

## Editorial for the 70th anniversary of *Marine and Freshwater Research*

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As we celebrate the 70th year of *Marine and Freshwater Research*, I'd like to reflect a little on our history supporting the publication of high-quality research. It has been a long journey and much has changed, and some things have not, such as the commitment to producing a high-quality journal, and one that is recognised as such. This recognition comes from our research peers and reflects well on both the manuscripts we publish as well as the quality of the publishing processes and the appearance of the journal itself. This is not just nice to know – it is part of our heritage, part of Australia's research-publishing history, and worth hanging onto as we look ahead to the opportunities and challenges of coming years as journals further develop their online presence and features – rather than publish hard copy – to suit an era of open science. Journal publishing is a proven avenue for sharing research findings and, in my opinion, favours those who can both write well and compile their data in an interesting and attractive manner. Imagine a future where other skills or talents are able to come to the fore when presenting your research – a future where it is norm to accompany written text with sound, animation or film, or any combination of their many variants? I certainly think we could entertain and develop such ideas as we seek to further share our research findings and opinions, and to engage with a wider set of communication skills.

Now back to the beginning. In 1950, the first issue of the *Australian Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research* was published, derived from the successful publishing partnership that was established between the then newly formed Australian Academy of Science and CSIRO to establish the *Australian Journals of Scientific Research*. As explained by Jenny Foster in a tribute to the *Australian Journal of Chemistry* (see <http://www.publish.csiro.au/ch/virtualissue/2482>), this partnership led to the publication in 1948 of the *Australian Journal of Scientific Research*, which had a rapid growth in subscriptions, demonstrating the value to Australian researchers of having a local and high-quality publishing outlet. The success of this publishing exercise led to this journal being joined in 1950 by the *Australian Journal of Agricultural Research*, the *Australian Journal of Applied Science* and the *Australian Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research*.

The history of the publishing partnership is, in itself, as fascinating as it has been successful, but back to our journal, which continued to develop under the same name until 1995, when the title was shortened to the current *Marine and Freshwater Research* as part of a successful move to internationalise the journal. In doing this, the initial aim of the journal to provide a vehicle for the incredibly diverse research undertaken in the marine, estuarine and inland water environments was extended, and allowed for further 'crossover' readership between fields,

and the dissemination of research articles of a truly interdisciplinary nature. This has been, and still is, a major feature of *Marine and Freshwater Research*.

In keeping with this aim, the number of pages we publish has increased. Volume 1 in 1950 comprised 2 issues, and continued with 2, 3 or 4 issues per year until volume 27 in 1976. In 1977, we had an increase to 6 issues per year, and then, in 1994, to 8 issues, and then, in 2007, to 12 issues. We still publish 12 issues per year and, at times, increase the number of pages to accommodate an increased number of accepted manuscripts. This is a sure sign of the success of the journal and its importance in global publishing. In 2018, we had 490 manuscripts submitted and 188 being published, with 32% of these from Australia, 20% from Asia–Oceania, and 16% from Europe and also from South America. This is a remarkable genesis and has set the stage for the continued development of *Marine and Freshwater Research* as a vehicle for the diverse research undertaken in the marine, estuarine and inland water environments. This has included Research Fronts and Special Issues addressing specific themes, such as Chinese Wetlands, Tropical Aquatic Ecosystems of the Kakadu Region (Northern Australia), Fish Passage & Hydropower in 2018, and Climate Impacts on Marine System Structure and Function, Water Ecology of China's Pilot Cities, Women in Marine Science, and Irrigation and Fisheries for Sustainable Development in 2019.

The journal has also been managed in different ways over the past 70 years from internal Managing Editors, supported by an Editorial Advisory Board, to the introduction of external Editors, supported by an Editorial Board to manage the manuscripts and provide advice. At this stage, I'd like to acknowledge the substantial efforts of the Managing Editors, Lou Bennett, Meredith Dobbie, Ann Grant and Dugald McGlashan, who have all featured over my career as a researcher with a direct interest in and appreciation of the importance of the journal for Australian research publication. The Editorial Advisory Board was, for a time, chaired by Prof. Keith Hunter, who sadly passed away in 2018 – we are pleased to announce that an issue in early 2020 will be dedicated to his research interests.

