We're hoping you keep all the details in the palm of your hand!

**Mobile App
Available
April 25, 2012.
Go Green!**



PLANT BIOLOGY BOOK SERIES: AUTHORS/EDITORS WANTED

Wiley-Blackwell and ASPB are developing a *Plant Biology Book Series* covering all areas of plant science at the undergraduate and graduate levels. We are looking for potential authors and editors and invite you to contact us if you have ideas that you'd like to discuss further.

Please contact our Commissioning Editor, Justin Jeffryes, at justin.jeffryes@wiley.com, or Series Editor Susan Singer at ssinger@carleton.edu.

www.wiley.com/go/ASPB

 WILEY-BLACKWELL



President's Letter
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this if we are to have any hope of convincing governments to continue supporting fundamental and applied research in plants. And by “we,” I mean all of us—each ASPB member has a vital role to play in conveying this important message.

Most of you reading this (thank you!) are well aware that ASPB provides a strong voice for the global plant science community. The Society's mission to promote the growth and development of plant biology and plant scientists is achieved through work in the realms of research, education, and public policy. ASPB provides national and international leadership in organizing efforts to bring diverse groups together to speak with one voice on topics relating to plant science research. For example, under the leadership of ASPB member **Gary Stacey**—and with support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the National Science Foundation, and the Department of Energy—the Society convened the Plant Science Research Summit in September 2011. The goal was to devise a consensus plan to guide plant science research over the next decade as a means to inform science, policy, and funding processes (<http://www.aspb.org/newsletter/novdec11/11summit.cfm>).

Although efforts such as these are targeted to scientists and policy makers, there is also a profound need to reach out to the general public. Most of us as ASPB members simply “like” plants, but when compared to our national populations, we are surely a small minority. How do we convince our fellow citizens (presumably a significant majority of voters and legislators) who do not share our passion for the importance of plants and the need to support continued research in plant biology?

These issues are being dealt with at various levels by several ASPB committees charged with sharing information about plant biology. In particular, the Society's Education Committee (http://my.aspb.org/?G_Leadership#edu) and the Education Foundation (http://my.aspb.org/?page=EF_



Katie Engen, MEd
Education Coordinator
Education Foundation, Education Committee, Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship

Katie enjoys collaborating on initiatives that support public understanding of plant biology and provide inquiry-based innovations for K–16+ educators and students. She thrives on fun in the sun with family. She also loves sports, reading, and puns. One day she'll add a children's book about Norman Borlaug to her list of freelance publications.

See Katie and Kathy's profile pages in ASPB's online directory (<http://my.aspb.org/search>).



Kathy Munkvold, PhD
Public Affairs Manager

Kathy joined ASPB as the plant science policy fellow this past summer and was recently named public affairs manager. Prior to serving as ASPB's link to Washington policy and funding issues impacting plant biology research, she studied the molecular interactions between bacterial pathogens and their plant hosts as a postdoctoral researcher. When taking a break from the Washington policy scene, Kathy enjoys cooking, outdoor activities, and family time.

Index) are developing educational materials and outreach programs targeted to K–12 and university students as well as the general public. **Katie Engen**, ASPB education coordinator, provides broad support to the education and public affairs activities and helps to develop the resources that are provided to promote the teaching and learning of science using plants and to encourage plant biology as a career choice. In an analogous manner, the Public Affairs Committee, with the guidance of **Kathy Munkvold**, ASPB public affairs manager, takes our story to Washington, D.C., every year for a series of meetings on Capitol Hill and at federal agencies to convey to government officials the important contributions plant biology is making to help solve some of the country's most pressing scientific, social, and economic problems. Over the course of the year, multiple action alerts are sent to members to engage their

congressional delegates as critical events unfold—and many respond. Lewis-Burke Associates, LLC, a government relations firm, supports many of the efforts of the Public Affairs Committee.

These efforts are extremely important but provide an active role for relatively few of our members, and I would submit that each of us needs to be involved. One thing we can do is *share the importance of plant biology with the people we encounter in our daily lives: neighbors, friends, family, and so on*. I would also ask each of you to think about new ways to *engage the general public in dialogue, perhaps using social media* (more on that at the end of this article). Having well-informed voters and citizens is just as important as having well-informed legislators and government leaders, and my simple point is that *everyone* can play an

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President's Letter
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active and important role in informing the public. This message is not unique—it is implicit in the work of the committees already mentioned—but we need a broadened and renewed commitment to inform the public about the importance of plant biology. As noted last summer at the first Public Affairs Workshop (Advocacy 101: Stand Up for Plant Science; <http://www.aspb.org/newsletter/septoct11/13advocacy.cfm>), Jim Siedow (former chair of ASPB's Public Affairs Committee and past ASPB president) reminded the audience that we “must be proactive in engaging a Congress and a public about government spending. Therefore, *it is critical for members to get involved and convince the public of the benefits of plant science research.*”

Why is this particularly important now? I see several reasons. First, with the budget crises that will continue to unfold over the next several years, especially in the United States and Europe, it is likely that public research funding for plant science will become even more limited. At the same time, it is critical that everyone understand how the important contributions of plant biology work being done on topics such as human health, the food supply, next-generation biofuels, and climate change are helping to solve some of the planet's most pressing scientific, social, and economic problems. As noted in the 2012 Annual Letter from Bill Gates (<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/annual-letter/2012/Pages/home-en.aspx>), the situation is already dire: “Right now, just over 1 billion people—about 15 percent of the people in the world—live in extreme poverty. On most days, they worry about whether their family will have enough food to eat.” Food security also impacts geopolitical stability, so there are many reasons to be concerned about the current situation. Continued research support—targeted to mission-oriented research as well as fundamental research—will be essential to solve these problems.

