

Publications Advisory Board

Committee Members: P. Stapp (Publications Director). *Journal of Mammalogy*: Editor-in-Chief – B. Riddle, Managing Editor – Burton Lim; Associate Editors – A. Bickham Baird, L. Carraway, A. Cruz-Neto, N. Dochtermann, J. Esselstyn, E. Fleharty, J. Frey, D. Ge, J. Goheen, L. Hayes, C. Jacques, T. Jezkova, T. Jung, S. Loeb, K. Monteith, B. Moore, R. Moratelli, T. Morisaka, A. Mortelliti, J. Ortega Reyes, J. Pauli, R. Reyna-Huertado, K. Rowe, J. Scheibe, T. Smyser, M. Vieira, P. Zollner; Special Features Editor – R. Powell; Book Review Editor – M. Kalcounis-Ruppell; Associate Editor for Language Coordination – V. Hayssen. *Mammalian Species*: Editor-in-Chief – M. Hamilton; Associate Editors – C. Cooper, C. Kilpatrick, D. Leslie, P. Owen, R. Rose, S. Solari. *Oxford University Press*: R. Dowdy (Journal Manager), R. Gaddy (Advertising), S. Larche (ScholarOne), F. McDonald (Lead/Publisher), M. Senderling (Marketing), S. Wolper (J&J; Editorial Assistant).

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 in the third year of a five-year publishing contract with Oxford University Press (OUP). With our current contract ending in December 2024 and in light of the annual budgeting process, the Society will need to decide in 2023 if it wishes to solicit bids for switching to a new published in 2025. President Lessa will appoint an *ad hoc* committee to undertake this assessment.

ASM continued to support publishing by members who lacked institutional funds through the Hardship Publishing Grants program. Since January 2021 I received 20 applications, of which 12 have been published, for an estimated \$2400. Thirteen of the 20 were researchers from developing countries that are suffering economic crises, made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic.

(2) Editorial Staff. *JM* and *MS* are the most visible products of the ASM. Their success is a direct reflection of the efforts of the editorial teams of 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 also want to recognize the efforts of the team at OUP, especially Fiona McDonald, Rebecca Dowdy, Matt Senderling, and our stalwart editorial assistant from J&J Editorial, Sarah Wolper.

The Associate Editors (AEs) interact the most with authors and reviewers and deserve the Society's thanks and recognition for their roles in maintaining the high standard of work in our journals. Effective at the end of June 2022, nine AEs for *JM* and one AE for *MS* are stepping down from their posts: **Amy Bickham Baird (3 years), Ariovaldo-Cruz Neto (3 years), Susan Loeb (4 years), Ned Dochtermann (6 years), Leslie Carraway, Jake Esselstyn, Tereza Jezkova, Kevin Monteith (8 years each), Marcus Vieira (10 years), and Bill Kilpatrick (11 years)**. The Society thanks them all for their service to ASM, especially those who served more than one three-year term. 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 for them to begin their new terms in July.

I want to recognize 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 for both journals, and Sean Maher, Chair of the Informatics Committee, for his ongoing assistance with publications-related content on the ASM webpage. I am grateful to Ginny Hayssen for her willingness to serve as Associate Editor for Language Coordination, who coordinates both the Buddy System and the translation of abstracts.

Meredith Hamilton continues to provide steady leadership as Editor-in-Chief (EIC) of *MS*. The number of species accounts published each year has remained fairly steady (13 to 16) over the past several years, while the number of pages published continues to increase. Moreover, the journal continues to be a major source of educational and natural history information for educators and the media, including the popular March Mammal Madness.

Brett Riddle took over as *JM* EIC from Luis Ruedas in July 2021, although Luis generously assisted Brett throughout the summer to facilitate the transition. Burton Lim also assumed the new position of *JM* Managing Editor in July. They spent the summer learning how to manage ScholarOne and the editorial workflow, so that by the end of the year, *JM* was back publishing approximately on time. The Society should be grateful for the extraordinary efforts that Brett, Burton, and Luis extended to work through the backlog of manuscripts and correspondence over this period.

(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. In 2021, we worked with OUP to update changes to Style Guide used to guide production of both journals. Implementation of the new guide, which included changes to Literature Citations to try to bring the journals closer to CBE style, was more difficult and protracted than expected, but changes were eventually in place for many articles appearing in the last issues of 2021. Because of the pandemic, we were unable to hold our annual strategy meeting of the senior leadership and OUP. We hope to be able to resume these meetings in 2023. Since 2021, Luis (and now Brett and Burton) and I have met monthly via videoconference with Fiona, Sarah, and Rebecca to discuss

JM matters. These meetings have been very helpful and productive and were essential during the EIC transition. We continue to explore ways to improve communication, reduce errors, and increase efficiency.

(4) Distribution, Availability, and Promotion of Publications. ASM members and readers occasionally express frustration with our publications, including inaccessible and missing articles and Supplementary Materials, errors on proofs, billing, and confusion about accessing the journal pages. If members encounter any problems, please let me know immediately and I will try to remedy them as quickly as possible. Some technical problems are handled centrally at OUP or by outside vendors, and outside of the control of our immediate OUP contacts, so your patience is appreciated. OUP has informed us that they will be implementing a new author services delivery system that is expected to improve billing and communications with the business side of OUP. Supply chain disruptions caused by the pandemic continue to slow printing and distribution.

With the resumption of in-person meetings, Meredith is again working with Matt at OUP to produce *MS* trading cards, depicting images and natural-history information about regionally relevant mammal species. Look for these cards at the Annual Meeting.

