

outlined in Walt Koenig's Treasurer's Report. The society was doing well financially, with an income of about \$60,000 US per annum. Profits would be used to establish a reserve and help the needy attend ISBE meetings. The report was approved by a show of hands.

4. Ken Otter and Mariella Herberstein gave the Newsletter Editor's report. Mariella is the incoming Associate Newsletter Editor (a new position), and will take over from Ken as Editor after a period of at least one year's transition. A new Associate Editor would then be appointed. The new editorial structure may allow the newsletter to have a broader scope.

Since the last conference, there have been 4 regular issues of the Newsletter and one special election issue, with a total of 80 pages. There were 18 book reviews, 2 commentaries, information on the 2004 conference and a report of a non-ISBE workshop.

Ken encouraged submissions of book reviews, commentaries, announcements and synopses of workshops for future issues. Upcoming events would also be announced on the Newsletter's web site – web.unbc.ca/isbe/newsletter. The Fall issue would include book reviews, including the first review of a non-English book, and reports from the 2006

conference.

Mariella suggested and sought ideas about the future of the Newsletter. She intended to survey members on ideas, and suggested that we might consider articles on research groups, a series giving practical advice for those early in their careers, and (as a counterbalance perhaps?) more humor.

Jack Bradbury thanked Ken for his ongoing efforts with the Newsletter, and Mariella for volunteering take over. Ken thanked the Society and its members for their support and Mariella for agreeing to share the burden.

5. Marlene Zuk asked for any other business. There were no concerns about the issues on the agenda, but the poor attendance at the business meeting prompted informal discussion about how this could be remedied, and so how more members could take an active role in the society. Ideas included better advertising, a more appropriate name (eg "society meeting" rather than "business meeting"), door prizes, etc. Please send Marlene any ideas!

Rob Magrath, ISBE Secretary

Editor-in-Chiefs' Reports, *Behavioral Ecology*

Outgoing Editor-in-Chief's Report

I recently heard someone airing the view that scientific journals will soon be redundant. Before long, they said, researchers will just post their manuscripts on their own websites, or on institutional websites, where they'll be accessible to all. We would then live in a world of readily available scientific information with no journals, no submissions, no reviewers, no editors, no publishers and, most importantly from this person's standpoint, no publisher's profits. (Of course the profits of Internet Service Providers would rise, but that doesn't matter as much.) Well, I don't know what the future holds, and our predictions will only return to haunt us. But I can't help thinking that, if researchers travel down this path, people would get together after a few years and, faced with the growing mountain of undifferentiated information looming over them, would say, 'Here's an idea. Let's group our papers into subject areas to make

them easier to find, and get them vetted so that readers have some assurance of quality. To keep it fair, the vetting can be done by members of our own research community, so everyone gets a shot at being both author and reviewer. Hmmmm, someone will need to oversee and organise all this. So we'll need editors, and people to publish the product. We could call the whole enterprise a *journal*.'

This tale is by way of making the point that, as we all know, scientific publishing is in a phase of rapid change. New developments combine the possibility of many novel benefits to readers and authors with powerful pressures to travel down untrodden paths whose end-points remain uncertain. Nonetheless, my strong feeling is that the basic apparatus of journals, submissions, reviewers and so on will not cease to serve an essential purpose. Against this background, I am

pleased to report that, since the period covered by the last EIC's Report in Autumn 2004, our society's journal, *Behavioral Ecology*, has continued to thrive. Let me start with some statistics, then move on to how the journal has been meeting the demands of the changing publishing environment.

The statistics reveal a journal in excellent health. In 2004, the number of submitted manuscripts was 382, up 5% on the previous year. In 2005, the number of submitted manuscripts was 415, an increase on the previous year of nearly 9%. The first half of 2006 saw a further rise, with 243 manuscripts submitted up to 30 June. To keep costs down, the size of the journal has been kept steady, with 142 papers published in 2004 and 143 published in 2005. The acceptance rate has likewise remained steady, being 30% in 2004 and 27-32% in 2005 (some 2005 papers are still awaiting final decision, which precludes the calculation of an exact acceptance rate for 2005 at present). However, if submissions continue to rise and the journal's size is to remain stable, the editors will inevitably have to reject a greater percentage of manuscripts. Despite handling considerably more manuscripts, the editors have managed to bring down the time between receipt of a manuscript and the first decision. On average, this interval was 67 days in 2004 and 61 days in 2005. Finally, *BE*'s impact factor has undergone a welcome increase. In 2004, the impact factor was 2.189 (having dipped from 2.473 in 2003), but in 2005 it was 2.943. This is the highest achieved by *BE* and puts the journal some way ahead of the two other journals with the most similar content, *Animal Behaviour* and *Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology*.

