

## Publications Advisory Board

**Committee Members:** P. Stapp (Publications Director). *Journal of Mammalogy*: Editor-in-Chief – B. Riddle, Managing Editor – B. Lim; Associate Editors – C. Davy, E. Fleharty, J. Frey, D. Ge, J. Goheen, A. Greenville, M. Hawkins, L. Hayes, E. Hines, C. Jacques, T. Jung, K. Mabry, M. McGowen, R. Moratelli, A. Mortelliti, J. Ortega Reyes, J. Pauli, A. Reis Percequillo, N. Pillay, R. Reyna-Huertado, K. Rowe, J. Scheibe, T. Smyser, T. Tomasi, G. Wang, P. Zollner; Special Features Editor – R. Powell; Book Review Editor – M. Kalcounis-Ruppell; Associate Editor for Language Coordination – V. Hayssen. *Mammalian Species*: Editor-in-Chief – M. Hamilton; Associate Editors – C. Cooper, A. Feijó, D. Leslie, P. Owen, R. Rose, S. Solari. *Oxford University Press*: F. McDonald (Lead/Publisher), A. Montgomery (Journal Manager), R. Gaddy (Advertising), S. Larche (ScholarOne), M. Senderling (Marketing), K. Hines (J&J Editorial Assistant).

**Mission:** The Publications Advisory Board (PAB) oversees the publications of the American Society of Mammalogists (ASM), which includes the *Journal of Mammalogy* (*JM*) and *Mammalian Species* (*MS*). The PAB sets editorial policy for ASM and nominates editors for approval by the Board of Directors. The PAB typically is composed of current editors, who are involved in reviewing and accepting papers and the technical production of the publications. Key publishing partners from Oxford University Press (OUP) are invited to serve as *ex officio* non-voting members.

### Information Items:

**(1) General Information.** ASM is in the fourth year of a five-year publishing contract with Oxford University Press (OUP). With our current contract ending in December 2024 and in light of the annual budgeting process, President Lessa appointed an *ad hoc* committee, consisting of Ginny Hayssen, Matina Kalcounis-Rueppell, Jesse Alston, and me, and led by Past-President Doug Kelt, to assess whether we should solicit bids from other publishers or renew our publishing agreement with OUP. Working with KGL, our publishing consultant, we asked OUP to prepare a draft outlining the parameters of a new contract, including the possibility of starting the agreement a year early. After discussion of OUP's proposal with KGL and then with the *ad hoc* committee, Doug proposed to the Board that we engage solely with OUP to negotiate a new agreement that will begin in 2024. The Board approved that proposal in early April 2023. I hope to have a new agreement for Board consideration at the Annual Meeting in July.

ASM continues to support publishing by members who lacked institutional funds through the Hardship Publishing Grants program. Since June 2022 I have received eight applications for grants; five of these have been published, at an estimated cost of \$1,140. All have come from authors from developing countries that are suffering economic crises that reduce research funding severely.

In December 2022 I distributed an online survey to assess members' experience and attitudes towards ASM publications. The response rate was 23% (495/2,180 members). I will present a poster describing key findings at the Annual Meeting.

**(2) Editorial Staff.** *JM* and *MS* are the most visible products of the ASM. Their success is a direct reflection of the efforts of the editorial teams of both journals, who comprise the bulk of the PAB. We excel through the dedication and efforts of these members, and they continue to display passion for mammalogy and for helping authors present their work as effectively as possible. We are fortunate to have outstanding senior leadership at our journals: Brett Riddle (EIC) and Burton Lim (Managing Editor) at *JM* and Meredith Hamilton (EIC) at *MS*. I also want to recognize the efforts of the team at OUP, especially Fiona McDonald and Matt Senderling, and recent additions, Anna Katherine Montgomery (OUP Production) and Kathleen Hines (J&J Editorial).

The Associate Editors (AEs) interact the most with authors and reviewers and deserve the Society's thanks for their roles in maintaining the high standard of work in our journals. Effective at the end of June 2023, one subject-matter AE for *JM*, **Jake Goheen (seven years)**, and one AE for *MS*, **Bob Rose (nine years)**, are stepping down. In addition, Special Features Editor **Roger Powell (six years, following 11 years as subject-matter AE)** and Book Review Editor **Matina Kalcounis-Rueppell (five years)**, are also moving on. I am grateful for all their years of service to our publications. I am currently seeking replacements and will submit to the Board the names and qualifications of individuals nominated to fill these positions, with the aim of having a full complement of AEs approved by the Board in time for them to begin their new terms in July.

Sadly, Editor-in-Chief **Meredith Hamilton** has also indicated that she intends to step down from *Mammalian Species*, no later than next year. Meredith has been EIC for 17 years, on top of four previous years as *JM* AE, four years as *JM* Advertising Editor, and four years as Editor for Special Publications. Her 30 years of service to ASM Publications, especially at such high levels of responsibility, is, to my knowledge, unparalleled in the Society. She led *MS* steadily over a period of significant change and I will miss her advice and expertise greatly.