Second, we need to continue to attract the best students to study plant biology and pursue careers in this area. Recognition of

the importance of plants to the earth's ecosystems and our own survival will help ensure this. At present, the fields of study that are valued most are those in animal-based fields such as neuroscience, developmental biology, and immunology. This is manifest in several ways, one of which is the level of federal funding provided for different areas. As noted in the Plant Science Summit report in the *ASPB News*, “the National Institutes of Health spends more for research on individual diseases from schizophrenia to urologic diseases than the USDA allots for the entire Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) competitive grants program.” Bill Gates, in his 2012 Letter, also comments: “Given the central role that food plays in human welfare and national stability, it is shocking—not to mention short-sighted and potentially dangerous—how little money is spent on agricultural research.” The disparity in funding also correlates with scientist salaries. As noted in an article published recently in *The Scientist* (<http://the-scientist.com/2011/12/01/life-sciences-salary-survey-2011>), the highest median salaries are in fields that are human-health related, which, as noted above, is also where the majority of the research dollars are going.

How can we get people's attention so that we have an opportunity to persuade them of the value and importance of the plant sciences? In a social setting, after beginning with an icebreaker, you might go on to describe (in no more than a minute) your own area of work, why it is important, and how it might impact science and/or technology. (See the sidebar on this page for an icebreaker idea from ASPB staff.) But we need to reach beyond this to address topics of concern to the general public: jobs, health, sustainability, and food security. Although human health is readily appreciated to be important (we all get sick, including those in government), less recognized—beyond the oft-ignored admonition to eat your fruits and veggies—is the role of plants in promoting good health over a lifetime. Moreover, the public needs help grasping and changing personal choices in response to other issues (global food security, sustainable energy,

Plant Science Icebreakers

One clever icebreaker comes from Katie Engen and was originally published in the November/December 2009 issue of the *ASPB News*. Anticipating scientists mingling at a holiday party, the following chitchat opener was suggested:

Reveling scientist: *Nelson Mandela, Elie Wiesel, Mother Teresa, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., are four of only five people to win the Nobel Peace Prize, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and the Congressional Gold Medal. Who's the fifth?*

Party guests: [offer random suggestions but remain stupefied]

Reveling scientist: *Norman Borlaug, the “father of the Green Revolution,” whose efforts to develop new grain varieties saved as many as a billion people from hunger and starvation.*

Reveling scientist continues to regale fellow partygoers with fascinating tidbits about plants.

and global climate change) that may soon become just as real and personal as disease. We need to seek solutions now so that changes can be implemented before it is too late. ASPB continues to be a strong supporter of the acquisition of basic knowledge, and although more applied studies may be the safest approach to get results in the short term, we must remind people that fundamental research needs support as well. Many breakthrough and technological advances have come quite unexpectedly from very basic research programs, and we can make people aware of the importance of these.

What are the venues for reaching the public with a compelling message about the value of plant biology now and in the future? I encourage each of you to join the public affairs interest group (<http://aspb.org/>

publicaffairsgroup) and subscribe to the *Plants in the News* blog (<http://www.aspb.org/plantsinthenews>) and the *Plant Biology Policy* blog (<http://www.aspb.org/policyblog>) to keep up with policy developments and a wide range of activities of interest to the plant biology community. Become active in the education interest group (<http://aspb.org/educationgroup>) and invest in the next generation of scientists, perhaps influencing top talent to pursue plant biology careers! If you plan to come to Plant Biology 2012 (<http://austin2012.aspb.org>) in Austin, Texas, sign up to attend the public affairs workshop (http://my.aspb.org/?page=Meetings_PB12Wrkshps) titled “The Intersection of Plant Biology and Washington Policy” when you register (http://my.aspb.org/events/event_details.asp?id=140353). But most important, find ways to engage the people you encounter in your daily life and talk specifically and broadly with them about plant biology. See the sidebar for a partial list of some “easy to share” resources.

Do you have ideas for how we can use social media to foster dialogue with folks who are not experts in plant biology? What

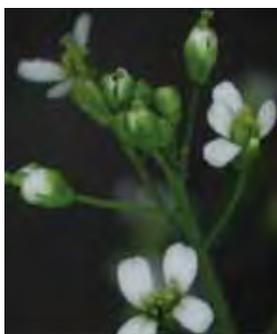
A Few “Easy to Share” Resources

- Science-based information and resources on agriculture, food, and technology: <http://ucbiotech.org>
- Scoop It: <http://tinyurl.com/7bsgcjv>
- <http://www.Greenseedling.com>
- <http://ChloroFilms.org>
- *Teaching Tools in Plant Biology* (“Why Study Plants?”): <http://www.plantcell.org/site/teachingtools/TTPB1.xhtml>
- Plants and Human Health: coming soon!
- Vision & Change Final Report: <http://visionandchange.org/finalreport>
- 2012 Annual Letter from Bill Gates: <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/annual-letter/2012/Pages/home-en.aspx>
- ASPB Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/myASPB>

stories about the connections between fundamental plant biology research and tangible benefits to society have you found most compelling in your conversations? Do you have experiences and best practices to share? I'd like to hear from you! E-mail

me (shuber@aspb.org) with your thoughts, questions, and suggestions; if there is enough interest, we will establish a place online for these conversations.

Steve Huber
shuber@aspb.org



TAB articles are now indexed on PubMed!

As part of continuing initiatives to improve the quality and visibility of *The Arabidopsis Book* (TAB) and its content, PubMed is now indexing past and future articles. This will allow easier discovery of relevant articles by all scientists and should be especially helpful at leading non-Arabidopsis researchers to the expanding content of the journal. TAB content is already indexed in The Arabidopsis Information Resource (TAIR; <http://www.arabidopsis.org>) by associating all Arabidopsis Gene Identifiers mentioned in each article with the relevant gene pages on TAIR.

