

# The American Dahlia Society

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## ADS Genome Project Update August 2023

Zach Meharg, a PhD student in Alex Harkess' lab at HudsonAlpha, has generated all the raw data needed for the genome project and, for the first time in history, has a "draft" genome assembly for any *Dahlia* species. This draft genome is nearly complete, and much like a puzzle, much of it has been put together. He is currently working through the challenges presented by the duplicate puzzle pieces. Zach recently presented a poster of the genome project at the American Society of Plant Biology conference in Savannah, Georgia, and will also be presenting at the National Show in Portland. Please try to attend and support the important work Zach is doing.

Once the genome is assembled as best as humanly possible, Zach will start identifying individual genes, which presents another challenge. There are likely around 100,000 genes in the genome, each of which can have a different function. These genes hold the secrets to identifying how major traits like color, shape, size, and disease resistance are determined.

All the funds necessary to see this project through 2025 have been raised. Thank you to all who donated.