

## Report to the AIS from the AIS Foundation – October, 2013

### Grants and Scholarships:

The Foundation is currently funding six projects. Of these, funding has been fully paid on five of them. Only \$500 remains to be paid out on these projects.

Dr. Carol Wilson, at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, is conducting a three year study titled “Does Data Based on Nuclear Sequence and Pollen Morphology Agree with the Sectional Classification of Subgenus *Iris* Based on Chloroplast Sequence Data?” The Foundation Board voted to approve funding in the amount of \$10,285, divided in two parts over the course of the study. The first payment of her grant was made two years ago and the remainder of the grant was paid this fall. We expect an interim report of her progress in the next few months, and a full report upon completion.

Bob Pries was granted \$500 for a pilot study to digitize and archive about 1000 iris photos. A photographic record of digitized photos would be displayed on the Iris Wiki. Bob has not yet requested payment for this grant.

Sunni Taylor, a graduate student of Dr. Noland Martin’s at Texas State University San Marcos, is conducting a study: “Divergence in Sympatry: Mechanical Pollinator Isolation as a Mechanism for Hybrid Speciation”. From the study outline: “This preliminary study is essential to our understanding of the reproductive ecology of *I. nelsonii* and the ecological divergence between *I. nelsonii* and its most closely related progenitor, *I. fulva*.” The primary pollinator of *Iris fulva* is the ruby-throated hummingbird, but the primary pollinator of *Iris nelsonii* has not been published, though it shares the “hummingbird-pollination syndrome” with *I. fulva*. Foundation funding (\$2,718) for this grant has been completed. A No Pay extension for this study was requested and granted. We await a report of findings at the end of the study.

Dr. Nina Alexeeva, from the Komarov Botanical Institute in St. Petersburg, Russia presented a program for SIGNA in Dallas about the Botanical garden and about her research and travels. The AIS Foundation had approved a grant in the amount of \$5,000 to Dr. Alexeeva for upgrading the *Iris* section of the Komarov Botanical Institute website, and translation into English. This grant was funded and the website work completed.

A new study was approved in February to Jenna Hamlin, a PhD student at the University of Georgia, working under the direction of Dr. Michael Arnold in the Department of Genetics. Jenna’s study involves work on the evolutionary diversification of two species of Louisiana irises, *Iris fulva* and *Iris brevicaulis*. Jenna has already completed the field work collecting samples of *Iris fulva* and is beginning work analyzing the data. This grant of \$6,921 will allow her to complete the field work collecting samples and specimens of *Iris brevicaulis*, then completing studies and analyses on the data. With this data and experiments/analyses, Jenna hopes to further the knowledge into the role of geography, ecology, natural hybridization and natural selection in the evolutionary diversification of these two taxa. Funding for this grant has been fully paid.

A proposal from Erin Riggs at the Leach Botanical Garden in Portland, Oregon was approved after review by the AIS Scientific Committee. This study is a continuation of her taxonomic study of the *Iris hartwegii* complex (PCN). The modest cost (\$1,924) of this study was paid late this summer.

**Ackerman Essay Contest.**

The 2013 Ackerman Youth Essay Contest was completed. The essay title for 2013 was “What makes irises outstanding garden plants, and why do you like to grow them?” The two youth winners were Rachel Potter from Region 4 (Senior winner) and Chelsea Curlee from Region 17 (Junior winner). Their essays will appear in the upcoming issue of IRISES. The 2014 contest has been announced and is titled “Why, When, and Where did you become interested in Irises?” Essays can be sent to Carol Warner, essay contest administrator, and the deadline for submission of essays is March 1, 2014.

**AIS Library:**

The AIS Library moved from its home in the basement of a city government building in Silverton, Oregon to a new location in Molalla, Oregon last summer. The new location, leased for two years (beginning June 1, 2012) is more accessible for library users, much more convenient for the librarian, and has more storage space, work space, and display areas than the old location. The lease cost is \$7,500 per annum.

The AIS Foundation has assumed management of Library funding, including day to day costs of supplies, equipment, acquisitions, maintenance, etc. This funding comes from Foundation library funds and through interest proceeds from the Sidney P. DuBose Memorial Trust

**Donation contributions:**

The contribution from the DuBose Trust interest continues to be the single largest yearly donation coming to the Foundation. Other donations now include those for all AIS and AIS Foundation donation accounts. Per the agreement set forth in the joint AIS/AIS Foundation board meeting in Victoria, BC in June 2011, donations received earmarked for the AIS Library and for Research and Scholarship remain in AIS Foundation accounts, and are used towards the AIS Library or towards iris research, as specified by the donor.

Donations received for all Youth activities (except for the Ackerman Essay Contest), for the AIS General Fund, for Insurance Defrayment, for the AIS Encyclopedia (Wiki) and for the AIS 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fund are collected and disbursed to the AIS on a roughly quarterly basis. Please see the separate “Donations to the AIS” report for details of those donations since March 1<sup>st</sup> of 2013. To date, in situations where no designation of donation application was made (either to the AIS or to the AIS Foundation), we have attributed them to the AIS General Fund.

Other funding sources, primarily interest income on Certificates of Deposit, have dramatically fallen over the past few years, with no significant rise in the foreseeable short term. Currently, interest on CDs is at its nadir since the Foundation was chartered in 1971, with interest on a 1 yr term at only 0.2%. Consequently, the bulk of the AIS Foundation’s income is now from donations and interest contributions from the DuBose Trust. While the Foundation has sufficient funds to maintain the library at its current levels, funding for new scientific grants must be curtailed, unless donations for Research increase dramatically and/or interest rates rise significantly.

Respectfully submitted, October 23, 2013

Gary E. White, Secretary/Treasurer of the AIS Foundation