In addition, I want to recognize members of the Nomenclature Committee, especially Ryan Norris, Al Gardner, and Associate Editors Ricardo Moratelli (*JM*) and Sergio Solari (*MS*), for their continued assistance navigating taxonomy issues that arise as part of our editorial process for both journals, and Sean Maher, Chair of the Informatics Committee, for his help with social media and publications-related content on the ASM webpage. Lastly, I am grateful to Ginny Hayssen for her willingness to continue coordinating both the Buddy System and the translation of abstracts as the AE for Language Coordination.

We continue to make strides in maintaining and increasing the diversity of our editorial teams. Currently, 32% (12) of PAB members are women and 29% (11) reside outside the U.S. and Canada ("international"), including five from Latin America. As has been the case for more than 25 years, half of our EICs are women. These statistics compare favorably to the current demographic makeup of the Society (34% women, 26% international), but women and international authors are underrepresented on the PAB relative to our authors (45% of corresponding authors in *JM* 103.3-104.2 were women or from outside the U.S. and Canada).

**(3) Editorial Policies and Procedures.** Given the dynamic nature of the academic publishing landscape, the PAB, and especially the EICs, deal with a wide range of editorial issues regularly. In order to provide consistent information to authors and editorial staff and avoid confusion, the EICs and I aim to update the *Instructions to*

*Authors* for each journal once per year, shortly after the Annual Meeting, with changes to be adopted with the next volume.

Brett, Burton, and I meet monthly via videoconference with Fiona and *JM* editorial and production teams to discuss *JM* matters. These meetings have been very useful and productive. We hope to be able to resume annual strategy meetings in-person in 2024. OUP recently rolled out a new online proofing system that should help authors and editors handle proofs more quickly and with fewer errors. We also have added “teaser” text and images to each Feature article posted online and re-designed the look of the journal webpages. We continue to explore ways to improve communication, eliminate mistakes and confusion, and increase efficiency.

**(4) Distribution, Availability, and Promotion of Publications.** ASM members and readers occasionally express frustration with our publications, including inaccessible and missing articles and Supplementary Materials and errors on proofs and billing. If you encounter any problems, please let me know immediately and I will try to remedy them as quickly as possible. Some technical matters are handled centrally at OUP or by outside vendors, and are outside of the control of our immediate OUP contacts, so your patience is appreciated. OUP has informed us that they soon will be implementing a new author services delivery system that they hope will improve billing and communications.

With the resumption of in-person annual meetings, Meredith is again working with Matt to produce *MS* trading cards depicting images and natural-history information about regionally relevant mammal species. Look for these cards at the Annual Meeting.

As in the past, I am requesting funds to publish 30 print copies of the 11 issues of *Mammalian Species*, Volume 54, Accounts 1014-1024. Twenty-eight of these will be sent to archival libraries, and two will be available for purchase. Due to recent increases in paper, ink, and shipping expenses, the estimated cost will rise to \$700.

**(5) Publication Statistics.** Publication statistics for the *Journal of Mammalogy (JM)* between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023.

**Composition of recent issues of *JM*:**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Feature Articles</b>	<b>Special Feature / Invited Articles / ASM History / Obituaries</b>	<b>Book Reviews</b>	<b>Total Pages</b>
<b>103.3</b>	20	1	0	263
<b>103.4</b>	21	1	0	249
<b>103.5</b>	20	0	1	253
<b>103.6</b>	16	0	0	202
<b>104.1</b>	16	1	0	221
<b>104.2</b>	16	2	1	205
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1393</b>

The publication target for *JM* historically has been approximately ~2,000 pages per year. We published 1,393 total pages this year, an average of 232 pages per issue. The number

of Feature articles in each issue was reduced because of concerns about declining numbers of submissions and the need to have sufficient content for future issues.

***JM* handling and production times (Feature articles only in 103.3-104.2; n = 109):**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Avg Submission to Acceptance (days)</b>	<b>Acceptance to Publication (online/ paper) (days)</b>	<b>Total Time (online/ paper) (days)</b>
<b>103.3</b>	345	60/ 191	405/ 537
<b>103.4</b>	325	48/ 206	372/ 531
<b>103.5</b>	319	44/ 192	363/ 511
<b>103.6</b>	337	66/ 219	402/ 556
<b>104.1</b>	404	83/ 204	487/ 608
<b>104.2</b>	390	69/ 170	459/560
<b>AVG</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>62/ 197</b>	<b>415/ 560</b>
<b>2021-22 (n = 113)</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>53/ 145</b>	<b>379/ 472</b>

For all metrics, manuscript handling and production times for *JM* Feature articles continued to be much slower than desired. These were attributed to difficulties finding sufficient numbers of suitable reviewers (average time from submission to first decision for initial submissions increased to 57 days), the time taken by authors to address reviewer comments, and delays on the EIC's desk. Staff turnover at OUP has also contributed to miscommunication and delays. Handling times continue to be long, as the 2022-23 issues consisted mostly of backlogged manuscripts submitted during the pandemic and EIC transition. Except for August 2022, all *JM* issues were posted online during the scheduled cover month, but print copies of the August and December 2022 issues were mailed approximately 3 weeks late.

