ASPS Treasurer's Report for the Period 1 May 2011 – 30 Apr 2012
Prepared by Helen Irving (ASPS Honorary Treasurer)
Presented at the AGM on Wednesday 26th September 2012

This May 2011 / April 2012 audit period the Society had a deficit of $8,757.60 compared to a surplus of $20,029.87 the year before; however the balance of funds within the society is still strong. ASPS has three main sources of income. ASPS membership subscriptions and a proportion of the profits from each ComBio meeting have been our major sources for a long time. We also have income from Plants in Action and our bank interest.

Royalty payments from the first edition of Plants in Action have nearly ceased and we have probably received the last significant income in 2011/12 from this source; in part because we bought the final hardback copies of PiA in May 2010. However, we obtained considerable income the previous financial year from sponsors for the online version of Plants in Action and Plants in Action2. We acknowledge our sponsors: Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics (ACPFG), The University of Western Australia and the University of Western Sydney. It is also important to acknowledge the fantastic efforts of the Plants in Action editorial team for their roles in obtaining this funding, particularly Susanne Schmidt and Rana Munns.

Income from ComBio is calculated from the number of registrants attending the meeting from each of the participating societies. Our last payment was for the 2009 meeting at Christchurch in New Zealand. We are yet to be paid for OzBio from 2010 (about 16% attendees were ASPS members) and ComBio2011 (~17% were ASPS members but the profits are likely to be small for that meeting as it was held in Cairns and overall attendance/trade participation was lower).

The number of ordinary members has stabilized at a significantly higher number compared to the low point reached in 2006/7. The current total of 439 members comprises 212 ordinary members, 192 student members, 14 retired members, 11 corresponding members, 6 Life members, 2 gratis members and 2 sustaining members (at September 20 2012). I will be following up the membership list more vigorously this year as the improved website will make this easier. I will also provide Council members with details of current, lapsed and forgetful members in their states and institutions so they can remind non member plant scientists about our Society. The ASPS Executive decided in 2010 that retired members of ASPS need not pay a membership fee but we benefit from keeping in touch with our long time members who retire and they may donate to the RN Robertson Fund. The membership fees are at ordinary member 1 year $85.00; 2 years $155.00 and student member 4 years $60.00.

Table 1: ASPS membership in the Ordinary and Student categories over the last six years.

Category	11/12	10/11	09/10	08/09	07/08	06/07	05/06
Ordinary	212	244	238	283	209	166	184
Student	192	164	151	176	151	158	175

The Society recognises the importance of student participation for its long-term wellbeing. Student membership is encouraged through special awards (RN Robertson Fund) and attendance at ComBio is encouraged by subsidising a considerable part of their travel, accommodation, registration costs and the annual dinner ASPS dinner. Last year 9 students received support from ASPS to attend ComBio2011 meeting in Cairns at a cost of $4,150.

We also support student attendance at special meetings and provided $9,200 to support student travel to the International Botanical Congress meeting in Melbourne in July 2011 to support 22 students. Furthermore, ASPS rewards active participation by students in the ComBio program by recognising outstanding posters and oral presentations with monetary prizes. This year we are providing four poster prizes and one oral prize at ComBio thereby increasing our student prizes by 2 at our annual meeting.

We provide seed money for conferences and in the last year we provided seed money to the International Conference of Arabidopsis Research (ICAR2013) to be held in Sydney on 24-28 June 2013. We also provide registration fees as part of the prize for the teaching award and the best paper award further supporting our members.

One of my goals as Treasurer of ASPS is to attract more Sustaining members to the Society. An organization or company willing to support our Society can pay $300 per annum to become a Sustaining member. In return for this fee they have their name, logo and web link placed on our website and they receive free advertising space in our e-newsletter *Phytogen*. The total number of sustaining members has dropped and I have had little success at raising it this last year but will pursue this more vigorously in the next 12 months. Functional Plant Biology deserves a special mention because not only is it our longest Sustaining Member but it also instigated the Best Paper Award for student ASPS members and remains the generous benefactor of the Society's prestigious award to young scientists, the Goldacre Medal. I also thank the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) and hope their action will serve as an impetus for other Australian plant research centres to become Sustaining members of ASPS.

The ASPS website, www.asps.org.au has been updated this year largely through the efforts of Rob Shepherd (our executive assistant). The new behind scene ease of use will allow it to function well and continue to serve as convenient gateway to pay membership and advertising fees. The website was designed and is now maintained by Michael Major Media Pty Ltd and I wish to acknowledge the important input of Rob Shepherd into taking care of the process of updating the website to make the behind scenes aspect of it work better.

The financial transactions have been audited and the Auditor's report is available for perusal with the financial summary at the AGM. Following the AGM, the Auditor's report and financial summary will be submitted to the Registrar General's Office by our Public Officer. In summary, I am pleased to report that the Society's finances remain sound. The balance in our accounts was $68,913.55 in the RN Robertson Fund administered by the University of Western Australia at April 30 2012 and as of 20 September 2012, $111,274-73 in our bank accounts. Also $33,000 of the bank account has been earmarked for the Robertson Fund from a decision at the 2009 AGM. A further $21,351.12 was donated by our sponsors for maintenance and production costs associated with the online versions of Plants in Action 1 and 2.

Finally I wish to acknowledge the encouragement and assistance of our president Ros Gleadow who through her tireless efforts has made my job much easier. Thanks Ros!

Helen Irving
Honorary Treasurer ASPS
ComBio 2012 Adelaide