



BIG THICKET ASSOCIATION
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Cynthia Louise Troxell, (1954-2010)

Dr. Cynthia Troxell of Colorado, Big Thicket Lichen Pioneer

The Big Thicket Association (BTA), a non-profit organization committed to preservation of the Big Thicket, accepts memorial donations. Typically, Ann Roberts, BTA's Administrative Assistant, opened the mail, recorded, deposited and then notified the donors. Roberts informed Mary Catherine Johnston, BTA President, that family and friends of Cynthia Troxell, a resident of Colorado, had responded and multiple donations were being received. The donations were sincerely appreciated but also somewhat of a mystery as Johnston did not know the identity of Cynthia Troxell. When reading a progress report submitted by Dr. Robert Egan to the Thicket of Diversity All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory project, the puzzle was solved.

Cynthia was a native of Port Arthur and a 1973 graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School. As an undergraduate student at LSU she worked with Dr. Shirley Tucker in the mid 1970's. Her undergraduate thesis concerned lichens from the Big Thicket National Preserve region. She graduated from Louisiana State University with a degree in botany and received a master's degree in environmental biology and a PhD in molecular biology, both from the University of Colorado. She did research on motor proteins at National Jewish Hospital, the University of California, Davis, and the University of Colorado in Boulder. She later devoted herself to raising her children and helping the community. Cindy was a beloved

member of the Boulder Friends Meeting (Quakers), where she volunteered extensively. Cindy had a long interest in natural areas. She helped promote the Big Thicket Preserve in Texas, did field research in Rocky Mountain National Park, was a member of the Boulder County Nature Association, and wrote the newsletter for the Andrews Family Organic Farm.

Throughout her life she continued researching lichens and collecting specimens. At her death, husband Daniel Murphy of Boulder, Colorado contacted Dr. Robert Egan and Larry St. Clair about her collections. Both expressed interest and arrangements were made to share specimens, notes and collection books. Dr. Egan received the Minnesota, Louisiana and Texas Lichens at University of Nebraska and Colorado material was shared with Larry St. Clair at the M.L. Bean Life Science Museum at Brigham Young University.

Dr. Egan with the assistance of M.S. student Lacey LeGrand, who was working on her thesis, began piecing together specimens, packet notes, collection numbers and data from Troxell's field notebooks. New complete labels for over 400 Southeast Texas specimens were created and the material was prepared for identification/verification and deposit at the University of Nebraska Lichen Herbarium.

The work of Dr. Cynthia Troxell is indeed significant as several of her collections appear to be rare early records for SE Texas. She will be remembered as a pioneer in Lichen research in the Big Thicket National Preserve.



The Big Thicket Association sincerely
appreciates the donations submitted
in Memory of Dr. Cynthia Louise Troxell.