

PBT Section Newsletter – December 2016

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1. Note from PBT Section President, Peter Jensen

I treasure the arrival of Spring more now than ever. My son, Hugo, is 4 and loves digging holes, turning over rocks or logs, and fearlessly picking up anything that scuttles, wiggles, or jumps. Not only do I enjoy getting down beside Hugo following foraging (or fleeing) ants, beetles, and worms, but the excitement of discovery is contagious. Its easy to forget the wonder that even the most common insects can evoke in those discovering them for the first time. While I might not squeal as loudly as Hugo, I feel similarly about the scientific meetings that our Society conducts so well, year after year. The chance to catch up with old friends and to hear about their latest work and families, to hear from excited students, and to learn about the cutting-edge research across entomological disciplines; it's a hint of springtime in the Fall.

To that end, I'm absolutely thrilled that the first PBT sponsored workshop proposal was accepted for the 2017 program (Insect Genome Editing: Why and How), and I want to thank everyone that helped with the inception, planning, and proposal submission for the workshop. The format will include five presentations around using gene editing technology in entomological research focusing on frequently encountered challenges, in addition to a hands-on session where attendees can bring ideas and get pointers on how to get started. I have every confidence that it will be a riveting and helpful workshop for members within and outside of our PBT section.

I'm also proud to highlight the selection of PBT's very own Dr. Carol Anelli for the Founder's Memorial Award lecture. Anna Botsford Comstock is the honoree; congratulations Carol!

Finally, while I can't consider Hugo's critter hunting for ESA award recognition, you can nominate an early career professional that you know for one of the four new ECP awards or the PBT-focused Lillian and Alex Feir Graduate Student travel award. Act soon, the June 1 deadline is coming fast!

Warm regards,

Peter

2. What can you do right now to help yourself and your Section?
 - i. Read PBT Section meeting notes and reports to ESA Governing Board available on the [PBT Section Homepage](#).
 - ii. Review volunteer list and position descriptions and consider nominating yourself or someone skilled for a volunteer position ahead of the Denver 2017 meeting. [Please let us know if you're interested](#).
 - iii. [Suggest](#) a new idea for a PBT initiative.
 - iv. PBT Section is need of volunteers for Entomology 2017. If you are interested in serving as a moderator or judge for the student competition, [please let us know by June 15](#) as the Program Committee will be meeting in late June to develop the Annual Meeting program schedule.

3. Nominations for volunteer positions
 - a. Nominations are due to ESA HQ from PBT by May 31st for several positions. The following nominations are planned from PBT based on discussion at the ICE PBT Business meeting and subsequent PBT governing council meetings.
 - i. PBT Section Vice-President Elect - Kun Yan Zhu
 - ii. PBT Section Treasurer – Richard Mankin is willing to serve another term unless there is other interest expressed.
 - iii. PBT Section Representative to the ESA Governing Board – Marianne Alleyne
 - b. Congratulations to Clare Rittschof for her recent nomination as PBT representative to the ESA science policy committee through 2018. Dr. Rittschof is a current ESA science policy fellow and we are excited about having her voice representing the PBT Section.

4. Denver 2017 Updates
 - a. As I mentioned above, the PBT sponsored workshop proposal “Insect Genome Editing: Why and How” was selected for the program. Congratulations to David O’Brochta, Marce Lorenzen, and Jenn Brisson for their leadership and efforts on this proposal. Everybody start thinking about crispy research plans and questions!
 - b. PBT was involved along with the other ESA Sections in pulling together in a successful program symposium proposal “Grand Challenges: Tackling Invasive Species and Communication Strategies”. I’m looking forward to exciting presentations from Kirstin Pelz-Stilinsky and Omar Akbari nominated from PBT for this symposium.
 - c. PBT had a very healthy number of high quality Section symposium proposals and the Program Committee selected 12 for the program. Thank you for your commitment to high quality and congratulations to those with accepted proposals. Section symposia are listed on the ESA website [here](#).

5. Upcoming dates ([ESA calendar link](#))

- a. Be sure to check the award eligibility grid [here](#) for nomination deadlines. **June 1** is the nomination deadline for the PBT-focused Lillian and Alex Feir Graduate Student travel award as well as four new early career professional awards.