TAB continues to be free to authors, publicly accessible, and online only. It is funded by ASPB.

Help your students put down roots

Provide Them with Membership in ASPB!



Teaching Tools
in Plant Biology™
ideas to grow on

Students are the future of plant biology, and the earlier they become involved in their profession, the more likely they will stay involved throughout their career.

Have you considered sponsoring your students' membership in ASPB? If you submit their membership applications with your membership fee (if you are not already renewed for 2012), you will receive a \$5 discount on the membership fee for each student you sponsor.

Membership Offers Many Benefits to Your Students

- The online Career Center
- Online networking tools through the ASPB website
- Free online access to *The Plant Cell* and *Plant Physiology*
- Reduced registration rates for the annual meeting
- Access to travel grants to support attendance at the annual meeting
- The bimonthly *ASPB News* and the monthly *Member Chatter* e-mail to keep them up-to-date on Society happenings
- Opportunities to volunteer in the Society



http://my.aspb.org/?Membership_GYSR



21 ASPB Members Elected to the 2011 Class of AAAS Fellows

Twenty-one members of the American Society of Plant Biologists (ASPB) were elected to the 2011 class of American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Fellows. Each year, the AAAS Council elects fellows based on their contributions to science and technology in the areas of research; teaching; technology; services to professional societies; administration in academe, industry, and government; and communicating and interpreting science to the public. Fellows are defined as AAAS members “whose efforts on behalf of the advancement of science or its applications are scientifically or socially distinguished.”

New fellows were honored with a certificate and a blue and gold rosette to symbolize their distinguished achievements at the AAAS Annual Meeting Fellows Forum on February 18, 2012, in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Congratulations to the following ASPB members:

Section on Agriculture, Food, and Renewable Resources



Daniel R. Bush

Colorado State University

For fundamental contributions to our understanding of plant assimilate metabolism and for his service as president of the American Society of Plant Biologists and as chair of the AAAS Section on Agriculture, Food, and Renewable Resources



Gerald E. Edwards

Washington State University

For leadership in the study of photosynthesis and its relation to crop improvement, including the effects of environmental stress and potential global climate change



Z. Jeffrey Chen

University of Texas at Austin

For distinguished contributions to the field of plant genomics and agriculture, particularly for pioneering work on genetics and epigenetics of polyploidy and hybrid vigor in plant improvement



B. W. “Joe” Poovaiah

Washington State University

For distinguished contributions to plant science, particularly for recognizing the significance of calcium/calmodulin-mediated signaling in plant growth, plant-microbe interactions, and plant defense



Steven R. Rodermel

Iowa State University

For distinguished contributions to the field of photosynthesis, particularly for understanding nuclear-chloroplast genetic coordination, and for university and National Science Foundation administrative service

Not featured is ASPB member Federico Sánchez from Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. The entire list of 2011 AAAS fellows can be found on the AAAS website: <http://www.aaas.org/aboutaaas/fellows/2011.shtml>.

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AAAS Fellows
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Section on Biological Sciences

Richard M. Amasino
University of Wisconsin–Madison

For distinguished contributions to our understanding of the genetic and biochemical mechanisms that control seasonal flowering, as well as for leadership in science education



Gretchen Hagen
University of Missouri–Columbia

For distinguished contributions to plant physiology and molecular biology, particularly for responses to the plant hormone auxin at the transcriptional and cellular levels



Xuemei Chen
University of California, Riverside

For pioneering discoveries in the field of plant biology in small RNA metabolism and plant development



Sheng Yang He
Michigan State University

For contributions to the field of plant pathology focusing on the molecular mechanisms of bacterial plant pathogenesis and host cell immunity



Xinnian Dong
Duke University
For distinguished contributions to the field of plant–microbe interactions, outstanding service to the American Society of Plant Biologists and the North American Arabidopsis Steering Committee, and the scientific discourse and standards set as an editor of *The Plant Cell*



Eliot Herman
Donald Danforth Plant Science Center; University of Arizona

For distinguished contributions to the field of seed biology and biotechnology



Daphne R. Goring
University of Toronto, Canada

For distinguished contributions to the field of plant mating systems, in particular for elucidating novel cellular mechanisms governing pollen discrimination



Gregg A. Howe
Michigan State University

For contributions to understanding the synthesis and action of the plant hormone jasmonate and for helping to elucidate the role of jasmonate in regulating plant defense responses to insect herbivores



Sheila McCormick

USDA-ARS/University of California, Berkeley

For distinguished contributions in the area of plant reproductive science, particularly for elucidating biological processes in pollen that lead to reproductive success



Richard T. Sayre

Los Alamos National Laboratory

For distinguished contributions in the field of plant metabolic engineering for improved nutrition, photosynthesis, and renewable fuels production



Anastasios Melis

University of California, Berkeley

For pioneering contributions to our understanding of photosynthetic hydrogen evolution and for opening the field of photosynthetic production of biofuels



Jack C. Schultz

University of Missouri-Columbia

For pioneering contributions to the field of chemical ecology, particularly demonstrating volatile signaling among plants and characterizing chemically mediated multitrophic interactions, as well as promoting interdisciplinarity



James V. Moroney

Louisiana State University

For distinguished contributions in the field of photosynthesis, particularly for studies elucidating the carbon-concentrating mechanism of green algae



Thomas D. Sharkey

Michigan State University

For studies of the biochemistry and biophysics of gas exchange between plants and the atmosphere, especially carbon uptake in photosynthesis and carbon loss during isoprene emission from plants