As in the past, I am requesting funds to publish 30 print copies of the 13 issues of *Mammalian Species*, Volume 53, Accounts 1000-1013. 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.

(5) Publication Statistics. Publication statistics for the *Journal of Mammalogy* between 1 April 2021 and 1 April 2022.

Composition of recent issues of *JM*:

Issue	Feature Articles	Special Feature / Invited Articles / Obituaries	Book Reviews	Total Pages
102.3	19	2	1	291
102.4	20	0	1	241
102.5	18	1	2	245
102.6	17	0	2	213
103.1	18	1	1	230
103.2	21	0	0	260
Total	113	4	7	1,480

The publication target for *JM* is approximately 330 pages per issue (~2,000 pages per year). We published 990 pages in the four issues in 2021 and approximately 490 pages in two issues in 2022, for an average of 247 pages per issue. We published the fewest articles and pages this year since 2014-15 (99 articles, 1,371 pages), reflecting the difficulties with processing manuscripts quickly and the transition between editors. However, given that we are currently back to

publishing and printing on-schedule (with respect to issue month), we expect to be able to increase the size of the issues in the remainder of 2022 and going forward.

***JM* handling and production times (Feature articles only in 102.3-103.2; *n* = 113):**

Issue	Avg Submission to Acceptance (days)	Acceptance to Publication (online/ paper)^a (days)	Total Time (online/ paper)^a (days)
102.3	275	56/ 137	331/ 412
102.4	307	55/ 151	362/ 458
102.5	325	49/ 127	373/ 452
102.6	327	65/ 163	392/ 490
103.1	340	48/ 133	388/ 473
103.2	383	48 / 162 ^a	431/ 544 ^a
AVG	326	53/ 145	379/ 472
2020-21 (n = 125)	248	65/ 165	313/ 412

^a Time to publishing online/ print in paper - assumes 103.2 will print 4/30/22

For all metrics, manuscript handling and production times for *JM* Feature articles continued to be much slower than desired. This appeared to be due to delays on the EIC’s desk (average time from submission to first decision for initial submissions was 55 days), but also could have been influenced by slower turnaround times of authors addressing revisions (26% of accepted manuscripts required 4 or more rounds of revisions). There were delays in printing and shipping early issues of volume 2021, but these improved over the course of the year, so that issues were usually printing by the cover month from 102.5 onward. Handling times are expected to continue to be long for at least the next several issues, as the EIC clears backlogged manuscripts from the queue.

Geographic distribution of submitting authors of all manuscripts accepted for publication between 1 April 2021 and 1 April 2022; *n* =154 accepted manuscripts:

Location	Submitting Author (%)
U.S.	79 (51.3)
Canada	23 (14.9)
Latin America	28 (18.2)
Europe	11 (7.1)
Oceania	4 (2.6)
Asia	3 (2.0)
Africa	6 (3.9)

JM corresponding authors of published manuscripts came from 20 countries on all continents except Antarctica. Represented countries, besides the U.S. and Canada: Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico); Europe (Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Norway,

Portugal, Romania, Russia, Spain); Oceania (Australia, New Zealand); Asia (Israel, Japan); Africa (South Africa, Tanzania). The proportion of authors from the U.S. and Canada (66%) was a marked increase from 2020-21 (45%), with corresponding declines in the representation of authors from Latin America, Asia, and Europe.

JM continues to publish many manuscripts from authors outside the U.S. (57% of 247 decided manuscripts from 40 countries), especially Latin America, although rejection rates tend to be higher for decided manuscripts from outside the U.S. (46%) than for those with a U.S. corresponding author (26%), possibly reflecting challenges for authors whose first language might not be English. These authors are encouraged to take advantage of ASM's Buddy System, which is coordinated by Ginny Hayssen.

Manuscripts (*JM* Feature Articles only) submitted, accepted, and rejected between 1 April 2021 and 1 April 2022, including comparable data for 3 preceding years:

Category	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20*	2018-19
Number of manuscripts handled	337	422	392	359
Number of manuscripts accepted/ provisionally accepted (a)	133	154	154	87
Number of manuscripts rejected (r)	83	130	162	141
Pending decisions (still in review)	121	138	76	131
Rejection rate [r/(a+r)] %	38	46	51	62
Total Final Decisions (a + r)	216	284	316	228

* Excludes the Special Centennial Issue Volume 100.3

JM handled fewer manuscripts in 2021-22 and a large fraction (36%) are still awaiting decisions. The rejection rate (38%) has fallen steadily since 2017. Approximately 12% of manuscripts were rejected without review, which was similar to previous years.

Annual publication statistics for *Mammalian Species* in 2021, including comparable data for 3 preceding years:

Statistic	2021	2020	2019	2018
Number of accounts published	14	13	16	15
Pages published	185	172	162	169
Accounts in proof	3	2	2	3
Accounts with Editor-in-Chief	7 ^a	17	14	26
Accounts with Associate Editors	8	13	18	35
New accounts submitted and assigned to Associate Editors	10	11	13	17
New accounts assigned to authors	16	25	22	14
Total number of accounts in preparation	128 ^b	148	233	257

^aTwo inactive ^b62 overdue

(6) Action Items: None

The PAB budget for 2023 is the same (\$114,770) as that approved for 2022. If bids are solicited to hire a consultant in 2023 to help the Society consider switching publishers at the end of our current agreement with OUP, the *ad hoc* committee appointed by President Lessa will provide estimates of those costs to the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stapp

ASM Publications Director

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