

## **Summary: Steven L. Stephenson and K. Winsett, Myxomycetes (Slime Molds)**

Steven Stephenson of University of Arkansas served as the lead researcher for slime molds. The proposal *Eumycetozoa of the Big Thicket National Preserve Continuing the Study of Slime Molds for the Thicket of Diversity* was approved on April 30, 2008 for \$3466. Katherine Winsett was one of the primary research participants and did most of the physical inventory work. It was paid through Centennial Challenge funding with the National Park Service. The two mobilized a strong team of researchers dubbed a TWIG-Taxonomic Working Inventory Group. In addition to Stephenson and Winsett, it included Paul Super of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Larissa Vasilyeva of Far East Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, John Landolt of Shepherd University, Jane Packard of Texas A/M University, Adam Rollins and Carlos Rojas Alvarado of University Arkansas at Fayetteville, Pauline Singleton and Paul Roling, retired chemist.

In 2010 Katherine Winsett submitted *Ecological studies of myxomycetes in the Big Thicket National Preserve* targeting specific questions about the role of these organisms within the overall community. \$4185 was approved on Oct. 8, 2010 and paid through Park Partnership funds with the National Park Service and broken down in payments of 70% and 30%. She began project work as a graduate student and earned her doctoral degree from the University of Arkansas.

Additional funding was received from the National Science Foundation and the University of Arkansas Department of Biological Sciences.

Winsett was an enthusiastic researcher and team leader. She worked with Dr. Carl Knight's Eastfield College students, hosted a Science Café and participated in Bioblitzes and the Big Thicket Science Conference. The files have extensive photography documentation. To view all the records, go to Mona's historical data files. Winsett's work was submitted to the ToD and uploaded to the Taxa Tally by Mona Halvorson. 93 species were listed.

As is often the case, researchers continue their studies and refine observations beyond the life of the program. Winsett participated in the Big Thicket Science Conference after submission of her Final Report to ToD and NPS. In a power point presentation of which ToD received a copy, Winsett stated the species count was up to 99 as additional slime molds had been identified. In an email query by Mary Johnston, Winsett confirmed this correction. The Taxa Tally has not been changed because we do not have the corresponding data. The correction can be considered in the future.

In 2026 ToD Chair Mary C. Johnston and Intern Natalia Doiron reviewed files. A data report November 2013 and BITH data submitted 2013 showed updated data figures with geolocations. In review, the two decided to not count the names that had "sp" when that genus had already been identified. Two species names were added from past studies as they were not reflected in Winsett's list. Three species had a name change. The total Myxomycetes count that Johnston and Doiron identified on the list for the next Taxa Tally came to 97 (not the 99 listed in the

report) They were only able to find the names for 47 of 51 of the species new to the Park and 6 of 7 new to State. The 97 total species reflects a growth from 93 in the older Tally.

**Submitted by: Mary C. Johnston, April 2026**