**Dr. JoVonn Hill, Mississippi State University**

His project, Survey of Ants (Hymenoptera: Formicidae), grasshoppers, and related families {the suborder Caelifera (Orthoptera: Acrididae, Romaleidae, Tetrigidae, Tridactylidae)} in Big Thicket National Preserve. (2011-2012), was approved in ToD Minutes August 8, 2011 for $6,670.

It required two extensions that were approved. The project was extended to 8/31/2014. All data has been submitted with clear species lists. The project has been successfully closed.

Dr. Hill presented at the 59th Annual Conference of the Mississippi Entomological Association, October 22-23, 2012:

Preliminary Survey of Ants (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) and Grasshoppers (Orthoptera: Acrididae) of the Big Thicket Region of Texas. J. G. Hill Located in southeast Texas, the Big Thicket region has been called " the biological crossroads of North America" as species from the east and west occur relatively near each other within a mosaic of habitats such as arid sandy lands, bottomland hardwood forests and cypress sloughs, palmetto hardwood flats, wetland pine savannah, upland pine forests, and mixed grass prairies. Several protected areas including the Big Thicket National Preserve and others owned and managed by the Nature Conservancy, the state of Texas, and several other entities can be found in the region. In 2006, an All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI) began in the Thicket to document every living species within the region. As part of the ATBI, surveys of ants (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) and grasshoppers began in the Fall of 2011, and should continue for at least another year. During this first year of sampling, 38 ant species and 23 grasshopper species were documented across various habitats within the Big Thicket. The documentation of two ants, Dolichoderus pustulatus and Strumigenys angulatarepresent new state records for Texas. Additionally, six exotic ant species were documented in the region, with three species (Brachymyrmex patagonicus, S. invicta, and Pheidole morens) being extremely abundant, even in apparently undisturbed habitats.

**Submitted by Mary C. Johnston, October 27, 2020**