

Publications Advisory Board

Committee Members: P. Stapp (Publications Director). *Journal of Mammalogy*: Editor-in-Chief – E. Heske; Associate Editors – P. Barboza, H. Beck, L. Carraway, R. Constantine, N. Dochtermann, J. Esselstyn, E. Gese, J. Goheen, L. Hayes, A. Hohn, J. Hopkins, T. Jezkova, J. Light, K. Monteith, R. Moratelli, R. Ojeda, J. Ortega Reyes, C. R. Pavey, A. Piaggio, D. Rogers, L. Ruedas, J. Scheibe, R. Schooley, B. Swanson, J. Thomas, M. Vieira, B. Zielinski, P. Zollner; Special Features Editor – R. Powell; Book Review Editor – P. Meserve. Editorial Assistant – B. Blake. *Mammalian Species*: Editor-in-Chief – M. Hamilton; Associate Editors – C. Kilpatrick, P. Owen, B. Rose, S. Solari. *Oxford University Press*: M. Beaman (Production), S. Bewley (Advertising), C. Williams-Klamborowski (Editorial Assistance), S. Larche (ScholarOne), L. Godwin (Marketing), F. Williams (Lead/Publisher).

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 now in its fourth year of a 5-year publishing contract with Oxford University Press (OUP), after a 59-year association with Allen Press (1956-2015). The transition is mostly complete, but has not been without hiccups. If anyone has concerns with the availability or content of either journal, please contact me and I will work with OUP to resolve them as quickly as possible.

Efforts are underway to produce a Special Centennial Issue of *JM* in 2019, which is being led by Alicia Linzey and four Associate Editors (AEs). One option is to publish the issue as a separate seventh issue of the journal to be mailed to members along with the regular June issue (100(3)). An alternative is for the Special Issue to be the June 2019 issue, which should be less expensive. We have obtained cost estimates from OUP and have requested funds from the Board to support the production and mailing of a separate *JM* issue, the more costly option. Those involved will deliberate at the Annual Meeting and decide which approach to take. If the Special Issue is one of the six scheduled issues, then my Budget request will be amended to reflect that change. Because of the work required to review and edit approximately 28 comprehensive manuscripts for the Special Issue, I have requested funds for modest honoraria (\$250) for Alicia and each of the AEs.

At the 2017 Annual Meeting, the Board approved contingency funds of \$20,300 to pay a management consultant, Kaufman Wills Fusting & Company, LLC (KWF), to review our publishing agreement and the status of our journals and to provide guidance on whether ASM should solicit bids from other publishers for our next five-year contract, or remain with OUP.

OUP provided information to KWF in October 2017, which began a series of conversations between them that are still ongoing. Based on those discussions and with the recommendation of KWF, we decided to renew our new publishing contract with OUP, which will be finalized in early 2019. Although negotiations were promising and we identified potential approaches to help maintain revenues, unfortunately uncertainties in the publishing landscape prevented OUP from committing to firm contract details at this early stage. OUP will revisit their projections later in 2018 and enter negotiations with KWF to finalize a contract offer. I will update the Board at the Annual Meeting.

(2) Editorial Staff. *JM* and *MS* are the most visible products of the ASM. The success of these is a direct reflection of the efforts of the editors for 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 efficiently and effectively as possible. Editing is a rewarding job but not without its challenges; as all authors know, however, editors are seminal to the success of each and every one of us! I encourage all Society members to thank members of the PAB, listed on the first page of this report, in person.

I am indebted to Ed Heske and Meredith Hamilton for leading their respective editorial teams through another successful year. I also want to recognize the efforts of the team at OUP, led by Fiona Williams, who have contributed tremendously to the production, delivery, and marketing of the journals. Lastly, I want to thank the members of the Nomenclature Committee, especially Ryan Norris, Al Gardner, and Associate Editors Ricardo Moratelli (*JM*) and Sergio Solari (*MS*), for their continued assistance with taxonomy issues that arise as part of our editorial process.

Four AEs for *JM* resigned their posts this year (Harald Beck, 9 years of service; Peter Meserve, 6 years; Eric Gese, 3 years; Bill Zielinski, 2 years). Jamie Harris also resigned as AE for *MS* after 10 years of service. The Society wishes them all well and thanks them for their dedicated efforts in service of *JM*, especially Jamie, Harald and Peter, who served multiple three-year terms. I am currently seeking replacements and will submit to the ASM Board the names and qualifications of individuals nominated to fill these positions, with the aim of having a full complement of new Associate Editors approved by the Board to begin their new terms at the end of the Annual Meeting.

