

## EDITORIALS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### NON-PEER REVIEW SECTION

## RECENT DECISIONS AND DEVELOPMENTS AT HERPETOLOGICAL CONSERVATION AND BIOLOGY

### GOVERNING BOARD

Your Governing Board rarely meets in person because we communicate frequently online. Our first Board meeting was to organize HCB (Bury et al. 2006). In 2009 during the Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists (JMIH) in Portland, Oregon, we met one evening and also hosted a social event at a local pub for HCB supporters. On 14 July 2013, we convened all day during the JMIH in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Attendees were the full Board: David Bradford, Bruce Bury, David Germano, Malcolm McCallum (via Internet), Ann Paterson, Raymond Saumure, and Stan Trauth.

Much of our attention at the recent meeting was to discuss a possible affiliation of HCB with a major herpetological society. However, this required further discussion and the Governing Board voted in mid-Sept not to pursue this at this time. This is a complex issue and considerations are on-going.

Other measures and decisions were made at the meeting (Table 1). We are investigating the production of hard copies to continue distribution of HCB volumes to 25 universities and research institutions, plus 10 for internal purposes. We hope to later offer pdfs of entire volumes. The Board is exploring options to establish us as a not-for-profit organization.

Over half of our papers as well as Facebook members are international (i.e., outside of North America north of Mexico). The editors running the journal have changed somewhat since we started. Earlier, HCB ran logos of supporting groups on our covers and website. We decided to remove these. We appreciate all of the earlier interactions and support, but we want to have more formal arrangements with other organizations.

HCB has grown rapidly and we have published 2600 pages since its inception in 2006. At our current rate of production, HCB will likely be one of the leading herpetological journals in terms of pagination in 2013. Although we are proud of this, it had caused strain on those who do the copy editing and other preparation of the journal. In hopes to relieve some of the workload, we adopted a semi-automated professional layout program. To accommodate this change, we organized the system so that manuscripts are now copy edited before they are placed in a page layout, at which point the manuscripts are sent to the Section Editor. This new software will necessitate a

**TABLE 1.** List of measures, issues and policy decisions at the meeting of *Herpetological Conservation and Biology*, Albuquerque, New Mexico, July 2013. Y = yes, majority vote; N = no, majority vote.

Issue	Vote
Remove all logos of prior affiliations from cover page of HCB	Y
Investigate incorporation of HCB as a non-profit organization	Y
Dissolve the editorial guild (consider some other options)	Y
Ensure that keywords (minimum of five) are not repeated in the title.	Y
Add language that the corresponding author must assure that every author has read and approved the manuscript.	Y
Begin accepting articles on conservation genetics	N
Pre-Publication (on-line) and Rapid Publication route	N

## Governing Board.—Recent Decisions and Developments.

change to how authors format tables and we will provide guidelines in the Instructions for Authors (IFAs). Also, we discussed the need to train new copy editors, who are a key element of the journal.

We hope to recruit a student to create an index of all issues. Currently, a reader can use the search bar at the bottom of the web page (Table of Contents). We will add a line explaining how to search for articles (e.g., by scientific name, topic, etc.). Look for this soon.

Special Publications continue to produce large products. We will release a bibliography of anurans by C. Kenneth Dodd as a searchable document in 2013. There is progress with a symposium on head-starting of chelonians and another volume on a regional herpetofaunal monograph.

We discussed whether the Editor-in-Chief needs to have final approval of papers instead of relying entirely on the decision of Section Editors using the peer review process. For now, the Governing Board reserves the right to provide a contrary opinion in an editorial to any published paper. Overall, we continue to support publication of objective studies, and acceptance rests with the anonymous peer review system and editorial governance.

Our Editorial Guild was created at our inception to serve as a list of supporters and potential reviewers. It has no specific charge or function. We dissolved the guild and intend to review the supporters to see who may be able to serve in other roles. We plan to review the performance of the Assistant and Associate Editors to avoid over-taxing them.

We try to assist authors, but some international manuscripts need extensive work due to English being a second language. We are exploring ways to assist these authors. For example, we have added a number of multi-lingual editors. We will add criteria to the IFAs requiring the corresponding author to assure that every author has read and approved the manuscript. Conservation genetics is increasingly rapidly, but we decided not to accept these manuscripts if the paper is primarily on genetics. Some manuscripts will need special consideration here.

Because HCB encourages reviewers to use Track Changes to make detailed edits to a manuscript, we do not ask authors to use line numbers. However, reviewers can add them if they prefer. We will ask authors to provide a running head in the future. Authors must remove codes from EndNote or similar programs prior to submission because this creates serious formatting errors. Our current home page is relatively simple so that it fits on smaller monitors and it improves download speeds for those with slower internet connections.

Our mission is to publish a journal on the conservation and natural history of amphibians and reptiles. We may develop new wording later and add a strategic plan as a requirement for establishment as a not-for-profit organization. Currently, the Governing Board does not include all the Section Editors, yet most of us prefer a small Board (now seven). We are exploring options for other governing approaches in the future.

Lastly, we wish to announce three new additions to our Editorial staff:

### ASSOCIATE EDITORS

**MAY BOGGESE**, Associate Professor, School of Mathematical and Statistical Sciences, Arizona State University, USA, will serve as a special editor for statistics.

**GUARINO R. COLLI**, Professor, Universidade de Brasília, Brasil, will be a valuable addition to assess manuscripts on South American herpetofauna.

### CO-SECTION EDITOR FOR AMPHIBIANS (NEW POSITION)

**BRIAN T. MILLER**, Professor, Department of Biology, Middle Tennessee University, USA. Dr. Miller has been a strong supporter of HCB since our creation. Initially, Brian will handle salamander and caecilian papers while David Bradford covers manuscripts on anurans

### LITERATURE CITED

Bury, R.B., M.L. McCallum, S.E. Trauth, and R.A. Saumure. 2006. Dawning of Herpetological Conservation and Biology: A special welcome to your new journal. *Herpetological Conservation and Biology* 1(1):i-iii.