

PROLOGUE

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Editorial Comment

In this third issue of Volume 2 of *Chelonian Conservation and Biology* and seventh issue overall, we continue to expand in several areas. There are several masthead changes. Reflecting the increased editorial load of processing many manuscripts and sometimes facing difficult decisions regarding acceptance or rejection, we have expanded our editorial staff by adding a fourth senior editor, Russell A. Mittermeier, Conservation International, Washington, D.C., USA. Reflecting the nature of the type of editorial work performed by each of the senior editors, A.G.J. Rhodin and P.C.H. Pritchard serve as Editors, while J.L. Behler and R.A. Mittermeier are Consulting Editors. This follows the operational format established at the inception of the journal. As the number of international manuscript submissions has gradually increased, we have also added five new members to the Editorial Review Board in order to provide more international representation. Joining the board are: Roger Bour, Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, France; William R. Branch, Port Elizabeth Museum, Humewood, South Africa; Maria (Neca) Marcovaldi, Fundação Pró-TAMAR, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil; Hidetoshi Ota, University of the Ryukyus, Nishihara, Okinawa, Japan; and Richard C. Vogt, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de México, San Andrés Tuxtla, Veracruz, Mexico. We owe a debt of gratitude to all members of our board as they provide us with their help and expertise in the review process.

A new feature instituted in this issue is the documentation of the review process for each paper published. Timeliness of publication is always important and we have continually attempted to keep publication lag times to a minimum. At the end of each paper published, we will provide three important dates — 1) *Received*: the date the manuscript was first submitted, 2) *Reviewed*: the date we completed and mailed back the reviewed manuscript with either an acceptance pending minor revision, a provisional acceptance pending major revision, or a rejection with a recommendation for revision and resubmittal, 3) *Revised and Accepted*: the date we received the revised manuscript back and accepted it based on our earlier review. Delays in processing can occur anywhere along the line. Some papers, for example, are delayed between the times of review and revision; those delays are always due to the author. Time lags between submission and review reflect the peer and editorial review processes and are sometimes fairly long. However, time lags from revision and final acceptance to actual publication are always relatively short. Overall, the times from submission to publication, barring author-related delays, are often quite short and we are proud of our record and effort. Recording these dates for all published papers will allow a critical appraisal of the timeliness of the publication process.

A new section in this issue of the journal is Linnaeus Fund Research Reports. This section presents research reports based on support provided by Chelonian Research Foundation through its annual turtle research awards program, the Linnaeus Fund. Named after Carolus Linnaeus [1707-1778], the Swedish creator of binomial nomenclature, the fund honors the first turtle taxonomist and father of all modern systematics. Linnaeus Fund awards are granted annually to individuals for specific turtle research projects, with either partial or full support as funding allows. Priority is generally given to projects concerning freshwater

turtles, but tortoise and marine turtle research proposals are also funded. Priority is generally given to the following general research areas: taxonomy and systematic relationships, distribution and zoogeography, ecology, natural history, and morphology, but a broad range of other topics are also considered. Priority is also given to projects that demonstrate potential relevance to the scientific basis and understanding of chelonian diversity and conservation biology. The generally preliminary and summary reports in this section are not formally peer-reviewed, but are nonetheless subjected to editorial review.

The subscriptions for the journal continue to expand. The total distribution is now over 1000 to 60 nations and 48 U.S. states and territories. Nearly 34% of the subscribers are international and 9% are scientific libraries or other institutions. The number of pages and number of articles per issue have also generally continued to expand, with Volume 2 approaching a 75% increase as compared to Volume 1. We are gratified by the welcome response to our journal by the world of chelonian researchers, conservationists, and enthusiasts, and we look forward to an increasingly successful publication.

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