

PROLOGUE

Chelonian Conservation and Biology, 2003, 4(3):521-522
© 2003 by Chelonian Research Foundation

Editorial Comment

ANDERS G.J. RHODIN

This is the 15th issue of *Chelonian Conservation and Biology*—it has been 10 years since we published the first one back in November 1993. That first issue was only 75 pages long with 10 papers—since then we've grown considerably, this one is 236 pages long with 42 papers, and we are averaging nearly 250 pages per issue over the last 4 issues (Fig. 1). For me it has been a labor of love producing this journal. I have felt privileged to have had the opportunity to create the journal and to shepherd it from its modest beginnings to where it stands today. In a way, it has allowed me to partially repay the debt of gratitude I have always felt towards the international turtle community for granting me the opportunity to develop a second career within herpetology in addition to my primary profession as physician and orthopedic surgeon. I remember well the early days when the turtle work I produced came to be accepted by herpetological professionals, despite my lack of formal credentials within the field. I have never forgotten how good that acceptance felt and since then I have attempted to the best of my ability to be openly welcoming and respectful of whatever new talents arise within the field of turtle conservation and biology.

Welcoming new talent has indeed been a goal of this journal in that we have worked hard with all authors, especially students and international authors, most notably those from developing countries, to encourage submission of manuscripts and to help them improve and publish their work. Over the years we have seen a gradual increase in the percentage of international authors submitting papers, and the overall balance

between US-based and international authors is gradually approaching a highly desirable 50:50 balance (Fig. 2).

At the same time, we have hoped to maintain a reasonable balance between papers submitted dealing with either freshwater turtles, tortoises, or marine turtles, without any one or two of these areas of interest becoming overly predominant in the journal. So far, we have met with success in this area, approaching a submitted mix of approximately 40% freshwater turtle papers, 40% marine turtle papers, and 20% tortoise papers (Fig. 3). Recently there has been an upsurge in papers on marine turtles, probably reflecting the general and gradual increase in the global number of marine turtle researchers as compared to the number of people working on tortoises or freshwater turtles. We simply reflect the interests and endeavors of our author audience in this regard, but our present balance seems appropriate.

As the journal continues to expand in scope and volume, I have come to grow increasingly reliant on my cadre of colleagues who help with the all-important peer-review process. Their efforts have helped assure maintenance of professional excellence in the papers published and I could not do this without their help. Many of these colleagues have been members of my official Editorial Review Board, others have given of their time and expertise with little more than an occasional thank you for their professionalism and dedication to quality. It is time to honor some of these colleagues by significantly expanding the Editorial Review Board, and I have done so for this issue, inviting 16 new members, for a total of 44 board members (plus my 3 associate and

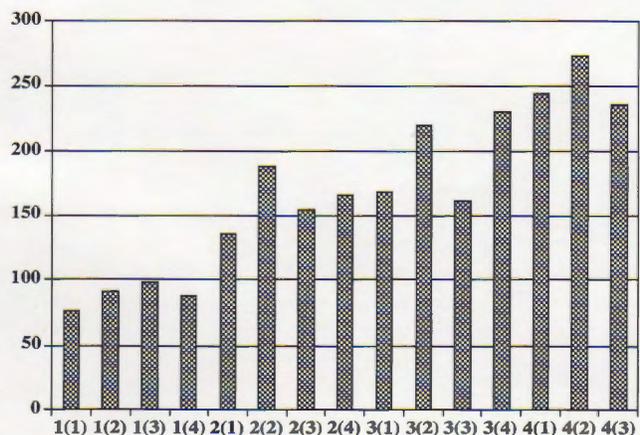


Figure 1. Number of pages published per issue of *Chelonian Conservation and Biology*.

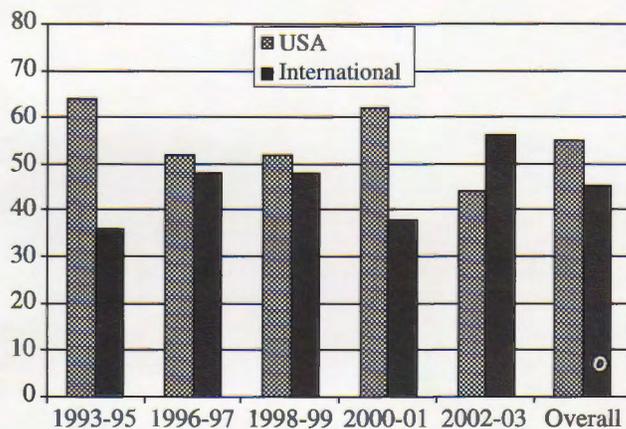


Figure 2. Percentage of US-based vs. international authors submitting papers to *Chelonian Conservation and Biology*.

