



## EDITOR'S MESSAGE

# Journal Tweaks and Pet Peeves

You may have noticed in the first issue that I arranged manuscripts a bit differently from how they were presented in the past. In previous issues, papers were arranged largely by taxonomic groups. I deviated from that by grouping papers according to their topical focus. For example, those with a focus on habitat are grouped, as are those focusing on population, management effects, and the like. My reasoning is that many members of The Wildlife Society have interests that extend beyond just amphibians, reptiles, birds, or mammals. Interests extend to multiple taxa, thus a paper that discusses estimating survival rates of grouse might have interest to a professional with a focus on deer. I must confess that my other motivation is to perhaps expose those inclined to just focus on one taxon to a manuscript on another that might increase their perspective. Some papers could be included in more than one group and I might miss the mark on a paper and place it in the wrong category, but change incurs risk! The other tweak is to standardize the format of notes to be more similar to full-length articles. The format differences between the two were very minor and simply not worth the trouble of authors and editorial staff to accommodate.

If you have not noticed, the guidelines for authors have been revised such that they are current with our procedures for manuscript preparation and submission. The guidelines can be found at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/societyimages/jwm/JWMSGuidelines2011Final.pdf>. This revision has been in the works for some time now. Frank Thompson (my predecessor as Editor-In-Chief) and Dawn Hanseder (former *Journal* Content Editor) initiated the revision and put tremendous work into it. The current editorial staff—Anna Knipps and Allison Cox—and I simply took their draft and put the finishing touches to it. This revision was long overdue and I hope you will find it useful as you develop manuscripts for submission.

During my first few months as Editor-In-Chief, I have identified some recurring issues with manuscripts that I want to highlight. I suppose that they are my pet peeves. I am sure that every editor of every journal has their own, so I thought it useful if I share some, not all, of mine with you. Some of these may seem trivial, but that is somewhat inherent to a pet peeve!

1. *Acronyms*: Authors often overuse acronyms in the hope of saving space (especially for variable names), but the resulting paper becomes laborious to read. Consider this con-

cocted sentence from the results section of a fictitious paper. "The DSR of the SPOW in the ASNF was positively correlated with DFBA, PPCC, ABCD, and MLD, but negatively correlated with LVCA, GRHT, and ZYXW." I am sure that makes perfect sense to the author and perhaps to the reader who establishes a cheat sheet for reference, but it is pretty tough reading for most of us. Certain acronyms are firmly established (e.g., AIC, ANOVA, GIS) and should be used after being established the first time used in a manuscript, but please minimize the use of those specific to your manuscript. Let's try to avoid the alphabet soup! The tiny bit of space you save is not worth the annoyance to the reader.

2. *Important*: Authors frequently like to interpret results as being important to the species under study. More often than not, authors interpret variables that might be prominent in a model or those that have strong statistical relationships with some population parameter as being important. Whether or not they are indeed important is really a value judgment. The animal might know what is important, but we are just guessing.
3. *Management Implications*: I want to standardize Management Implications to be short, concise, and to the point. They should be the take-home messages that derive directly from your study. They are not an opportunity to extend your discussion or to speculate beyond the bounds of your data. One paragraph should suffice to get your points across.
4. *It is, there is, there are*: Avoid the expletive construction of sentences beginning with "There is," "There are," "It is." As a long-time mentor of mine counseled me, using such phrases just makes for boring reading.
5. *Higher/lower*: I prefer that you use greater/lesser to higher/lower when describing amounts in most cases. Higher/lower should be used to distinguish height references.

Again, this does not exhaust my list of pet peeves, but these provide examples of things that I strive to correct. Please make things easier for all of us by keeping these in mind as you develop your next manuscript for submission.

—Bill Block  
*Editor-In-Chief*