David E. Salt

University of Aberdeen, UK

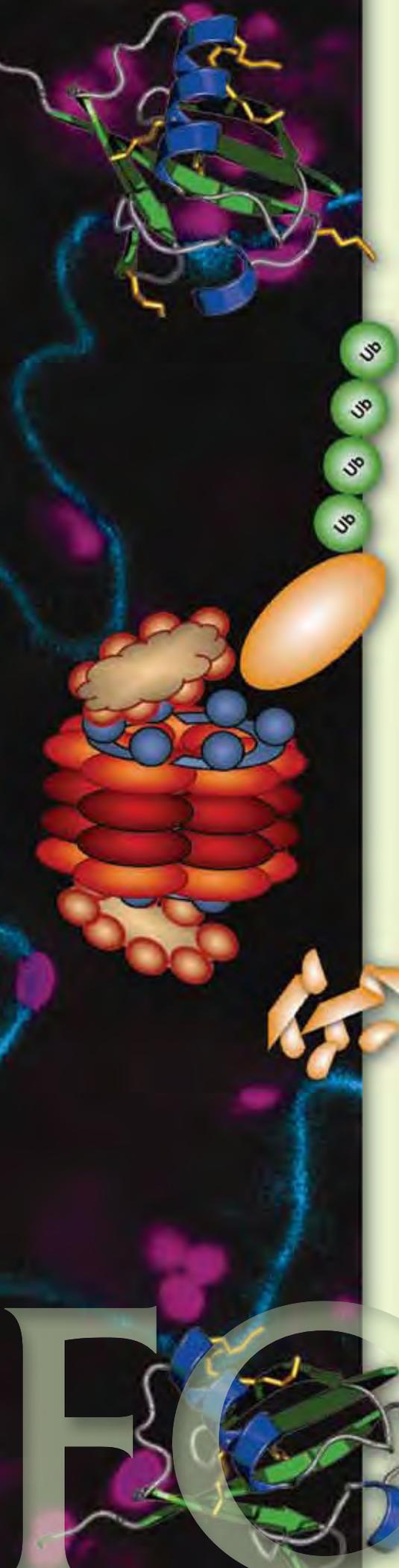
For distinguished contributions to plant biology, especially for development of ionomics, combining high-throughput phenotyping with genetics and genomics to further our understanding of mineral homeostasis



Larry N. Vanderhoef

University of California, Davis

For contributing to the advancement and well-being of science throughout his career, first through his work as a plant biologist, then in his various national roles, including chair of the ASPB Board of Trustees, during his 25 years as provost and chancellor at the University of California, Davis



CALL FOR PAPERS

Plant Physiology[®] Focus Issue on Ubiquitin in Plant Biology

Deadline for Submission: May 1, 2012

To submit an article, please go to <http://submit.plantphysiol.org>.

Plant Physiology is pleased to announce a Focus Issue on Ubiquitin in Plant Biology to be published in September 2012. The issue will be edited by Vitaly Citovsky and Bonnie Bartel. Research article submissions on the roles of ubiquitin or ubiquitin-like modifiers in all aspects of plant biology are welcome, including development and morphogenesis, hormonal and environmental responses, chromatin remodeling and histone modifications, and plant–pathogen interactions. The issue also will include invited updates on areas of recent progress.

Authors interested in contributing should indicate this in the cover letter when submitting papers online at <http://submit.plantphysiol.org>. Please select “Ubiquitin in Plant Biology (September 2012)” from the Focus Issue list in the online submission system. Articles published within 2 years before and after the Focus Issue will be considered for inclusion in an online Focus Collection of articles relevant to the focus topic.

Please contact Vitaly Citovsky (vitaly.citovsky@stonybrook.edu) or Bonnie Bartel (bartel@rice.edu) for additional information.

FOCUS

Joe Poovaiah to Present WSU Distinguished Faculty Address

ASPB member B. W. “Joe” Poovaiah has been selected to give the 2012 Distinguished Faculty Address on Friday, March 30, as part of the annual Showcase celebration of Washington State University (WSU) research, scholarship, and creative work.

The annual award from WSU recognizes a faculty member whose achievements in research, scholarship, and teaching place them in the front ranks of their discipline.

Joe Poovaiah, regents professor in the Department of Horticulture, has gained



Joe Poovaiah

international prominence for his pioneering research on calcium/calmodulin-mediated signaling in plants, which has implications for plant growth and protection. His research and scholarly activities continue to bring recognition to his department; to the College of Agricultural, Human and Natural Resource Sciences; and to WSU.

Joe holds six patents and has published more than 200 research articles. He has successfully competed for millions of dollars in federal grant support. Recently, his team had un-

precedented success in publishing a series of papers in *Nature* documenting how calcium/calmodulin-mediated signaling controls plant growth, plant-microbe symbioses, and plant immunity/defense. In 2009, their findings were highlighted in *Cell*.

Joe was recently elected to the class of 2011 AAAS fellows. In 2010, he was elected a member of the Washington State Academy of Sciences and a foreign fellow of the National Academy of Sciences, India. In 2011, he received WSU's Sahlin Faculty Excellence Award for Research, Scholarship and Arts.

To learn more about Joe's research, go to <http://molecularplants.wsu.edu/calcium/index.html>.

IPG2012

Plant Physiology In the "Omics" Era

May 23 - 25, 2012

University of Missouri, Columbia, MO

The 29th Annual Interdisciplinary Plant Group Symposium will provide a unique international forum to examine challenges and emerging paradigms in studies of plant physiology in the 'omics era.

Keynote Speakers: Deborah Delmer and Richard Richards

Closing Speaker: John Boyer

Information and Registration
www.ipg.missouri.edu/symposium

Hosted by the Interdisciplinary Plant Group at the University of Missouri with support from the Food for the 21st Century Program and in cooperation with the MU Conference Office.





