

## International Relations Committee

**Committee Members:** M. Abi-Said, T. Álvarez-Castañeda, R. Borroto-Paez, B. Buttler, G. N. Cameron, J. P. Carrera E., O. Coker, N. de la Sancha, D. A. Flores, S. L. Gardner, J. R. Goheen, J. F. González-Maya, E. E. Gutiérrez, D. A. Kelt, F. A. A. Khan, A. V. Linzey, R. A. Ojeda (Co-Chair), N. Ordóñez-Garza, I. Ortega, S. Pavan, N. Pradhan, K. C. Rowe, D. A. Schlitter (Co-Chair), J. Salazar-Bravo, A. T. Smith, S. A. Solari, T. Tarifa, M. V. Vieira, B Wilson.

### **Mission:**

The Board of Directors established the International Relations Committee in 1960 to maintain and enhance communication between members of the Society and mammalogists outside North America. The mission of this Committee is to advance the field of mammalogy by encouraging and facilitating international collaboration among members of the ASM and mammalogists from other countries.

### **Information Items:**

#### **A- On-going initiatives:**

**(1) Sponsored Membership Program:** The International Relations Committee continues to receive nominations and requests for processing sponsored memberships although the focus of the program has shifted from mainly Latin American nominations to Eastern Hemisphere individuals, especially from sub-Saharan Africa. Most nominations are coming from Committee members for outstanding individuals who they know personally. These nominated persons range in experience from outstanding doctoral students to senior mammalogists. This effort continues to generate a large pool of names of deserving people to be considered for sponsored online memberships. Many of these candidates have been successfully processed and are being sponsored. Regular ASM members are strongly encouraged to nominate suitable potential young individuals for sponsored memberships.

In addition to the IRC efforts at finding worthy individuals for sponsored memberships, many ASM members also sponsor individuals independently of this program. Clearly any such multiple-year sponsorship commitments from donating members are always helpful and additional sponsorships by members outside of the IRC program are always welcome. Finally, the IRC would like to thank those individuals who donated to the ASM's Donation Fund that helps cover the dues of sponsored members, those regular ASM members who have committed to directly cover the dues of selected individuals for sponsorship, and those individuals who submit the names of outstanding students to be considered for this program.

**(2) Links to Mammal Societies of the World:** Committee members continue to serve as contacts with mammal societies throughout the world, providing information on mammal meetings to appear on the ASM website and in the *Journal of Mammalogy* and other international publications. Major updating of the web pages on the ASM website continues to be done concerning changes in officers and addresses of international mammal societies. This is an on-going task and we are looking for volunteers to assist in this interesting and important task,

namely to help collect and maintain an up-to-date list of links to the mammal societies of the world. Contact the IRC Co-Chairs if interested.

For more interactions with international activities, among others, in mammalogy, members are also invited to join Facebook's American Society of Mammalogists' site at:

[https://www.facebook.com/American.Society.of.Mammalogists/?hc\\_ref=ARS7MI-9G2bFyEZxI08U3TMdK5DsRT8hcheVJdU8cZlA\\_zD1nJA2AOm5UNuNi5SSvx0&fref=nf](https://www.facebook.com/American.Society.of.Mammalogists/?hc_ref=ARS7MI-9G2bFyEZxI08U3TMdK5DsRT8hcheVJdU8cZlA_zD1nJA2AOm5UNuNi5SSvx0&fref=nf)  
<http://www.facebook.com/American.Society.of.Mammalogists?fref=ts>

### **(3) International Meetings and the International Federation of Mammalogists (IFM):**

IMC-12 was successfully held in Perth, Australia, from 9-14 July 2017. The ASM in collaboration with the University of Alaska extended a successful invitation to host the next IMC at the University of Alaska in 2021. Details of the next IMC will be forthcoming as they develop.

The IFM maintains a presence on Facebook, which can be accessed at International Federation of Mammalogists [https://www.facebook.com/groups/197157050399156/?ref=br\\_rs](https://www.facebook.com/groups/197157050399156/?ref=br_rs). Members are invited to join this site for more information on the Federation's activities and are reminded to read the Annual Report from the IFM as well.

**(4) ASM Student Award for Latin American Mammal Societies:** Because of its international reputation, international students place a high value on being associated with the ASM. The IRC has been expanding the student award program beyond the very successful ASM/SAREM student award to include a similar student award program for the rest of the current national mammal societies in Latin America. The Student Award goes to a student member from the Society selected from the presentations at their scientific meeting and is an online membership to the ASM, including all member rights and subscriptions to ASM's signature publications: *Journal of Mammalogy* and *Mammalian Species*. The ASM was able to endow this award program in 2011 through a generous contribution from Jim and Carol Patton and the endowment has grown sufficiently so that henceforth an online student membership award can be given to each outstanding student selected at their scientific meeting from the various national societies for three years. The funding of the membership awards no longer comes from the general fund budget.