(3) Editorial Policies and Procedures. Given the dynamic nature of the academic publishing landscape, the PAB, and especially the Editors-in-Chief, 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 will 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.

With input from Meredith and the PAB at last year's meeting, I significantly revised editorial policies for *MS*. Important updates included a stricter policy for reserving species and completing accounts, and permitting authors to update older accounts (>20-25 years) for which much new scientific information has become available. Our aim for the coming year is to better integrate the species "reservation" process with ScholarOne to improve tracking of species assignments and to improve the time to publication.

The PAB discussed via email changes to the number format and decided to return to spelling out numbers less than 10, and to a few other minor changes. This change will be effective with the 2019 volume. Ed and I will continue to consider other ways to streamline the Instructions to Authors for *JM*.

Some users continue to struggle with ScholarOne, which although powerful, can be quite cumbersome. Issues we dealt with this year included how to maintain confidentiality of manuscript reviews, whether to correspond automatically with prospective reviewers when an invitation is declined, and how to track requests for waivers of page charges for ASM members. Also, OUP is complying with the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) policies, recently implemented in Europe, to help ensure security of personal data of ScholarOne users.

As many of you know, the Buddy System is a successful program that benefits authors whose primary language is not English. The Buddy System partners such authors with a volunteer to help them improve the written presentation of research that seems scientifically sound, and to increase the odds that their manuscript will be eventually published in *JM* or *MS*. The Buddy System was initially conceived in 1994 by Tom Lacher and the International Relations Committee (IRC); Barbara Blake has generously overseen it since 2001, with the help of Alicia Linzey on the IRC. Over the past 11 years, we have “buddied” 56 manuscripts, an average of about 5 manuscripts per year. Over the past 5 years (2013-17), 17 *JM* manuscripts and 5 *MS* manuscripts have taken advantage of the Buddy System. Most authors have been from Latin America (55%) and Asia (27%), with a few from Europe and the Middle East. Once submitted, the rejection rate for these manuscripts has been similar to that for manuscripts in general. Authors who could benefit from the Buddy System are encouraged to contact Barbara, Alicia or one of the EICs for more information.

(4) Distribution, Availability, and Promotion of Publications. As many of you know, our agreement with BioOne ended in 2015, eliminating a source of future royalty revenue for the Society at the end of 2017 and another venue for distributing journal content. As part of our discussions with OUP about a new publishing contract, we learned that BioOne is interested in adding ASM journals back to its collection, possibly as early as 2019. BioOne would require ASM to enter into a 5-year contract directly with them, but, as in the past, OUP could serve as our financial and production contacts and would provide BioOne with content to back-fill material from 2016-2018. ASM Officers were polled for their views on whether we should pursue this opportunity and felt it could be a good opportunity. Details are still tentative, but I will provide an update to the Board at the Annual Meeting.

ASM members and visitors continue to express some frustration with online journal content, including inaccessible and missing articles, confusion about signing in and navigating the webpages, and the quality of some pdfs. If you encounter any technical problems, please let me know immediately and I will pass them on to OUP. Many technical problems are handled centrally at OUP and outside of the control of our immediate OUP contacts, so your patience is appreciated.

In November 2017, I asked Ginny Hayssen to take down the Smith College website that for many years hosted pdfs of *MS* accounts. This was a very difficult decision because the site had become well known as a convenient, central location where users from around the world freely accessed species accounts. Users included students, amateur naturalists, the media, and the general public, in addition to ASM members. Unfortunately, such access violated under our publishing agreement with OUP, and, despite months of conversations with OUP, we were unable to come to a resolution that permitted the Smith College site to serve as a repository for *MS* pdfs. To date, I have received via email 12 complaints about the loss of the Smith College site, lamenting the loss of free access to pdfs of the accounts, as well as to the functional index that allowed for easily perusing of accounts. OUP explored ways to recreate a similar index on its academic platform and, although they did improve the search function, they have not been able to create one that is compatible with their existing platform. I posted an Excel spreadsheet on the ASM Publications page, which contains all of the accounts and provides clickable links to the OUP page for each account. I am investigating other ways to recreate the Smith College page that will permit easier online access, and hope to have an update at the Annual Meeting.

