

CSIRO Publishing

FUNCTIONAL PLANT BIOLOGY

Continuing Australian Journal of Plant Physiology

FPB

VOLUME 29, 2002
© CSIRO 2002

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Published by CSIRO Publishing
for CSIRO and the Australian Academy of Science

www.publish.csiro.au/journals/fpb

Functional Plant Biology Editorial Report

"Thank you for the opportunity to review this fascinating investigation. The work was novel, well executed and certainly merits publication."

"There is excessive use of unnecessary abbreviations. Delete most of them! In one case the abbreviation is the same length as the direct wording and is therefore of no value."

"I do not wish to see this manuscript or any variation of it again."

"The manuscript is intensely boring to read. It appears to have been assembled hastily..."

"This is a poorly written paper. The senior author would do well to buy a copy of the book *How to Write and Publish a Scientific Paper*."

"The paper is perhaps the most comprehensive one dedicated to cover this important area of plant research to its entirety. It will be of great use for plant biologists interested in all aspects of phloem biology."

"I must admit that my biggest problem was a lack of any idea as to how to treat this type of manuscript, for it is neither fish nor fowl. Here I mean that it is neither a regular manuscript nor a true review."

"Word usage is not always ideal. And there are many other similar shortcomings."

"If it is to be accepted with minor revision the authors should indicate to the journal that they can/have located a suitable English speaker to correct the MS. It appears that the individual indicated in acknowledgements did not have sufficient impact."

"There is nothing new in the work. This area has been done to death in the past and it would be very surprising if anything new were to come out of this manuscript."

"You will see that I am recommending rejection. This was a difficult decision, as the science in the MS is sound, and it is well written (although 'over-thorough' in many places... I suspect it is a student thesis!) My problem is that it doesn't add much to the literature."

"Instead of going into lengthy and vague discussion about stomatal opening in response to sudden water deprivation, why not just measure changes in stomatal conductivity? I am quite sure that any Plant Science department has a porometer these days. Such measurements will take only half an hour! I want to see them in this paper instead referring to a paper from 1973."

"The last paragraph should be removed. It sounds very naïve for any plant physiologist. There is no doubt that it will take years and years before we understand the science behind the phenomenon observed (to say nothing about its physiological implications)."

Peer review, while not always kind, is the lifeblood of a reputable journal. Any peer-reviewed journal is indebted to its referees, who answer the call to review papers (usually) cheerfully, promptly and fairly. Peer-review gives a journal its crucial 'value-added' component, enabling us to produce a quality periodical. Thank you to all those who have reviewed manuscripts tirelessly for *AjPP* (listed overleaf). If anyone can suggest a legal and hygienic way to post caramel-filled chocolate koalas internationally as a 'thank you' to all referees, please let me know!

In 2001 *AjPP* published 1260 pages (again, our biggest year yet), including two very well received (and very fat!) Special Issues. These contained selected peer-reviewed papers arising from presentations at conferences on **Membrane Transport** and **Nitrogen Fixation with Non-Legumes**, held separately in December 2000. These Special Issues received a great deal of positive feedback, and will be a valuable resource to those with an interest in these areas for many years.

We will produce three Special Issues in 2002, arising from satellite workshops from the **Photosynthesis 2001** conference in Queensland, Australia, in August 2001. These Special Issues will cover **Carbon Concentrating Mechanisms, Crassulacean Acid Metabolism, and Light Stress in Photosynthesis**. Each of these Special Issues will contain papers from many prominent international experts.

Submissions in 2001 exceeded all previous records, and we received manuscripts from 37 countries. We had a large influx of new authors, especially from the USA, Japan, Canada, the UK and Israel. In many cases, this increase was a result of authors who don't usually publish in *AjPP* contributing a paper to a previous Special Issue in 1999 and 2000, and reporting that they enjoyed the experience of dealing with our Editorial team so much that they wanted to contribute a 'regular' paper!

Editorial Advisory Committees

Since the last editorial report, Dr Barry Osmond has retired as our Editorial Advisory Committee chair and left Australia to take up an appointment as Director at Biosphere II in Arizona. We are fortunate to be able to retain Dr Osmond's services on our International Advisory Panel. Associate Professor Tina Ofler has stepped into the position of the Editorial Advisory Committee chair, and Professor Hans Lambers is our ASPP representative. Membership of both the EAC and the IAP is listed on the inside front cover of each issue of the journal. We thank members for their ongoing dedication and commitment to the journal.

Why 'Functional Plant Biology'?

At the EAC meeting in February 2001, it was decided that *Australian Journal of Plant Physiology* would be relaunched as *Functional Plant Biology* in 2002. This progression

reflects the changing nature of experimental plant science research, with research previously falling under the heading 'Plant Physiology' now tending towards more applied agricultural research or more pure molecular work. The new title also more accurately reflects the journal's international authorship, readership and referees. To celebrate the relaunch, many new features will be introduced to benefit authors, subscribers and referees.

Electronic Handling of Manuscripts

FPB is committed to rigorous but sympathetic reviewing, prompt decision-making and rapid publication. We aim to complete the review process and have an acceptance decision to authors within 8 weeks of submission — recently this has been as low as 3 weeks from submission to acceptance! This aim has been aided by the implementation of a vastly improved electronic delivery system that encompasses manuscript submission, distribution to referees, referee reporting, and distribution of reports to authors. Many of you will have already tried our online 'Referee's Report Form' as referees, and many authors have already benefited from the speed with which we can return referee's reports for their revision. We constantly strive to improve the service to authors, referees and subscribers.

We thank you for making the *AjPP* a continued success, and look forward to your ongoing support of *FPB*, as both readers, authors and referees, in 2002.



Dr Jennifer McCutchan
Managing Editor



Suzanne Farley
Assistant Editor