The situation as regards subscriptions is also generally good. In common with many journals, *BE* is experiencing a trend whereby subscriptions from individuals and from individual institutions are falling whereas subscriptions from consortia of institutions are rising. The fall in individual subscriptions almost certainly stems from researchers and students increasingly gaining electronic access to the journal via their home institutions. However, *BE*'s publisher, Oxford University Press, appears optimistic. It reports that the reductions in subscriptions from individuals and individual institutions are moderate relative to those experienced by other journals and appear likely to be offset by the rise in consortial subscriptions. In addition, access to *BE* has greatly increased as a result of OUP's Developing Countries Initiative, whereby people in developing countries are given free or subsidised access to a package of OUP journals. Furthermore, because of the way the prices of

subscriptions differ across individuals, institutions and consortia, the income from *BE* (which is split between OUP and ISBE) has been rising.

A key feature of the changing publishing environment is the leap in quality of online functionality. OUP has been proactive in introducing to the journal a number of improvements that this development has made possible.

Of course, the journal has had online submission and processing of manuscripts since the start of 2003. Foremost among the innovations is that, from November 2004, all accepted papers have received online advance publication roughly 6 weeks after acceptance. Since the online paper counts as the first official publication of the work and is citable via its DOI, this development has effectively eliminated the problem in the print-only era of lengthy delays occurring between acceptance and publication. In January 2005, we introduced a redesigned cover featuring authors' digital colour images. The result has been a succession of stunning colour covers that have greatly enhanced the visual appeal of the journal. Earlier this year OUP completed the digitisation of the back numbers of all its journals. In the case of *BE*, this digital archive (issues from 1990 to 1997) is now available free to all ISBE members. In addition, in April this year *BE* joined OUP's Optional Open Access scheme, whereby authors of accepted manuscripts are offered the choice of publication via either the traditional subscriber-pays model or an author-pays model. If take-up of Open Access publication is high, income to ISBE from the journal may be affected, so ISBE and OUP will be closely monitoring the scheme. Early indications are that take-up is not going to be high (there was a single taker between April and July 2006), but this may of course change. Finally, at the 2006 meetings of the Editors, Publisher and ISBE Executive, it was agreed that content of *BE* would be made free after 12 months from publication. It is hoped that these last two innovations will meet the demand by some funders for investigators to make their published research freely accessible upon or soon after publication.

Many people have worked extremely hard to deliver these improvements and to maintain the journal's high standards of production and scientific quality. In 2004, a total of 584 individuals reviewed manuscripts for *BE*; in 2005, this figure was 613. I offer grateful thanks to them all. I would also like to record thanks to Caitlyn Haase and her colleagues in the OUP Production Office in Cary, North Carolina, as well as our main OUP link, Cathy Kennedy, who is Senior Journals Editor at OUP in Oxford. In addition, I thank my Editorial Assistant,

Jenny Fulford, who is remaining with the journal as I step down as EIC. The journal's Editorial Board continues to act as an invaluable source of advice and support. I thank outgoing Board members Theo Bakker, Jonathan Newman and Mary Reid, and welcome with gratitude new Board members Mark Blows, Rebecca Kilner, Lotta Kvarnemo, Jutta Schneider and Bill Sutherland. Much of the work of the foregoing individuals is invisible to authors. By contrast, the work of the editors, necessary as it is, probably at times seems all too apparent. Faced with annual rises in submission levels, the editors have worked especially hard over the past two years, and deserve the thanks of us all. I offer particular thanks to

outgoing editor Marlene Zuk, and to the two editors who have joined us since the last EIC Report, Naomi Pierce and Mark Hauber. Thanks too to incoming editors Rob Brooks and Will Cresswell. Finally, I extend a grateful welcome to my successor as EIC, Mark Elgar. The journal is in the hands of an excellent team and seems well positioned to remain at the forefront of publishing in our field, whatever forms this takes in future.

**Andrew Bourke, Outgoing Editor-in-Chief,
*Behavioral Ecology***

Incoming Editor-in-Chief's Report

As Andrew Bourke reveals in his report, the journal has an enviable reputation and this is in no small part due to his outstanding contribution as Editor-in-Chief.

The success of any journal depends primarily on the quality of the papers we publish, and authors send their best papers to journals that make defensible decisions within a reasonable period of time. Andrew has been responsible for a number of important initiatives associated with the speed of the editorial process and, importantly, ensuring that the editors of *Behavioral Ecology* have similar perspectives on what makes a paper acceptable for publication. The submission rate of papers to *Behavioral Ecology* continues to increase; while this extremely satisfying metric reflects the reputation of the journal, it also creates non-trivial pressures on the time commitments and decision-making processes of our editors. We

shall expand the number of editors to ten, but any further increase may compromise our capacity to ensure a high level of consistency in our decisions. This issue becomes even more acute since there are no plans to expand the size of the journal, with obvious implications for the acceptance rates. A second challenge is to ensure that *Behavioral Ecology* leads the way in publishing both new perspectives in the field of behavioral ecology, and new applications of these perspectives to other fields of biology. The editorial team is currently exploring ways of addressing these challenges. In the meantime, I'd like to take the opportunity of thanking Andrew for his role as Editor-in-Chief; he leaves the journal in excellent shape and the society has benefited substantially from his very considerable time and thoughtful insights.

**Mark A Elgar
Editor-in-Chief, *Behavioral Ecology***



EXAMPLES OF TOOL-USE RARELY SEEN ON BBC WILDLIFE