Bill Gates Focuses on Agricultural Innovation in 2012 Annual Letter

At a time of worldwide economic instability, Bill Gates, former CEO of Microsoft Corporation and cochair and trustee of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), chose to focus his 2012 Annual Letter (<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/annual-letter/2012/Pages/home-en.aspx>) on agricultural innovation as a means to global improvement. Gates highlights the success of Norman Borlaug's Green Revolution in the 1960s and 1970s as impetus for our continued support of agricultural innovation. He states that "the world faces a clear choice. If we invest relatively modest amounts, many poor farmers will be able to feed their families. If we don't, one in seven people will continue living needlessly on the edge of starvation." But where even that "modest" funding will come from in times of economic uncertainty greatly concerns Gates.

In his letter, Gates emphasizes three areas of research key to feeding a growing global population: improving resistance to emerging and evolving plant diseases, crop improvement to tolerate variable weather patterns in the face of climate change, and continued advancement in molecular breeding techniques and plant genomics. To that end, the BMGF has been a strong supporter of agricultural research through partnerships with the National Science Foundation (NSF; Basic Research to Enable Agricultural Development [BREAD] grants), the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), among others.

The global population is expected to reach nearly 10 billion by 2050. The question remains: will there be adequate funding for the advances in agriculture needed to meet the demands of the future?

DOE Office of Science and NIH See Slight Bumps in Funding in Final FY2012 Appropriations Bill

More good news on the appropriations front for federal science agencies funding plant science research as the final fiscal year (FY)

2012 appropriations bill (Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012) was signed into law by the president on December 23, 2011. This action followed months of wrangling over the federal debt, deficit, and reducing federal spending. The final bills represent real compromise and sustain important investments in federal research and education programs, such as the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Department of Defense (DOD) basic research, and Pell grants, at current levels or with modest increases.

The DOE Office of Science received \$4.889 billion, an increase of \$46.34 million (about 1%) above FY2011. The department's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) programs were slated for level funding at \$1.825 billion. The Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) received \$275 million, half of the \$550 million requested by the president.

The \$915 billion appropriations bill includes \$30.698 billion for NIH, an increase of \$299 million (0.7%) above FY2011. The final bill creates the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS), which is the top priority for NIH Director Francis Collins.

Damaging Provisions for the Federal Funding Process in the Grant Reform and New Transparency (GRANT) Act

The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee recently approved the Grant Reform and New Transparency (GRANT) Act, H.R. 3433. The bill is intended to provide greater transparency in the federal grant-making process by requiring all federal agencies to publicize the selection procedures for each grant program. It also mandates that the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) create a single, comprehensive website for all federal grant opportunities, among other provisions.

Many in the research community have concerns with the bill's transparency requirements in the peer-review process, which include the posting of full copies of funded proposals online (albeit with an excep-

tion for information that is not subject to the Freedom of Information Act [FOIA]) and changes to peer-reviewer anonymity. Although many efforts have been made to effect positive changes in the bill, the amount of disclosure required is still potentially damaging to the peer-review process. As such, Representatives Rush Holt (D-NJ) and David Price (D-NC) sent a "Dear Colleague" letter to the House leadership urging them to fix these remaining issues. While Reps. Holt and Price sought additional signatories to the letter from among their colleagues in January, ASPB urged members to contact their representatives to share their concern and encourage them to sign on to the letter (http://my.aspb.org/members/blog_view.asp?id=612565&post=137505).

In other efforts to remove these damaging provisions in the GRANT Act, ASPB signed on to a letter to House leadership spearheaded by the Coalition for National Science Funding, of which the Society is a member. Among others, the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Association of Public Land-grant Universities have sent similar letters to protect the peer-review process. ASPB continues to monitor this piece of legislation. Subscribe to the *Plant Biology Policy* blog (<http://www.aspb.org/policyblog>) for the most recent updates on this and other relevant legislation.

NSB Provides Guidance on NSF Merit Review Criteria

In January, the NSF National Science Board (NSB) published a report titled *NSF Merit Review Criteria: Review and Revisions*. After extensive review and stakeholder consultation, the NSB concluded that Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts should be maintained as the two review criteria used to assess NSF proposals; however, there is a need to provide greater clarity on each of the criteria and explain how they relate to the NSF core principles. The updated definitions are as follows:

- **Intellectual Merit:** The Intellectual Merit criterion encompasses the potential to advance knowledge.

- **Broader Impacts:** The Broader Impacts criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes.

The report notes that the Broader Impacts criterion is required as an element of merit review under the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act, which states that the overall goals of the Broader Impacts criterion should be increased or improved to address such issues as economic competitiveness; global science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workforce competitiveness; participation of women and underrepresented minorities; partnerships with industry; pre-K–12 STEM education; undergraduate STEM education; public scientific literacy; and national security. However, NSB recommended that NSF not include this list or other examples of broader impacts in the criteria to avoid being too prescriptive or restricting the creativity of NSF researchers.

USDA Closing 259 U.S. Offices to Cut Costs

In an effort to save \$150 million, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack announced in January the closure of 259 U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) offices. Most of the savings have come from reducing travel and supplies, whereas the office closings will result in about \$60 million in savings. The closures will affect offices at USDA headquarters in Washington, D.C., 46 states, and one U.S. territory and include 12 Agricultural Research

Service (ARS) programs in 10 locations. In a press release (http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=blueprint_for_stronger_service.html), Vilsack said, “the Blueprint for Stronger Service effectively means that in an era of reduced budgets, we’re not going to see reduced service.” He added that if the USDA did not undertake the consolidation of offices with zero to two employees in many cases, the remaining option would be furloughs or a reduction in workforce, ultimately leading to a reduction in service.

