

## Publications Advisory Board

**Committee Members:** P. Stapp (Publications Director). *Journal of Mammalogy*: Editor-in-Chief – L. Ruedas; Associate Editors – A. Baird, L. Carraway, M. Cherry, R. Constantine, A. Cruz-Neto, N. Dochtermann, J. Esselstyn, J. Goheen, L. Hayes, A. Hohn, J. Hopkins, T. Jezkova, J. Light, S. Loeb, K. Monteith, R. Moratelli, R. Ojeda, J. Ortega Reyes, J. Pauli, C. Pavey, R. Reyna-Huertado, K. Rowe, J. Scheibe, R. Schooley, T. Smyser, B. Swanson, M. Vieira, P. Zollner; Special Features Editor – R. Powell; Book Review Editor – M. Kalcounis-Ruppell. Editorial Assistant – V. Hayssen. *Mammalian Species*: Editor-in-Chief – M. Hamilton; Associate Editors – C. Cooper, S. Eiseb, C. Kilpatrick, P. Owen, B. Rose, S. Solari. *Oxford University Press*: S. Hemenway, (Production), R. Gaddy (Advertising), S. Wolper (Editorial Assistance), S. Larche (ScholarOne), V. Sparkman (Marketing), F. McDonald (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.** In 2020 ASM began its first new in a new five-year publishing contract with Oxford University Press (OUP). The details of the agreement were made available to the Board last summer and the final agreement was signed by the ASM Secretary-Treasurer on 29 September 2019. Highlights of the agreement were published in a letter in the February 2020 issue of *JM*. The Society is looking forward to our next five years with OUP as we continue to navigate the rapidly shifting publishing landscape.

ASM celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2019 and the June issue of Volume 100 of *JM* was a collection of invited articles that commemorated the Society's history and summarized the state of the science of mammalogy. The special issue was an enormous success, reflecting several years of work of Alicia Linzey and her team of editors, Ed Heske, and the many individuals who reviewed manuscripts. I also thank all the authors who contributed papers. I also recognize the special efforts of Bob Timm and Sue McLaren in writing the memorable historical pieces in last year's issues and to Bob, Sue, and Hugh Genoways for their historical articles in the first 2020 issues of *JM*.

**(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. I encourage all Society members to thank members of the PAB, listed on the first page of this report, in person.

Luis Ruedas officially assumed Editor-in-Chief (EIC) responsibilities for *JM* in 2020, replacing Ed Heske, who served as EIC twice. Ed and Luis worked on the transition

throughout the fall and early winter. I am grateful for Ed's willingness to devote so much time and energy to editing and preparing manuscripts for last issues of Volume 100 and the February 2020 issue, giving Luis time to master the myriad tasks and technical idiosyncrasies that come with editing a modern journal. I greatly appreciate Luis' willingness to accept the EIC post and especially, to take on these responsibilities sooner than he had planned. I also want to recognize the efforts of the team at OUP, especially Fiona McDonald (*née* Williams) and Sam Hemenway, as well as Sarah Wolper, our editorial assistant, who helped so much during the transition, and throughout the year.

Meredith Hamilton continues to provide steady leadership of *MS* as the journal moves into its second half-century. The number of species accounts published has increased each year over the past several years, and the journal continues to be an important source of educational and natural history information for educators and media, including March Mammal Madness, animal appreciation days, and our annual meeting trading cards. I also 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, and Sean Maher, Chair of the Informatics Committee, for his ongoing assistance with publications-related content on the ASM webpage.

Sadly, we lost a true titan of the Society and, especially, the PAB, with Barbara Blake's death in August 2019. In addition to serving as Managing Editor for both journals, and Special Features Editor and Associate Editor for *JM*, Barbara was *JM*'s Editorial Assistant (her chosen title), coordinating both the Buddy System and the proofing of foreign language summaries. Her impact on the journals, both public and behind-the-scenes, are inestimable. Following Barbara's passing, Carlos Iudica generously offered to assume the Editorial Assistant role, but found it too difficult to maintain regular internet access from his sabbatical leave in Argentina. I am very grateful to Ginny Hayssen, who has already provided years of service to ASM publications, for her willingness to step in and take over these duties this year.

