

Report to the AIS from the AIS Foundation – April, 2013

Grants and Scholarships:

The Foundation is currently funding or agreed to fund six projects.

Dr. Carol Wilson, at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, is conducting a 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 will be paid this year. We expect an interim report of her progress in the next few months.

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.

A new study to be conducted by Sheng-Wei Ho is entitled “Transmission distortion of *Iris nelsonii* and *Iris fulva*”. Sheng-Wei Ho is a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Noland Martin at Texas State University San Marcos. Dr. Martin noted that “The goal of this study is to develop a genetic linkage map to use as a resource for ultimately mapping a variety of traits that differentiate *Iris fulva* and *Iris nelsonii*. This map will not only be used by Sheng-Wei Ho, but also by later students to do the actual field work using the mapping population that he’s developed.” This Foundation grant of \$7021 has been voted and approved by the AIS Foundation trustees and payment of the first installment is pending.

The AIS Foundation approved a grant in the amount of \$5,000 to Dr. Nina Alexeeva in St. Petersburg, Russia for upgrading the *Iris* section of the Komarov Botanical Institute website, and translation into English. The grant money for this project was wired to Dr. Alexeeva last summer. Dr. Alexeeva’s work is well respected internationally, and the Foundation has supported and funded some of her iris research in the past, as well. Dr. Alexeeva will be at the AIS convention in Dallas.

A new study was just 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.

The 2013 Ackerman Youth Essay Contest is being completed. The essay title this year was “What makes irises outstanding garden plants, and why do you like to grow them?” The two youth winners (Junior and Senior) are being selected and will be announced at the Awards presentations at the convention in Dallas. Carol Warner, of Upperco, MD in Region 4 is the new administrator of the Ackerman Youth Essay Contest for the Foundation. Carol is a former teacher and is a longtime member of the AIS Foundation Board of Trustees.

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.

The Foundation recently approved funding of a new printer/scanner and a new flat-screen monitor for the Library. These items have been purchased and will be in service by convention time.

The Joint AIS/AIS Foundation Library Committee has been re-configured and is corresponding with each other concerning initial activities/concerns, etc. Please see the committee report.

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, and for the AIS 100th 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 November 1st of 2012. 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. Consequently, the bulk of the AIS Foundation’s income is now from donations and interest contributions from the DuBose Trust.

Respectfully submitted, 1 April 2013

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