Despite Vilsack’s commitment to stronger service, some raised concerns about effects on food safety because the USDA plans to close five of the 15 Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) district offices throughout the United States. Undersecretary for Food Safety Elisabeth Hagen says that although the offices are being consolidated, there would be no reduction in inspectors or inspection work. “Not only do we have a statutory obligation to be in every facility, we have an unwavering commitment to food safety,” Hagen said in a statement. “We will still be on the job, in every facility, every

day.” It will be clear in time whether the USDA can maintain its current standard of service following the closures.

Selected Funding Opportunity

- **NSF:** Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (S-STEM) are granted to institutions of higher education to support scholarships for academically talented students demonstrating financial need, enabling them to enter the STEM workforce or STEM graduate school following completion of an associate, baccalaureate, or graduate-level degree in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics disciplines (<http://bit.ly/z3tQUk>).

To stay up-to-date on funding opportunities, follow the *Funding Opportunities in Plant Biology* blog at <http://www.aspb.org/fundingblog>; e-mail subscription and RSS feed are available.

Kathy R. Munkvold, PhD
Public Affairs Manager
kmunkvold@aspb.org

This column provides just a small sample of the content from ASPB public affairs, including material provided by ASPB’s government relations consultants, Lewis-Burke Associates, LLC. Also be sure to check out our blogs: *Plant Biology Policy*, *Funding Opportunities*, and *Plants in the News*. Please visit <http://www.aspb.org/publicaffairs> for the most up-to-date news.

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Immature Rice



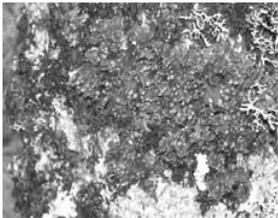
Prickly Pear Cactus



Turf Grass



Juniper



**Lichens
& Bryophytes**



Conifers



**Various
Aquatic Plants**



**Some types of
Algae on Rocks**



Fruit



Pineapple



Arabidopsis



Agave



Focus on Education at Plant Biology 2012

Enhance your conference experience by including some of these events designed to pique the interests and meet the needs of science educators.

Please verify all logistics online at <http://austin2012.aspb.org> or on-site in Austin.

EVENT	DESCRIPTION	ACCESS NOTES
Poster Session for Undergraduate Networking Friday, July 20, 9:30–10:30 a.m.	Welcome the next generation of plant biologists! Undergraduates display their posters during this special session.	Open to all <i>Light refreshments</i>
Small Colleges/PUI Research Networking Event Friday, July 20, 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Join with scientists working at or interested in primarily undergraduate institutions (PUIs). Network, discuss common interests, find out about PUI-related opportunities, and provide feedback on ASPB programs for PUIs.	Online preregistration required. Free.
How to Be a Great Teacher: A Hands-on Workshop for Postdocs and Students Saturday, July 21, 7:30–10 p.m.	Consider goals for teaching diverse groups of students, discuss and practice methods for engaging students, and explore ways to assess student learning. We also will share ideas about how graduate students and postdocs can find opportunities to teach.	Online preregistration and ticket purchase required. \$30 faculty/\$25 postdocs/\$20 students. <i>Buffet dinner</i>
Education Workshop: Case Study Teaching—Engaging Students in Plant Biology Problem Solving Sunday, July 22, 7:30–10 p.m.	Explore case study teaching and related teaching materials available through the National Center for Case Study Teaching in Science (NCCSTS; http://sciencecases.lib.buffalo.edu/cs). Attendees will tackle a plant biology case, experiencing case study teaching from the student perspective and seeing how cases can be used to foster learning of science concepts and skills. The workshop will end with an invitation for participants to apply for sponsorship from ASPB to join a weeklong professional development workshop at the NCCSTS, New York, in May 2013. Sponsored by the ASPB Education Committee.	Online preregistration required. Free. <i>Light refreshments</i>
Education Minisymposium (#26) Monday, July 23, 3:45–5:30 p.m.	Learn from plant scientists sharing their education and outreach innovations, including ways to study the efficacy of instructional materials and teaching approaches.	Open to all
Education Booth Competition for Innovative Instruction Daily in the Education Booth	See how colleagues are teaching plant science in the laboratory, classroom, and other venues. Speak with the Education Booth competition winners about their innovative techniques, technologies, and strategies for teaching plant science.	During exhibit hall hours
Hot Topics in Science Education Daily in the Education Booth	Meet experts for interactive 30- to 60-minute sessions to discuss the hottest science, outreach, and education topics (PB12 session topics TBA). To suggest a topic or facilitate a discussion, please e-mail Erin Dolan, Education Committee chair, at eldolan@uga.edu. Sponsored by the ASPB Education Committee.	During exhibit hall hours
Resource Library Daily in the Education Booth	Peruse selected resources on how people learn and help yourself to education and outreach materials—all free for the taking.	During exhibit hall hours

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ASPB to Again Partner with USA Science & Engineering Festival Expo

The Largest Celebration of Science in the United States!

ASPB returns this spring as an official partner of the 2012 USA Science & Engineering Festival (USASEF) Expo.

The weekend event is a collaboration involving more than 500 of the nation's leading science and engineering organizations. Teens, youngsters, and adults can meet science celebrities, award-winning science authors, and Nobel Prize winners. Also on hand will be a career pavilion for high school students, a book fair featuring more than 30 science authors, and a science carnival for children.

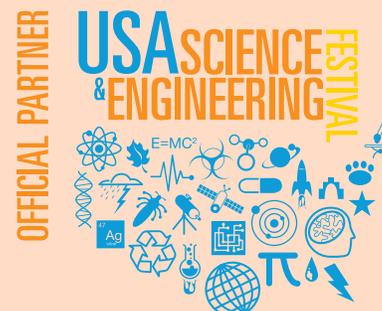
The expo will kick off with an invitation-only "Sneak Peek Friday" on April 27

at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center.