The Associate Editors (AEs) interact the most with authors and reviewers and deserve the Society's thanks and recognition for their roles in maintaining high quality of work in our journals. In addition to Luis changing roles from AE (4 years) to EIC, three other AEs will resign their posts in June: Aleta Hohn (3 years), Bob Schooley (3 years), and Jessica Light (4 years). The Society thanks all three of them for their service to the *Journal*. 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 to begin their new terms in July.

**(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.

The EICs, Fiona MacDonald, and I met in Albuquerque in January 2020 with Ed Heske for our annual editorial strategy meeting. We discussed how to implement the changes that will come about this year with our new OUP publishing agreement. We also

discussed strategies for reducing some of the errors that continue to affect production and delay issues. I believe that OUP takes these problems seriously and will continue to make modify its procedures and team, including vendors, to minimize sources of disruption to the timely and clean production and distribution of the journals, and to avoid frustration for our authors.

One issue that arose this year was the publication of geopolitical borders on figures and maps. Some international borders continue to be the subject of considerable dispute. ASM considers the depiction of borders in its pages to be an editorial decision and will encourage authors to avoid taking political stances that could result in controversy that would detract from the underlying science.

One outcome of our new publishing agreement was the establishment of the Publishing Hardship Grants program, which is intended to help member-authors who cannot afford to publish their work in *JM*, even at the reduced member rate (\$20 per page). Grants are intended to cover up to \$200 in page charges and the Board generously budgeted \$10,000 for this program. Approximately one-third of the way through the year, I have received six hardship applications, four of which were for manuscripts that were originally submitted in 2019, when ASM members could request full page-charge waivers. All but one is from a developing country where funding for science and research has been cut drastically for political/socioeconomic reasons.

**(4) Distribution, Availability, and Promotion of Publications.** ASM members and readers occasionally express some frustration with online journal content, including inaccessible and missing articles and Supplementary Materials, errors on proofs, and confusion about accessing the journal pages. 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.

As with many aspects of the Society's business, production and publication of *JM* and *MS* were disrupted in March 2020 by the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting global shutdowns and disruptions of supply chains. Starting with April 2020, issues of *JM* were delayed and delivery of print copies to our overseas and academic subscribers was suspended until OUP could be confident that these copies would not be lost in transit. Back copies of all *JM* issues will be sent when normal postal operations resume. Archive issues of *MS* (2019, Volume 51) are also being held at the printer and will be shipped at a later date.

As in the past, I am requesting funds to publish 30 print copies of the 16 issues of *Mammalian Species*, Volume 51, Accounts 971-986. Twenty-eight of these will be sent to archival libraries, and two will be available for purchase. The estimated cost of printing is \$400, which is the same as in last year's budget. There was a significant delay in shipping the 2018 archived volume last year, and we expect that printing and shipment of the 2019 volume will be delayed by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**(5) Publication Statistics.** Publication statistics for the *Journal of Mammalogy* between 1 April 2019 and 1 April 2020.

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

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Feature Articles</b>	<b>Special Feature / Invited Articles / Obituaries</b>	<b>Book Reviews</b>	<b>Total Pages</b>
<b>100.3</b>	0	27	0	479
<b>100.4</b>	25	1	1	304
<b>100.5</b>	21	1	1	293
<b>100.6</b>	17	7	3	314
<b>101.1</b>	28	1	0	324
<b>101.2</b>	25	2	1	292
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2,006</b>

The page budget for *JM* in 2019 was 333 pages per issue (~2,000 pages per year). We published 1,390 pages in the four issues in 2019 and 616 pages in two issues in 2020, slightly exceeding our six-issue budget, largely due to the Special Centennial Issue (100.3), although all issues were ~300 pages or longer. Effective in 2020, we will no longer have a fixed page budget and will not be penalized for exceeding or not publishing a certain number of pages, although 2,000 pages per year will remain our internal target.