OUP is part of a group of scholarly publishers, the Coalition for Responsible Sharing (CRS), that is issuing requests (“take down notices” TDNs) to ResearchGate, a for-profit company funded by commercial investors and venture capital, asking that they remove journal articles that infringe copyrights from their website. This effort is part of a broader one by publishers to protect copyrighted articles from illicit use on aggregation sites. OUP will only issue TDNs for ASM journal content that obviously violates copyright.

In an effort to market and advertise our journals online and connect visitors with ASM, Lauren created a “family” page as a portal for information on both journals. She also created a landing page to remind prospective authors of the benefits of publishing in *JM*, which will be useful in social media and promotional campaigns. Lastly, she created posters (print and pdf) that will be sent to prospective authors and institutions with much of the same content. Working with Meredith, Lauren is again designing a set of the popular Mammal Trading Cards to distribute at the Annual Meeting in Kansas, showcasing a few regional species for which we have published *MS* accounts.

I also thank Sean Maher, Chair of the Informatics Committee, for his ongoing assistance with publications-related content on the ASM webpage. Although we were not able to devise a way to allow a single member sign-on to access journal content, we clarified the materials related to the two journals and added links where members can see how to sign on quickly via the wildapricot ASM Business Office webpage.

Lastly, as was the case last year, I am requesting funds to publish 30 print copies of the 14 issues of online-only *Mammalian Species*, Volume 49, Accounts 942-955. Twenty-eight of these will be sent to archival libraries, and two will be available for purchase. The estimated cost of printing is \$375, which is the same as in last year’s budget. I am planning to have archive copies shipped directly from the printer to the repositories this year, which will save money and time.

(5) Publication Statistics. Publication statistics for the *Journal of Mammalogy* between 1 April 2017 and 1 April 2018.

Composition of recent issues of *JM*:

Issue	Feature Articles	Special Feature / Invited Articles / Obituaries	Book Reviews	Pages
98.3	21	9	1	316
98.4	19	6	2	310
98.5	26	0	3	294
98.6	27	0	4	290
99.1	24	1	4	304
99.2	19	0	3	196
Total	136	16	17	1,710

The page budget for *JM* is 333 pages per issue (~2,000 pages per year). We published 1,210 pages in 2017, 122 pages below the page budget, and to date, 500 pages in 2018, which was 166 pages fewer than budgeted.

***JM* handling and production times (Feature articles in Issues 98.3-99.2; n = 136):**

Issue	Avg Submission to Acceptance	Acceptance to Print (online/ paper)*	Total Time (online/ paper)*
98.3	233 days (7.8 mo)	37/ 110 days (1.2/3.7 mo)	270/ 343 days (9.0/ 11.4 mo)
98.4	143 days (4.8 mo)	42/ 121 days (1.4/ 4.0 mo)	185/ 264 days (6.2/ 8.8 mo)
98.5	204 days (6.8 mo)	39/ 113 days (1.3/ 3.8 mo)	243/ 317 days (8.1/ 10.6 mo)
98.6	195 days (6.5 mo)	46/ 105 days (1.5/ 3.5 mo)	240/ 300 days (8.0/ 10.0 mo)
99.1	209 days (7.0 mo)	56/ 92 days (1.9/ 3.1 mo)	265/ 301 days (8.8/ 10.0 mo)
99.2	167 days (5.6 mo)	41/ 92 days (1.4/ 3.1 mo)	208/ 260 days (6.9/ 8.7 mo)
AVG	194 days (6.5 mo)	44/ 106 days (1.5/ 3.5 mo)	237/ 299 days (7.9/ 10.0 mo)
2016-17 (n = 147)	214 days (7.1 mo)	46/ 147 days (1.5/ 4.9 mo)	260/ 361 days (8.7/ 12.0 mo)

* - time to publishing online/ print in paper

By all metrics, handling and production times for *JM* Feature articles have improved since last year. The improved efficiency is reflected in the positive ratings and comments provided by authors on the peer-review process. On average, authors gave us ratings of 4.4, 4.8, and 4.7, for speed of peer review, quality of peer review, and speed/quality of communication with editorial office, respectively, on a 5-point scale. Authors still struggled with ScholarOne, however, giving us an average rating of 4.2.

