

Informatics Committee

Committee Members: V. Apkenas, B. R. Costelloe, C. Gerdes, D. Green, G. Griffiths, E. E. Gutiérrez, M. E. Hopton, P. Larsen, J. E. Light, S. P. Maher (Chair), S. B. McLaren, D. K. Odell, B. P. Tanis.

Mission:

The Informatics Committee is responsible for addressing issues that arise with continuing changes in technology and information processing, retrieval, etc. as they relate to mammalogy. In recent years, the committee has been primarily involved with maintaining and further developing the Society's website.

At the 87th Annual Meeting (2007) in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the Board of Directors of the American Society of Mammalogists charged the newly redefined Informatics Committee to explore improvements including a redesign of the Society's website and to maintain the existing website during this period.

Information Items:

(1) The ASM website (www.mammalsociety.org and www.mammalogy.org) went live on 17 March 2011.

(2) The ASM website is hosted on a server with InMotion Hosting. Annual web hosting fees are \$1,371.84 for 2016 and it now is hosted on a dedicated server, which improved within site search and increased our capacity.

(3) Informatics paid design firm Acro Media to implement additional changes and fixes to the website (\$1,770). These included resolving problems, general support, and work on integrating the State List Project for Public Education Committee.

(4) ASM has a presence on a number of social media including:

Facebook

(<https://www.facebook.com/American.Society.of.Mammalogists>; 3907 "Likes" as of 27 April 2017; increase of 935 since last year)

Twitter

(@Mammalogists; 2079 followers as of 27 April 2017; increase of 639 since last year)

LinkedIn

(<http://www.linkedin.com/groups/American-Society-Mammalogists-4575484>; 165 Members as of 27 April 2017; increase of 34 since last year)

Instagram account (@amersocmammalogists 261 followers as of 27 April 2017; increase of 148 since last year)

YouTube page (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCA6tp7M-8d9YFLorYysHR_Q; 14 subscribers)

Google+

(<https://plus.google.com/#s/american%20society%20of%20mammalogists67>; 73 “+1”s as of 27 April 2017; increase of 3 since last year)

Along with the Mammal Images Library Committee, an “Image of the Week” is posted on the Facebook and Instagram, and tweeted via the Twitter account. In general, the Facebook page reaches can read over 3,000 people each week through various posts (although direct interaction with posts is less). Google+ does not seem to have such a reach and activity there has been reduced. Twitter and Instagram do not provide summarized feedback. Announcements regarding newly published issues of Journal of Mammalogy, the Annual Meeting, grants and fellowship deadlines, and ASM Newsletters also have been posted through social media outlets. We have been posting mammal-related research on Facebook and Twitter, which has enhanced our presence. We also provide the Mammal Image of the Week on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and a “Mystery Mammal” photo quiz on the Facebook page each week.

(5) Routine maintenance and updates were performed on an as-needed basis, as requested by President Lacey and Committee Chairs. Leadership pages, including changes in Editors, Officers, and Elected Directors, were updated following the 2016 Annual Meeting.

(6) Online submissions of fellowships administered by the Honoraria, Grants-in-Aid of Research, Patton Award, and Latin American Fellowship Committees were conducted using the ASM website.

(7) Requests for information, job postings, and announcements submitted to the website were received by Dan Odell and routed accordingly. Odell received 74 emails June 2015 – 9 April 2016 compared with 66 between June 2016 – 27 April 2017. The most common requests are meeting notices and employment notices for posting on the website. The rest were a wide variety of inquiries including journal use permissions, broken links on the Oxford JM site, lost password, membership, requests to link external websites to the ASM site (denied by policy), internship and scholarship questions, and a few crackpot emails. There were no robo/bot generated emails. As usual, not everyone looks for the proper place to send their query (e.g. Business Office), although we have updated our contact us page to better direct individuals for inquiries. Committee chairs should always review their respective pages and the clarity of their contact information.

(8) ASM continues to operate a Members only area for blogging and a within community job board. Members request access using their name and Membership ID. The Membership ID is available at the ASM Business Office (<https://asm.wildapricot.org/>). When you login to the Business Office you will see your ASMM Customer Number. This number is used to verify your active ASM Membership. However, few members take advantage of this and only one blog post has been added since this feature was established.

(9) In 2016, an upgraded meeting app, Guidebook, was provided by the University of Minnesota, and Informatics and the Program Committee worked together to upload information. This platform provided many advantages to the free EventBase platform Informatics provided in 2014 and 2015. Moving forward, we would like to continue to provide this platform, as the feedback and use of the app has increased since we first launched the program.

(10) In 2015, we added a subscription service to Vimeo (\$199, Pro option) and uploaded selected Symposium talks from the 2015 and 2016 ASM meetings. These were made available to members through the Business Office site. Additionally, we uploaded videos to the YouTube page from speakers who gave appropriate permission.

(11) In 2016, members of the Committee provided content and images related to March Mammal Madness, which is a science outreach activity on Twitter developed by non-ASM members. Specifically, we provided post “battle” information about the loser, as well as preliminary images of the combatants, usually from the Mammal Images Library.

(12) In 2016, the State List Project, in conjunction with the Public Education Committee, was launched on the ASM webpage (<http://www.mammalogy.org/mammals-list>). So far, 7 users have completed our web form and provided information about why they were using the database, and 6 stated they were using it for a college course (although one user may have filled out the form twice given duplicate IP addresses).

Action Items:

(1) The sum of \$13,000 is requested from the 2018 budget. Hosting the ASM website on a dedicated server is expected to cost \$2,279.88 per year; this is an annual expense, but provides use of a server with sufficient resources to meet the demands of the new website. Additional costs include: \$45 per year to maintain the domains (mammalogy.org, mammalsociety.org, and mammaldiversity.org) and an annual subscription to Vimeo to support video delivery to members, at \$199 per year. We request \$1,000 to contribute towards a meeting app. We request an additional ~\$9,476.12 as a placeholder for potential expenses related to the Society’s website upkeep and added functionality.

Respectfully submitted,

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