

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR CHAIRING A COMMITTEE FOR THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MAMMALOGISTS

Thank you for agreeing to chair one of the committees for The American Society of Mammalogists. The role of a Committee Chair can be difficult and the qualities of a good Committee Chair are difficult to define. The American Society of Mammalogists will only be successful with the involvement of member volunteers like you. Your contribution and participation on the Committee you chair is of great value to ASM.

Functions of a Committee:

The primary function of every ASM Committee is to contribute to the efficient operation of the American Society of Mammalogists. All committees of ASM communicate information to the membership and assist the Officers and Board Members in making good, effective decisions. For specific responsibilities of your ASM Committee, refer to the document "DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STANDING COMMITTEES" available on line at www.mammalsociety.org under "Committees," or by contacting the Chair of the ASM Coordination Committee.

Guidelines:

- The President appoints the Chair and members of all Standing Committees, but Committee chairs should be prepared to provide names of potential committee members to the President. Send a formal list of proposed committee members including their full professional name, mailing address, and email address to the President no later than 10 July. This date assures that a complete, up-to-date list of committee members will be available to include in the No. 3 issue of The Journal of Mammalogy each year.
- Upon confirmation of committee make-up, the President will send a complete list of committee members including mailing addresses and email addresses to the Chair of the Coordination Committee, Chair of the Informatics Committee, and the Journal Editor.
- Contact each committee member via email or letter and inform her/him that they have been appointed to serve on the committee. Recommend that they read the portion of "DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STANDING COMMITTEES" that pertains to your committee and provide them with any other information regarding the committee that they will need to know to function well. For example, if your committee has hard deadlines that must be met each year, tell committee members what those deadlines are as soon as possible so they can plan.
- Contact via email or letter any committee members that are rotating off the committee and thank them for their service to the Committee and ASM.
- Review existing material on the ASM website for your committee at least on an annual basis and forward appropriate new or updated information regarding your committee to the Chair of the Informatics Committee by 1 September for annual revisions on the ASM website. Content for the website must not only be accurate but also edited for typographical errors prior to submission. Chairs may appoint someone on their committee to act as a liaison to the Informatics Committee, but all information to be posted must be approved and vetted by the committee chair before sending it to the Informatics Committee. Chairs are responsible for the content of their Committee's web page and must be mindful of political, financial, or

advocacy issues that might affect the reputation or status of the American Society of Mammalogists.

- Prepare and submit any budget requests to the Chair of the Planning and Finance Committee no later than 1 April.
- Prepare an annual report as an electronic document to be emailed to the President and the Chair of the Coordination Committee no later than 1 May. The report should be organized into "Information Items" and "Action Items." Preferably, draft report should be circulated to the members of the committee for their comments and revisions prior to the final report being sent the President and Chair of the Coordination Committee. Examine previous reports from your committee to see how reports have been prepared in the past.
- Attend both Board of Directors meetings, with the knowledge that chairs can participate in any discussion but should refrain from voting unless they also are elected members of the Board. Be prepared to answer questions from the Board.
- Present a brief oral summary of the annual report at the Board of Directors meeting. The report should emphasize any projects completed by the committee during the last year and any matters that require Board actions (e.g., items that require budgetary approval, new initiatives for the Society).
- Schedule a committee meeting to occur sometime during the Annual Meeting. Meeting time and place should be arranged to accommodate the largest number of committee members. For some committees, a breakfast or lunch meeting time works well. Reservations for meeting rooms can be made by contacting the Chair of the Local Committee, preferably before 15 March.
- Notify all members of the committee of the meeting time and place at least 10 days before the meeting. You also may want to post meeting time and place on bulletin boards provided by the Local Committee.
- Start the committee meeting on time and work with a definite agenda. Make sure that committee members receive all necessary information related to issues to be discussed during the meeting well before the meeting.
- Keep the meeting moving; speak clearly; talk to the entire group, not individuals; keep responses short and to the point; control aimless discussion but do not stifle free comment.
- Keep adequate minutes of each meeting and distribute copies of minutes to each committee member.
- Attend the Annual Members Meetings, present a brief oral synopsis of the committee's annual report to the membership, recognize members of the committee, and be prepared to answer questions from the membership.
- If your committee is responsible for any of the awards that are announced at the Annual Banquet (e.g., Grants-in-Aid, Honoraria, Merriam, Jackson, Grinnell), attend the banquet and consult with the President and the Chair of the Local Committee regarding your responsibilities during the banquet.
- If you cannot attend Board Meetings, Members Meetings, the annual committee meeting, or banquet, designate a member of the committee to attend and present the reports. You, as chair, are responsible for making sure that the designated person is fully informed and prepared to speak for the committee.

Additional Recommendations:

- Understand the general organizational structure of ASM (officers, board members, editors, committees) and what the general responsibilities are for each component. General information about the organization of ASM can be found in the By-laws available on line at www.mammalsociety.org.
- Understand the general budgetary process and be sure to communicate any budgetary issues in a timely manner to the Planning and Finance Committee, the President, and the Secretary-Treasurer.
- Ask for clarification regarding directions and responsibilities from the Officers and Board when needed.
- Develop and adhere to appropriate timetables for all your committee's activities.
- Complete annual reports in a timely manner.
- Delegate--involve the whole committee by having them participate in activities of the committee.
- Communicate clearly and efficiently with other committee members, the Board, and Officers.
- Regularly monitor your committee's page on the ASM website for accurate and timely postings. It is your responsibility to provide text ready to be posted to the Informatics Committee.