

EMBARGOED UNTIL AUGUST 3, 2010

**SUNFLOWER EXPERT RECOGNIZED FOR OUTSTANDING ACCOMPLISHMENTS AT AMERICAN BOTANICAL MEETINGS**

Providence, Rhode Island, August 3, 2010 — The American Society of Plant Taxonomists awarded Harold E. Robinson, a prolific expert on the sunflower family, their Asa Gray Award for outstanding career achievements at the society's annual meeting. Robinson is hailed by his peers as a leader in research productivity, with his publication of 900 papers and over 600 new species names in his 54-year career.

Robinson received his Ph.D. in Botany from Duke University in 1960 and has worked as a botanist at the Smithsonian Institution since 1962. His taxonomic work in the sunflower family, based on careful microscopic surveys of floral and fruit diversity, is considered prescient of modern evolutionary results based on DNA evidence. The sunflower family is the largest family of flowering plants and includes artichoke, endive, lettuce, and tarragon.

The award is named for Asa Gray (1810–1888), the most important American botanist of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

About the American Society of Plant Taxonomists:

The American Society of Plant Taxonomists promotes the research and teaching of the taxonomy, systematics, and phylogeny of vascular and nonvascular plants. Organized in 1935, the Society has a membership of over 1300. The Society publishes *Systematic Botany* and *Systematic Botany Monographs*, supports funds for a variety of honorary and charitable activities, and conducts scientific meetings each summer. Information on the Society's 2010 joint meeting with three other American botanical societies (Botany 2010) can be found at <http://www.botanyconference.org/>.

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