Any ASPB members interested in volunteering at the booth for shifts on April 27, 28, or 29 can contact katie@aspb.org.

Members unable to make it to the event can develop sanctioned satellite events featuring plant biology. Satellite event planning information is available at <http://www.usasciencefestival.org/satellite-event-directory>. Contact katie@aspb.org to explore how the Society might help you.

Spread the good news about USASEF 2012! Visit <http://tinyurl.com/6oft15u> for more details. 



ASPB Roots for Plant Science at USASEF

Dig in to plant science with the American Society of Plant Biologists!

The ASPB booth will offer hands-on, inquiry-oriented activities that inspire visitors to discover how plant biology cultivates critical advances in

- research and discovery
- conservation
- health and nutrition
- food and fuel
- sustainability

Talk with expert plant research scientists and science educators to connect the in-booth activities with the importance of plants in our daily lives.

Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Washington, D.C.

April 28-29, 2012

Saturday 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. and Sunday 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

<http://www.usasciencefestival.org>



Need to promote open positions, fellowship opportunities, programs, or conferences in plant biology?

Advertise in the publications of the American Society of Plant Biologists (ASPB). ASPB opportunities include

- *The Plant Cell*
- *Member Chatter*
- *Plant Physiology*
- ASPB website
- *ASPB News*

Advertising Benefits

- Link directly to leading international plant scientists.
- Promote directly to the ASPB membership.
- Product and recruitment advertising are accepted.
- E-mail ads and print/online ad design are available.

Contact FASEB AdNet at 301-634-7103 or e-mail adnet@faseb.org for an ad estimate.

View the ASPB rate card and full media kit at <http://www.faseb.org/adnet>.

ASPB Partners with USASEF to Provide a Broader Impacts Resource Cultivating Careers in Plant Biology

Interested in motivating the next generation of talented plant researchers? Looking to inspire members of your community, professional network, or political sphere to better understand plant biology? Then share the insights, phrasing, and linked resources in *How to Grow a Career in Plant Biology* by ASPB (<http://tinyurl.com/74vfovz>). This career-catalyzing piece was selected in February to be the featured post for the STEM Advice Corner, an online resource offered by the USA Science & Engineering Festival (USASEF; <http://www.usasciencefestival.org>).

USASEF organizers expect parents and students to use the advice corner as a source of motivation and practical tips on hot careers in science and engineering. Posting with USASEF gives ASPB the chance to fill each reader's mind with accessible insights about plant biology careers. Furthermore, the site is visited by the thousands of educators and media representatives engaging with USASEF, which is sure to lead to broader impacts for plant biology.

For more "broader impacts" options to share with your colleagues, coeds, or kids,



check out the variety of career development (http://my.aspb.org/default.asp?page=C_Index) and career education (http://my.aspb.org/members/group_content_view.asp?group=80400&id=99873) resources available for free on the ASPB website. 

Education Foundation Grant Request for Proposals

MARCH 1 – JUNE 8, 2012

The **ASPB Education Foundation** seeks proposals from ASPB members to support education and outreach activities that advance youth, student, and public awareness and understanding of plant biology and the role of plants in all areas of life.

The Foundation awards up to \$30,000 each for **education and outreach projects** (i.e., not science research projects) that promote the

- importance of plants for the sustainable production of medicine, food, fibers, and fuels
- critical role plants play in sustaining functional ecosystems in changing environments
- latest developments in plant biotechnologies, including genetic modifications that enhance the disease and stress resistance of crops
- contributions of discoveries made in plants to discoveries that improve human health and well-being
- range of careers related to plant biology or available to plant biologists
- programs or relationships that can be sustained over time
- projects that combine other funding with the Foundation grant

No forms are needed, but the submission requirements are very specific. Be sure to read the **complete RFP and submission instructions** very carefully.

**Questions? E-mail katie@aspb.org.
DEADLINE: June 8, 2012**

Project Summaries from prior projects can be found on the Education Foundation web pages (<http://tinyurl.com/7htvzco>).

Additionally, the Foundation seeks

- resources in flexible formats that can be widely shared and disseminated
- project PIs with international dissemination options



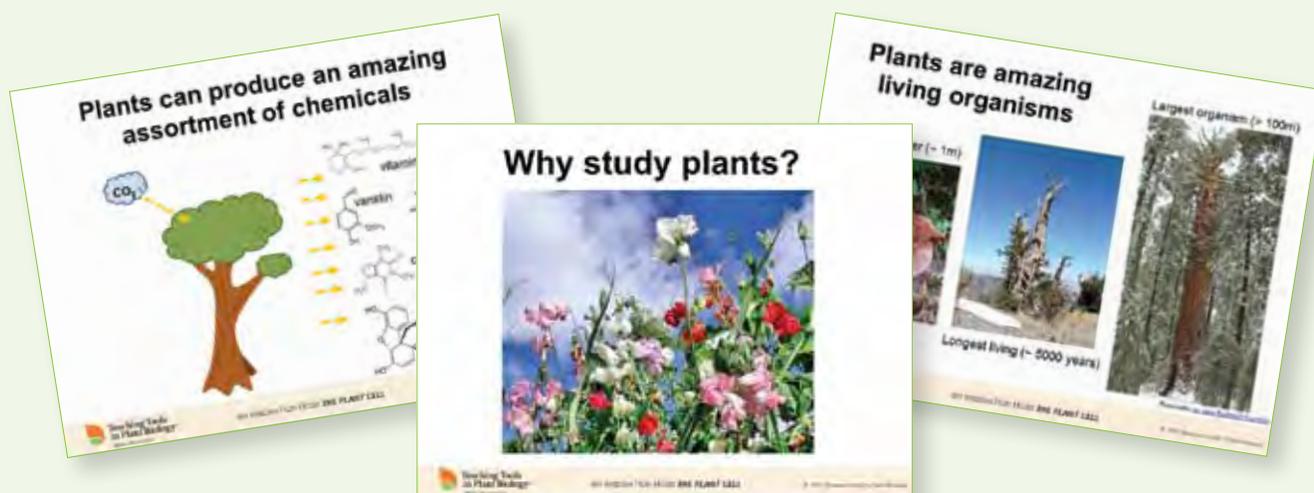
Teaching Tools in Plant Biology™

ideas to grow on

Freelance science editors sought to update *Teaching Tools in Plant Biology* lectures