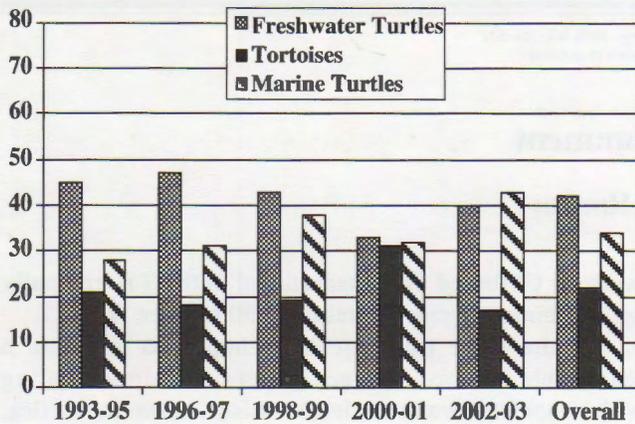


Figure 3. Percentage of submitted papers to *Chelonian Conservation and Biology* dealing with freshwater turtles, tortoises, or marine turtles.

consulting editors, for an overall team of 47 friends and colleagues). The new board members who have been added as of this issue are: KURT A. BUHLMANN, MICHAEL A. EWERT, BRENDAN J. GODLEY, ELLIOTT R. JACOBSON, GERALD KUCHLING, MOLLY E. LUTCAVAGE, DIMITRIS MARGARITOU LIS, RODERIC B. MAST, ANNE B. MEYLAN, STEPHEN J. MORREALE, FRANK V. PALADINO, NICOLAS J. PILCHER, JAMES PERRAN ROSS, H. BRADLEY SHAFFER, DAWN S. WILSON, and JEANETTE WYNEKEN. They are all leading experts in their fields and bring fresh insight and wide experience to the review board. I welcome and thank them for their help, both past and future. Many of these new board members are marine turtle specialists, reflecting the increasing number of marine turtle submissions we are receiving. For our entire editorial board, we now have 19 specialists for marine turtles, with 27 focusing on freshwater turtles or tortoises.

Producing this journal has indeed been a personal labor of love, but a labor nonetheless. As the volume of submitted manuscripts has grown and the number of pages published has grown, it has taken me longer and

longer to produce each successive issue. Each issue is produced entirely by myself as a desktop publishing document and turned over to the printer only when everything is completed: reviewing, editing, formatting, and layout of text, tables, figures, and photos for all published articles and notes, plus the compilation of recent literature citations.

All this work on *Chelonian Conservation and Biology* takes considerable time, all squeezed between the time allotted to my multiple other turtle endeavors, including running *Chelonian Research Foundation* and its *Linnaeus Fund* grants program, co-chairing the *IUCN/SSC Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group*, chairing the *Turtle Conservation Fund* based at *Conservation International*, participating in the *IUCN Turtle Survival Alliance*, the *CITES Animals Committee Working Group on Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles*, the *IUCN/SSC Marine Turtle Specialist Group*, and the *International Sea Turtle Society*, plus trying to keep up with my own turtle research efforts and providing care for a few captive tortoises in my home. All of this in addition to earning a living in my regular work in private practice orthopedic surgery plus finding opportunities for the increasingly important time needed for simply relaxing and enjoying life in general. There just aren't enough hours in my day or days in my year or years in my life for me to accomplish everything I need or want to in a timely fashion. As my multitasking reaches ever more degrees of difficulty in delicate and constant balancing, I wonder how long and well I can carry the multiple loads. I could really use an assistant to help with some of these efforts. If anyone out there is interested in becoming a managing editor of *Chelonian Conservation and Biology* and helping in a significant way with this publishing process, please contact me. You would need to work on a Mac and be competent in using Adobe PageMaker software, plus demonstrate well-developed obsessive-compulsive behavior—it's hard to get by without it these days.