Symposium to Explore Genome Evolution in Plants

Ever since Darwin, biologists have sought to understand how species evolve. The complexity and flexibility of the plant genome, as first revealed by Mendelian genetic methods, renders plants especially able to adapt to changing environments. The new tools of genomics, driven by studies of model organisms, are now being applied across the diversity of plant life. Comparative studies have addressed the role of variation in genes, gene families and genomes in such processes as speciation, domestication and floral development.

The 2009 Smithsonian Botanical Symposium, entitled "Genes, Genomics, and Genome Evolution in Plants," hosted by the National Museum of Natural History, Department of Botany, will highlight results of current studies on plant genes and genomes, especially as they apply to fundamental questions in evolutionary biology, crop improvement and ecosystem sustenance in rapidly changing environments worldwide.

The Symposium will be held at the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C., on 27-28 March 2009. The Symposium will include a day of invited speakers, and is being sponsored by NMNH and the United States Botanic Garden, with support of the National Science Foundation and the Cuatrecasas Family Foundation.

Registration and additional information about the Symposium are available at botany.si.edu/sbs, or email sbs@si.edu for more information.

Call for Papers

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew is hosting a celebratory scientific conference on 12-16 October 2009, “Plant Conservation for the Next Decade: A Celebration of Kew’s 250th Anniversary.” The program will include three days of scientific sessions in the Jodrell laboratory, showcasing Kew’s conservation research and inviting leading international research scientists to present papers in six sessions—Plant Conservation: Policies and Politics; Plant Conservation: Management and Restoration; Plant Conservation and Human Cultures; Plant Conservation and Agriculture; Frontiers of Plant Conservation Technology; and, Plant Conservation: What Can We Afford to Lose?

Keynote speakers include Dr. Peter Raven, Dr. Judy West, Professor Hongwen Huang, Professor Michael E. Kane, Dr. Saw Leng Guan, Professor Richard Hobbs, Ms. Sara Oldfield, the current Director of Kew Professor Stephen Hopper and previous Directors Professor Sir Peter Crane and Professor Sir Ghillean Prance.

Kew now invites interested parties to submit abstracts for posters and oral presentations, to be considered for inclusion in this exciting conference. Participating authors are also invited to contribute to a special issue of Kew Bulletin, subject to standard scientific review. Abstracts should be no longer than 250 words, excluding the title, and the deadline for abstract submission is 9 April 2009. Details of online abstract submission and registration, and general information about the conference, can be found at www.kew.org/science/anniversary-conference.

Current Literature


Anthony, B.P. 2008. Use of modified threat reduction assessments