In 2007, two external co-editors were appointed, namely Prof. Andrew Boulton and Prof. Keith Hunter, who took charge of the journal until 2010. At the same time, an Editorial Board was established to assist them with the management of the increasing number of manuscripts. Prof. Boulton became the sole Editor in 2010, handing over to me in 2012. I was pleased to not only inherit the mantle of a successful journal, but also one that was evolving to meet the challenges of the rapidly changing world of research publishing, supported by the professionalism and combined enthusiasm of the staff of CSIRO Publishing.

This leads us to this celebratory issue of the journal, which contains 10 papers led by Associate Editors. These continue the diversity that has characterised *Marine and Freshwater Research*. This collection includes a long work by Paul Boon that considers the environmental history of Australian rivers and how this has influenced perceptions and attitudes of the Australian community over the past 200+ years (Boon 2020). Rebecca Lester considers the use of ecological models to understand and manage aquatic ecosystems and examines the critical question of how ecological-response models translate to what happens in practice (Lester 2020). Daniel Roelke and co-authors consider how resource fluctuation patterns influence emergent properties of phytoplankton assemblages and their resistance to harmful algal blooms (Roelke *et al.* 2020). Brendan Kelaher and co-authors investigate the variation in assemblages of large marine fauna off ocean beaches using drones (Kelaher *et al.* 2020). Haseeb Randhawa and Robert Poulin quantify the patterns and identify the correlates associated with tapeworms discovered in elasmobranch fishes (Randhawa and Poulin 2020). Colin Simpfendorfer and others investigate the use of towed-float GPS telemetry to assess the movement patterns and habitat use of juvenile stingrays (Martins *et al.* 2020). Jacob Johansen and co-authors investigated the sublethal effects of weathered oil on larval red drum (*Sciaenops ocellatus*) following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico (Rowsey *et al.* 2020). Fasil Taddese and Gerard Closs investigate the spatial and temporal dynamics of the ichthyofauna of a permanently open estuary (Taddese and Closs 2020). Nick Davidson led two multi-authored manuscripts, the first reviews the adequacy of reporting to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands on change in the ecological character of wetlands (Davidson *et al.* 2020a), and the second considers trends in the ecological character of the world's wetlands (Davidson *et al.* 2020b).

As we celebrate with this special issue of the journal, I'd like to express our appreciation to all our authors and reviewers who have helped us make *Marine and Freshwater Research* a success. Seventy years is a long time and our success has depended entirely on those authors who have contributed their manuscripts, as well as the efforts of the reviewers who have and continue to provide a critical service for the journal, and more widely, for research publishing. The Associate Editors who comprise the Editorial Board are thanked for their ongoing efforts to manage the manuscripts and shepherd them through the peer-review processes. This is an incredibly important role and depends on the skill and efforts of a dedicated team. We appreciate these efforts and definitely do not underestimate the effort and professionalism of their role. In particular, I'd like to acknowledge Honorary Professor Paul Boon, who ended his long tenure with the journal, including most recently being a member of the Editorial Board in 2019 and having been the guest editor for the 50th anniversary issue (Boon 1999). We are also heavily indebted to the staff from CSIRO Publishing, who provide incredible support to the editorial board, the authors and

the reviewers. The journal is fortunate to be supported by a hard-working and professional team of people in CSIRO Publishing, stretching back 70 years. In thanking them all, I'd also like to make special mention of Ms Leanne Hamilton who has supported *Marine and Freshwater Research* for more than 31 years – this is an amazing contribution and it is with pleasure that I use the opportunity of this special celebratory issue to say thank you to Leanne from all her colleagues.

With these reflections and comments, I recommend this special issue of *Marine and Freshwater Research* to all those interested in marine, estuarine and inland water environments.

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