

Editorial

Overview

This year, *Australian Journal of Botany* (*AJB*) reaches 52 years of publication. There are many people who have contributed to its success during this time. I thank my production team here at CSIRO PUBLISHING, present and past Editorial Advisory Committee members, my predecessors, authors, referees and subscribers for its past success, and will work to ensure its future.

Indeed, we begin this issue with an interesting contribution written by a past Chair of the Editorial Advisory Committee and a past Managing Editor. Given its 52-year history, this timely review documents some of the changes to the journal during its lifetime. I thank Peter and Laurie for the time they devoted to the preparation of this paper.

Impact Factor and Ranking

The *Australian Journal of Botany* had an impressive increase in its impact factor of **0.97** (Plant Sciences Category) 63 of 136 ranked journals (Source: ISI 2001 Journal Citation Reports). This represents an improvement in *AJB*'s readership and improved accessibility via the internet (e.g. Contents pages and Abstracts may be viewed free of charge) and the large international referee base.

World Wide Web & Electronic Edition of Journal

Information about the *Australian Journal of Botany* [print and electronic versions (.pdf and XML)] is accessible through the *AJB* home page:

<http://www.publish.csiro.au/journals/ajb>

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Submission Rate

There were 187 manuscripts submitted in 2003, considerably more than the number of papers submitted in 2002 (129 manuscripts). About 56% of submissions in 2003 were from overseas contributors.

Published Papers for 2003 and Acceptance Rate

The journal published 70 papers (759 pages) in 2003. The category *Ecology and Ecophysiology* remained strong (35% of papers published), although there was good representation from all other categories.

The continued publication of the *Turner Review Series* [now at no. 7 with Richard Hobbs and Colin Yates' paper in the 5th issue] has broadened the Journal's readership and continues to consolidate *AJB* as a leading botanical journal. The feature paper in the 4th issue on *Plant Functional Traits* (DOI: 10.1071/BT02124) by scientists from the IGBP-GCTE group was also a significant contribution.

The acceptance rate was about 60% in 2003.

In 2003, *AJB* published one Special Issue entitled *Prospects for Biodiversity in Salinising Landscapes*, as Vol. 51, no. 6. I thank the coeditor Marcus Blacklow for his contributions in ensuring the publication of this issue.

In 2003, we have instituted a new policy, and now distribute FREE full-text PDFs to corresponding authors of published papers.

Acceptance to Publication Times

The time from acceptance to print publication for a paper in *AJB* is presently about 4 months, and is even shorter (at least 3 weeks earlier) for online publication as papers appear online as they are approved for printing.

Source of Reviewers

The quality of the published papers depends on the quality of the refereeing system. In 2003 the journal editor consulted 302 referees (51% overseas) from over 30 countries. This breadth not only allows for a wide range of opinions, but also has served to bring the journal to the attention of an increasing number of scientists, some of whom may submit their work for publication. The list of referees consulted in 2003 follows this report, and I thank them all.

Australian Journal of Botany — 2003 Student Prize

The *AJB* Student Prize for the best student-authored paper published in 2003 will be announced in the next issue. The award is a \$250 book voucher (selections from CSIRO Publishing Booklist) and a year's subscription to the journal.

Electronic Mail

For faster communication electronic mail is encouraged, email simone.farrer@csiro.au

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