

Informatics Committee

Committee Members: M. E. Hopton (Chair), C. A. Iudica, S. P. Maher, S. B. McLaren, D. K. Odell, I. M. Ortega, R. L. Rehmeier, B. J. Shaw.

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 web site.

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 web site and to maintain the existing web site during this period.

Information Items:

(1) On 3 April 2009, the Informatics Committee received a re-worked proposal for a 3-phase web site re-design process from Acro Media that would accommodate the fiscal cutbacks taken by the ASM Board in March 2009. Phase 1 involved the creation of new Information Architecture, which represents the backbone of the redesign process and was completed in August 2009 at a cost of \$4,246.45. In June 2009, the Board approved a line item of \$40,000 in the 2010 budget to apply to the remaining two phases of the redesign. Phase 2, the "visible" part of the redesign, was completed at a cost of \$23,191.30, and will be followed by a third phase that will increase functionality of the ASM web site. Due to the workflow from Acro Media and testing of various aspects of the new website, \$16,808.70 from the 2010 budget was unspent by the end of 2010. This amount will be carried forward and combined with 2011 funds budgeted for Phase 3 of the redesign. [Note: Details of the work accomplished before 2009 can be found in the 2010 Annual Report.]

(2) The ASM web site was moved to a dedicated server to attempt to address issues with online submission of grants and fellowships. The one-month cost of a dedicated server was \$69. Informatics hired a consultant to try to get online submission working. After 13 hours of effort (billed for 2.5 hours; \$280), the consultant was unable to get online submission working. In the interest of cost, we decided to forgo online submission until the new web site was in place and live.

(3) Phase 2 of the redesign was completed and the new ASM web site (www.mammalsociety.org and www.mammalogy.org) went live on 17 March 2011. Informatics is currently requesting suggestions for added functionality for Phase 3 of the redesign.

(4) The redesigned ASM web site is hosted on a new server and web hosting company to better meet the needs of the new web site. The increased specifications resulted in an increase in annual web hosting fees from \$144 to \$468 per year.

(5) For the past ~12 years, AIBS was the official registrar of both ASM web site domain names. Informatics is working on making American Society of Mammalogists the official registrant (i.e., owner) of both domain names (mammalsociety.org and mammalogy.org) and the process should be complete by June 2011.

(6) Routine maintenance and updates were performed on an as-needed basis, including posting of Open Access articles published in the *Journal of Mammalogy* and *Mammalian Species*. Committee pages and membership listings were updated, as requested by President Mares. Leadership pages, including changes in Editors, Officers and Elected Directors, were updated following the 2010 Annual Meeting.

(7) Online submission of fellowships administered by the Honoraria and Grants-in-Aid committees was interrupted due to difficulties with the old web site. The later occurring fellowships were able to utilize the new web site for online submissions.

(8) Requests for information, job postings, and announcements submitted to the web site were received by Dan Odell. More than 120 requests were made between June 2010 and April 2011; many were requests to post job announcements, but once the new web page was launched a number of requests dealt with where to find membership information (ASM Business Office), the membership directory (ASM Business Office), and questions about the 2011 Annual Meeting.

Action Items:

(1) A budget of \$8,468 is requested from the 2012 budget. Hosting the ASM web site on a virtual private server currently costs \$468. This is an annual expense but would provide use of a server with sufficient resources to meet the demands of the new web site. Of the total, \$8,000 is for additional expenses related to the Society's web site redesign. These funds would be used only if the remaining funds from the 2011 budget are spent and it is decided that additional functionality proposed by the design firm would benefit the ASM membership.

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew E. Hopton
(m.hopton@yahoo.com)