**Geographic distribution of corresponding authors of all manuscripts accepted between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023; n =132 accepted manuscripts:**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Corresponding Author (%)</b>
<b>U.S.</b>	60 (45.5)
<b>Canada</b>	23 (17.4)
<b>Latin America</b>	28 (21.2)
<b>Europe</b>	10 (7.6)
<b>Asia</b>	6 (4.5)
<b>Oceania</b>	4 (3.0)
<b>Africa</b>	1 (0.8)

*JM* corresponding authors of published manuscripts came from 20 countries on all continents except Antarctica, although most authors (63%) were from the U.S. or Canada. Represented countries, besides the U.S. and Canada: Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay); Europe (Czech Republic, France, Netherlands,

Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom); Oceania (Australia, New Zealand); Asia (China, Japan); Africa (South Africa).

*JM* continues to receive many manuscripts from authors outside the U.S. and Canada (44% of 203 manuscripts with final decisions), especially Latin America. However, rejection rates tend to be higher for manuscripts with international corresponding authors (45%) than for those from the U.S. and Canada (27%). Authors whose primary language is not English are encouraged to take advantage of ASM's Buddy System to improve the presentation of their work so that it can be evaluated on its scientific merits.

**Manuscripts (*JM* Feature articles only) submitted, accepted, and rejected between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023, including comparable data for three preceding years:**

Category	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20*
<b>Number of manuscripts handled</b>	238	337	422	392
<b>Number of manuscripts accepted/provisionally accepted (a)</b>	94	133	154	154
<b>Number of manuscripts rejected (r)</b>	61	83	130	162
<b>Pending decisions (still in review)</b>	128	121	138	76
<b>Rejection rate <math>[r/(a+r)]</math> %</b>	39	38	46	51
<b>Total Final Decisions (a + r)</b>	155	216	284	316

\* Excludes the Special Centennial Issue Volume 100.3

The number of manuscripts handled by *JM* was again lower than in previous years and a large fraction (45%) were still awaiting decisions as of 1 April 2023. The rejection rate (39%) has continued to be historically low. Approximately 9% of manuscripts were rejected without review, which was much lower than in previous years (12-18%).

**Annual publication statistics for *Mammalian Species* in 2022, including comparable data for three preceding years:**

Statistic	2022	2021	2020	2019
<b>Number of accounts published</b>	11	14	13	16
<b>Pages published</b>	155	185	172	162
<b>Accounts in proof</b>	2	3	2	2
<b>Accounts with Editor-in-Chief</b>	11 <sup>a</sup>	7	17	14
<b>Accounts with Associate Editors</b>	8	8	13	18
<b>New accounts submitted and assigned to Associate Editors</b>	10	10	11	13
<b>New accounts assigned to authors</b>	11 <sup>b</sup>	16	25	22
<b>Total number of accounts in preparation (not submitted)</b>	99 <sup>c</sup>	128	148	233

<sup>a</sup>Six inactive; <sup>b</sup>Three are updates to previously published accounts; <sup>c</sup>39 overdue

Although *MS* published fewer species accounts in 2022 than in previous years, the average account (14 pages) was longer, with several accounts of 19 pages or more that

were particularly thorough and featured beautiful images. We continue to receive requests to update older accounts. Given the reduction in the number of submissions, we should explore new ways to attract authors to write species accounts.

**(6) Action Items:**

a) If we can make progress on a new publishing arrangement with OUP, I will present it to the Board of Directors for discussion at the Annual Meeting in July. The new agreement will likely require changes to the PAB budget request for 2024.

b) Anticipating that *JM* will move to publishing online-only in 2024, I propose that ASM change its Membership dues schedule to eliminate print membership options and create a new Early Career tier (within 5 years of terminal degree), as follows:

2023 (current)	Online\$	Print +Online\$	2024 (proposed)	Online\$
Regular	55	95	Regular	55
			Early Career	40
Student	25	55	Student	25
Dev. Country (DC)	20	-	Dev. Country (DC)	20
Patron	5000	5000	Patron	4125
Life	1625	1625	Life	1375
Life (DC)	500	-	Life (DC)	500

Life Memberships will continue to be 25 times the annual Regular and annual Developing Country dues. Patron memberships are 3 times the Life Membership dues.

c) Regardless of the status of a new publishing agreement, I request the following changes to the PAB budget relative to 2023:

i) An increase in funding for Hardship Publication Grants from \$3,000 to \$6,000. My original 2023 request of \$8,000 was reduced to \$3,000 at the 2022 Annual Meeting to shift funds to support travel awards for IMC-13.

ii) An increase in funds for printing and distributing archive copies of *Mammalian Species* from \$400 to \$700.

iii) An increase in funding for editorial services for J&J Editorial from \$15,000 to \$25,000 to reflect increasing actual costs for editorial services and an anticipated increase in their hourly rate going forward.

iv) Editor stipends and honoraria are the same as in approved 2023 budget.

**Respectfully submitted,**

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ASM Publications Director