The Plant Cell seeks freelance editors to revise and update *Teaching Tools in Plant Biology* (TTPB) lectures. TTPB is a feature of *The Plant Cell* (<http://www.plantcell.org>), the leading research journal in plant biology and a publication of the American Society of Plant Biologists (<http://www.aspb.org>). Tools include review articles written for students and sets of PowerPoint slides for use in teaching. Tools are revised annually to include the most up-to-date, accurate information. Freelance editors will identify important review and research articles published within the past 12 months, update the lecture notes to reflect significant new or modified ideas, and produce new or updated slides as needed. The editor can work from home but must have access to current scientific journals. Compensation will be on a per-lecture basis.

Required Qualifications: Demonstrated ability to explain complex scientific concepts clearly and concisely; excellent editing and writing skills. Facility to grasp unfamiliar research concepts and to communicate ideas effectively. PhD in any discipline in biology or equivalent research experience in plant cell and developmental biology. Access to major research and review journals (e.g., through an affiliation with a university).



PowerPoint slides from TTPB presentations

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Send cover letter to nancyw@aspb.org (subject line: TPC freelance editor) addressing why this position interests you. Also include resume/curriculum vitae and one scientific editing or writing sample.

<http://www.teachingtoolsinplantbiology.org>



Erasmus Marré

1920–2011

Minetto, as he preferred to be called, died on December 11, 2011, shortly before his 92nd birthday.

Minetto began his university education in medicine but quickly moved to natural sciences, which was closer to his real interests in understanding how living organisms function and the processes of biological evolution. His university studies were interrupted by the war and his participation in the Italian partisan resistance as a brigade commander. After the war, he completed his university undergraduate studies in 1946. His academic career began at the Botanical Institute of the University of Genoa, his native city, from where he moved to Milan in 1953 after spending two years as a visiting professor at the University of Missouri. In 1959, he became a full professor of plant physiology, the first chair of plant physiology in Italy. He remained in this position until retirement in 1990, except for a five-year period when he held the chair of molecular biology at the University of Milan.

Minetto was an innovator. As a teacher, he played a pivotal role in the expansion of fundamental courses in mathematics, physics, and chemistry for biology students. His lectures were fascinating because of his combination of great enthusiasm and scientific rigor as well as an impressive ability to transmit his scientific passion.

As a researcher, he introduced approaches and concepts from the “new biologies” of genetics, biochemistry, and molecular biology to plant physiological studies in Italy. His personal research was considerable,



Erasmus Marré

with more than 250 scientific papers to his credit, several of which were selected for the Citation Classic section of *Current Contents*. His research interests covered many different aspects of plant physiology, such as the hormonal regulation of seed formation and germination, energy metabolism, protein biosynthesis, and the cellular transport of nutrients. He was one of the cofounders of the Italian Society of Plant Physiology and organized numerous advanced courses for plant biologists in which fundamental ideas and approaches from the physical sciences were emphasized.

Minetto is probably best known for his research on membrane transport, which developed from his interest in the mechanism of action of auxin and the studies of two Italian colleagues, biochemist Alessandro Ballio and plant pathologist Antonio Graniti, who had isolated and identified a toxin known as fusicoccin from a pathogenic fungus. These investigations, which began

in the early 1970s, definitively established his international reputation when his first papers appeared on the biological effects of fusicoccin. For these contributions, he was awarded the Charles Reid Barnes Honorary Life Membership by the American Society of Plant Physiology in 1983, on which occasion the following citation was made: “His most notable contributions began in 1973 when he first published on the biological effects of the phytotoxin fusicoccin. He demonstrated the ability of fusicoccin to induce high rates of proton excretion from many plant tissues and cause many cells to undergo extreme rates of growth. He characterized this response and presented evidence that this phytotoxin acts by enhancing the activity of a plasma membrane-associated ATPase. As a result of his efforts, fusicoccin has become an important tool in studies on cell physiology, solute and ion uptake, and plant growth.”

After retirement, Minetto gradually moved away from plant physiology toward certain aspects of the philosophy of science, with particular attention to problems inherent in evolution.

Working in Minetto’s laboratory was always stimulating. He had a rare ability to transmit his ideas and enthusiasm to both students and collaborators. He was always ready to listen to the ideas of others and to stimulate discussion among his young coworkers, members of his group, and the frequent visitors to his laboratory. 

Maria Ida De Michelis
Dipartimento di Biologia
Università degli Studi di Milano



Research and Learning Opportunities sponsored by the NSF-supported Research Coordination Network (RCN) on Pollen Biology are open for application

1. Travel subsidy for collaboration- and diversity-enhancement projects (12 at \$1,500 each)
2. Ten-week Summer Graduate Computational Internships (5 at \$4,000 each)
3. Three-week Summer High School Teacher Internships (5 at \$2,250 each)
4. Pollen Biology Workshops for High School Teachers



We also announce the “Frontiers in Pollen Tube Biology” Symposium at the Shanghai Institute of Plant Physiology and Ecology in Shanghai, China, on October 27th and 28th, 2012. This symposium is informally affiliated with the RCN.

Details on these programs, applications and deadlines can be found at <http://pollennetwork.org>

ASPB News

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