The Latin American national mammal societies involved are as follows: **Argentina:** Sociedad Argentina para el Estudio de los Mamíferos (SAREM); **Bolivia:** Asociación Boliviana de Investigadores de Mamíferos (ABIMA); **Brazil:** Sociedade Brasileira de Mastozoología (SMBz); **Colombia:** Sociedad Colombiana de Mastozoología; **Ecuador:** Asociación Ecuatoriana de Mastozoología (AEM); **Guatemala:** Asociación Guatemalteca de Mastozoólogos (ASOGUAMA); **Mexico:** Asociación Mexicana de Mastozoología (AMMAC); **Panama:** Sociedad Mastozoología de Panama (SOMASPA); **Paraguay:** Asociación Paraguaya de Mastozoología; **Peru:** Sociedad Peruana de Mastozoología (SPM); and **Venezuela:** Asociación Venezolana para el Estudio de los Mamíferos (AsoVEM). These additional student awards are patterned after the original ASM/SAREM student award, which is given each year to the outstanding student presentation at the annual SAREM meeting, namely a three-year on-line

sponsored student membership in the ASM. Argentina and Ecuador have accepted this option for a student award, although Ecuador only has a bi-annual scientific meeting.

Initially the various societies were contacted, explaining the nature of the award and their roles in establishing the mechanisms for determining each society's awardee and encouraging each to use the SAREM model as a starting point for internal discussions. Each has agreed to pursue this option with their society, either at an annual meeting or through contact with relevant officers and members. Decisions from the other national societies are being awaited and current contacts for each society established.

The 2017 student awardee for SAREM is Ana Ochoa of the Universidad Nacional de San Luis, Argentina. For AEM there was no award given during their off-year lack of an annual meeting.

**(5) African Graduate Student Research Fund:** This fund has been fully developed and added to the list of other funds found on the Society website and in the membership solicitations. A standing committee has been established for this fund. Details of the progress for the year can be found in their separate annual report. Chair of the standing committee has been Jacob Goheen but he has recently been replaced by Link Olson. If interested in the efforts to establish this endowment fund or to work on its activities, contact Link Olson ([leolson@alaska.edu](mailto:leolson@alaska.edu)). Any help with its activities or contributions to this new research fund would be greatly appreciated.

**(6) Caribbean Islands Society of Mammalogists (CISM):** The process of establishing a mammal society devoted to the study of Caribbean mammals, originally proposed at the ASM meeting in Jacksonville, FL, continues. A list of people and institutions potentially interested in the study of Caribbean mammals has been developed by IRC member Dr. Rafael Borroto-Paez. Establishing a website is being considered, depending in part in finding a person interested in and capable of maintaining such a website. To move this initiative along, promoting another symposium on Caribbean mammals either at a future ASM Annual Meeting or independently at a convenient geographic location might be the best option. Any ASM members interested in joining this initiative are encouraged to make contact with the IRC Co-Chairs or directly with Rafael Borroto-Paez ([borroto@yahoo.com](mailto:borroto@yahoo.com)).

**(7) International Colleagues Seeking Information and Advice:** International colleagues continue to contact the IRC seeking information and advice. Most queries deal with sources of information on ASM activities including travel award funding options and membership possibilities, mammals, literature or educational opportunities. The latter seek advice on which academic institutions might be suitable for graduate training in a specific field of study, not always on mammals, and contact information on potential ASM members who are located at those institutions. This is a new area of service for the IRC and continues to grow in need.

## **B- New Initiatives:**

**(1) Development of a West and Central African Mammal Society:** With the successful launch of the new African Society of Primatology, there has been an increasing interest in initiating a mammal society in Africa. Currently this initiative is being pursued by a group of West African mammalogists led by Dr. Blaise Kadjo of l'Université Félix Houphouet-Boigny, in

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. We are developing a database of individuals who would be interested in such a society. Solicitations so far have been sent to individuals from West and Central Africa, ranging from Senegal/Gambia to the Democratic Republic of Congo. Names, addresses, contact information, and areas of specialty have been received from over 100 persons. Discussions are underway to determine what kind of "society" might best serve the region and whether the initiative should be continental rather than regional, especially after the positive responses received so far. By-Laws patterned after those of the ASM are being developed.

(2) The Committee welcomes new initiatives from any members. The Co-Chairs would like to thank the support and commitment of all Committee members, especially to those who have submitted names of individuals to be considered for sponsored memberships and those who have contributed to the initiative to establish an African Mammal Society. Thanks to all!

**Action Items:** None.

**Respectfully submitted,**

Ricardo Ojeda, Co-Chair & Duane A. Schlitter, Co-Chair

([rojeda@mendoza-conicet.gov.ar](mailto:rojeda@mendoza-conicet.gov.ar)) ([happygd@suddenlink.net](mailto:happygd@suddenlink.net))