

## EDITORIALS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

NON-PEER REVIEW SECTION

### *DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION*

#### *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee*

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*Herpetological Conservation and Biology* is pleased to announce the formation of a new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee to help us work towards increasing the accessibility and fairness of the review and publication process to authors of all backgrounds. The committee is charged with developing ways that the journal can improve its operations and increase the diversity of its editorial board.

Beginning on January 1st, 2022, *Herpetological Conservation and Biology* will institute a new blinded review process (described in full [here](#)) and will include information on the reviewer checklist related to the new initiative. As *Herpetological Conservation and Biology* is a volunteer organization, we are limited in our ability to restrict access to author information. However, we are committed to implementing protections to safeguard authors from bias during the review process, including blinding where possible.

We welcome the committee members listed below, who have graciously agreed to serve to assist committee co-chairs Ann Paterson and Mizuki Takahashi in working on this initiative.

#### DEI Committee Members:

- Ann Paterson (co-chair)
- Mizuki Takahashi (co-chair)
- Erim Gomez
- Michelle Koo
- Sarah Kupferberg
- Sheila Poo
- Jennifer Sheridan

HCB has adopted the following diversity statement to guide our efforts:

“HCB welcomes and encourages submissions by all authors regardless of ethnicity, gender identity or expression, national origin, or other characteristics. Implicit biases exist in the peer-review process against certain groups of authors based on language, socioeconomic, gender, and other factors. We strive for a more equitable peer-review process. We acknowledge that our governing and editorial boards need to have increased diversity. Thus, to provide fair reviews and decisions to all authors, we commit to continue and expand our work to establish more diverse representation on both boards and to develop and ensure an effective system to disseminate educational information amongst our editors and reviewers concerning evidence of the peer-review biases and ways to reduce them.”

Adopted December 2021

The DEI committee is grateful for the opportunity to help remove barriers to publication access, aided by our lack of page charges, and is already working on several initiatives. Please watch for announcements regarding these efforts in the coming months.