Geographic distribution of corresponding authors of manuscripts accepted for publication between 1 April 2017 and 1 April 2018; $n = 142$ manuscripts; *JM* authors came from 19 countries on all continents except Antarctica:

Location	Corresponding Author (%)
U.S.	87 (61.3)
Canada	5 (3.5)
Latin America	24 (16.9)
Europe	11 (7.8)
Oceania	6 (4.2)
Asia	6 (4.2)
Africa	3 (2.1)

Represented countries, besides the U.S. and Canada: Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Mexico); Europe (France, Germany, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, U.K.); Oceania (Australia, New Caledonia, New Zealand); Asia (China, India, Japan, Taiwan); Africa (South Africa). *JM* continues to receive fairly high numbers of manuscripts from authors outside the U.S. (51% of 268 manuscripts with a final decision, from 35 countries), but rejection rates tend to be much higher for manuscripts from Asia (80%), Africa (73%), and, to a lesser degree, Latin America (56%) than for U.S. authors (34%), possibly reflecting the challenge for authors whose first language might not be English. Such authors are encouraged to take advantage of ASM's Buddy System.

***JM* manuscripts (Feature Articles) submitted, accepted, and rejected between 1 April 2017 and 1 April 2018, including comparable data for 3 preceding years:**

Category	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15
Number of manuscripts submitted (all types)	261	308	351	345
Number of manuscripts accepted/provisionally accepted (a)	65	63	89	138
Number of manuscripts rejected (r)	105	165	164	148
Rejection rate $[r/(a+r)]$ %	62	72	65	52
Total Final Decisions (a + r)	170	228	253	286

Publication statistics for *Mammalian Species* between 1 April 2017 and 1 April 2018, including comparable data for 3 preceding years:

Statistic	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15
Total number of accounts published	14	12	12	13
Accounts in proof	4	4	3	2

Accounts with Editor	32 ^a	25 ^a	20	20
Total number of accounts with Associate Editors	32 ^b	50 ^b	51	54
Number of new accounts submitted and assigned to Associate Editors	15	32	22	30
Number of new species accounts assigned to authors	34	21	18	25
Total number of accounts in preparation	290 ^c	237 ^c	289	275

^a Four inactive, eight moving to production by mid-June

^b 22 inactive

^c 125 overdue

Action Items:

(1) Request a decrease in the number of Associate Editors for *MS* from 7 to 6 for *MS*, and the addition of an honorarium of \$300 for a *JM* Editorial Assistant who oversees the Buddy System and reviews of foreign language summaries, resulting in a net decrease of \$200 in regular honoraria from 2018. This allotment more accurately reflects current workload assignments.

(2) Request funds for honoraria (\$250 each; \$1,250 total) for an Editor and 4 Associate Editors for editing ~28 manuscripts in the Special Centennial Issue of *JM*. This workload (6-8 manuscripts) is approximately half the annual workload of a Subject AE for *JM* and these manuscripts are expected to be considerably longer.

(3) Request funds for production and distribution of the Special Centennial Issue of *JM*. There are two options, *to be decided by the end of the 2018 Annual Meeting*:

a) Production of a 7th issue of *JM* of ~400 pages and 10 color plates, to be shipped with an existing issue (likely 100(3), June 2019), at an estimated shipping and production cost of \$17,000.

b) Production of the Special Issue as the regular June issue (100(3)), at an estimated cost of \$4,750 for color plates, but with a potential loss of \$7,083 in page charges for that issue.

(4) Request a maximum of \$8,400 for a management consultant (KWF Consulting) to review the revised financial offer and negotiate the publishing contract with OUP in early 2019. In the 2018 budget, the Board approved a contingency of \$20,300 to pay KWF to evaluate and negotiate our new publishing contract. To date, we have paid KWF \$6,000 of an agreed-upon \$12,000 (maximum) to negotiate exclusively with OUP. We will pay the balance of this agreement when the publishing contract is finalized in 2019. However, KWF has requested an additional \$2,400 (maximum) to review and analyze revised projections from OUP, which became necessary as a result of our deliberations over the winter.

Respectfully submitted,
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