***JM* handling and production times (Feature articles only in 100.3-101.2; n = 91):**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Avg Submission to Acceptance (days)</b>	<b>Acceptance to Print (online/ paper)<sup>a</sup> (days)</b>	<b>Total Time (online/ paper)<sup>a</sup> (days)</b>
<b>100.3</b>	-	-	-
<b>100.4</b>	184	46/ 113	229/ 297
<b>100.5</b>	241	45/ 133	286/ 374
<b>100.6</b>	183	72/ 161	255/ 344
<b>101.1</b>	231	42/ 127	273/ 358
<b>101.2</b>	230	45/ 183	275/ 413
<b>AVG</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>50/ 144</b>	<b>264/ 357</b>
<b>2018-19 (n = 109)</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>31/ 94</b>	<b>202/ 265</b>

<sup>a</sup> Time to publishing online/ print in paper

Statistics are not given for Issue 100.3, the Special Centennial Issue, for which manuscripts were received and handled on a different time-frame than typical Feature articles.

Manuscript handling and production times for *JM* Feature articles were much slower this year, in part because of disruptions caused indirectly by the production of the Centennial Issue and because of production delays caused by miscommunication and inconsistencies in handling of proofs by OUP overseas production staff. Some AEs also requested multiple revisions (3-5 times), extending the time to acceptance, and two manuscripts in the December 2020 issue were unusually delayed. The EIC has encouraged AEs to minimize the number of times a new revision is required before

acceptance. It is also increasingly difficult to find timely reviewers. Total time from submission to availability online increased by 2 months and print copies of most issues were delayed. There also were some technical problems at OUP that significantly delayed the printing of the April 2020 issue.

**Geographic distribution of corresponding authors of all manuscripts accepted for publication between 1 April 2019 and 1 April 2020;  $n = 151$  manuscripts; *JM* authors came from 24 countries on all continents except Antarctica:**

Location	Corresponding Author (%)
U.S.	81 (53.6)
Canada	11 (7.3)
Latin America	29 (19.2)
Europe	11 (7.3)
Oceania	8 (5.3)
Asia	10 (6.6)
Africa	1 (0.7)

Represented countries, besides the U.S. and Canada: Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru); Europe (Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, U.K.); Oceania (Australia, New Zealand); Asia (China, India, Japan, Taiwan, Turkey); Africa (South Africa). *JM* continues to receive fairly high numbers of manuscripts from authors outside the U.S. (57% of 326 manuscripts with a final decision, from 42 countries), especially Latin American, but rejection rates tend to be much higher for manuscripts from outside the U.S. (65%) than for those with U.S. authors (37%), possibly reflecting challenges for authors whose first language might not be English. These authors are encouraged to take advantage of ASM's Buddy System.

**Manuscripts (*JM* Feature Articles only) submitted, accepted, and rejected between 1 April 2019 and 1 April 2020, including comparable data for 3 preceding years:**

Category	2019-20*	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
Number of manuscripts submitted	392	359	261	308
Number of manuscripts accepted/ provisionally accepted (a)	154	87	65	63
Number of manuscripts rejected (r)	162	141	105	165
Rejection rate $[r/(a+r)]$ %	51	62	62	72
Total Final Decisions (a + r)	316	228	170	228

\* Excludes the Special Centennial Issue Volume 100.3

**Publication statistics for *Mammalian Species* between 1 April 2019 and 1 April 2020, including comparable data for 3 preceding years:**

<b>Statistic</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Total number of accounts published (annual count)</b>	16	15	14	12
<b>Accounts in proof</b>	2	3	4	4
<b>Accounts with Editor</b>	14 <sup>a</sup>	26 <sup>a</sup>	32 <sup>a</sup>	25 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Total number of accounts with Associate Editors</b>	18 <sup>b</sup>	35 <sup>b</sup>	32 <sup>b</sup>	50 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Number of new accounts submitted and assigned to Associate Editors</b>	13	17	15	32
<b>Number of new species accounts assigned to authors</b>	22	14	34	21
<b>Total number of accounts in preparation</b>	233 <sup>c</sup>	257 <sup>c</sup>	290 <sup>c</sup>	237 <sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Two inactive

<sup>b</sup> Four inactive

<sup>c</sup> 89 overdue

**(6) Action Items (requested changes from 2020 budget):**

- (a) Request \$400 for page charges (20 pages @ \$20 per page) in the *Journal of Mammalogy* for invited Perspectives articles invited by the Editor-in-Chief;
- (b) Request an estimated \$4,000 for development and review of contracts for two Editors-in-Chief, which are required under our new publishing agreement with OUP.

**Respectfully submitted,**

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