

Wildlife Biology proudly presents...

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Editorial

WILDLIFE BIOLOGY proudly presents ...

... its first issue! WILDLIFE BIOLOGY was born after long and heated debate within the Nordic Council of Wildlife Research, the joint body representing the five Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Professor Ingemar Ahlén tells us more about the »prehistory« of this journal after the Editorial.

We aim to produce a journal in the forefront of wildlife science, research, administration, management and conservation. We want to offer a new journal to a wide readership. There is no forum in the Nordic countries or Europe giving comprehensive coverage of all that is happening in the world of wildlife and game. Wildlife scientists and researchers have waited for decades for a journal of their own. Most administrators and game managers do not even try following up wildlife articles published in scientific journals, because nonscientist professionals cannot cope with their complexity and variety. We are trying to develop WILDLIFE BIOLOGY to meet also the standards of the reader who cannot afford the time and the money to glance through numerous journals. This goal is extremely ambitious, especially when maintaining high scientific standards is unquestionably the most important task of WILDLIFE BIOLOGY.

The high standard is guaranteed by our qualified staff: I can take pride in our team of Associate Editors; I know how the staff in the Editorial Office devote themselves to the success of the journal; and I trust in the unselfish work of leading scientists acting as referees. Every manuscript undergoes critical examination, and only those introducing important new progress are accepted.

We want to promote scientific wildlife management by publishing articles and ideas from different fields of research. We will not restrict ourselves only to articles based on a firm theoretical foundation and experimental work. In wildlife science we are not striving to advance theory alone, but must persuade theory to serve practice, i.e. to enhance the management and welfare of wildlife. This means that we shall also publish purely descriptive papers; however, they should be important high-quality contributions in their particular research fields.

Wildlife research is like a jigsaw puzzle; every single piece is important when aiming to complete the figure, and missing only a few pieces may lead to gross misinterpretations. Likewise, it is totally illogical to manipulate any wildlife species or its environment without first knowing the long-term effects of these efforts on the life-history of the species in question or on wildlife in general. Many wildlife species are rare or threatened, so it is often a very arduous job to collect pertinent data. Accordingly, it may not be wise to use rare animals as study objects when developing ecological theories; instead, a competent researcher should carefully select the most suitable species needed.

Personally, I would like to see included in WILDLIFE BIOLOGY results from management experiments, which have never been very common especially in wildlife ecology. Habitat and/or predator manipulation experiments, comparative studies on the effects of varying hunting yields etc., would be most welcome in the journal. It is easy to understand the paucity of these studies, because the areas needed are extraordinarily vast due to the large home ranges and small numbers of wildlife species; organising these experiments becomes extremely expensive, although absolutely necessary.

The Nordic Council of Wildlife Research is responsible for publishing this journal, but the forum offered by WILDLIFE BIOLOGY is open to anyone in wildlife research: we wish to attract ecologists, physiologists, geneticists etc. from all parts of the world to present their ideas and results to our readership. The first reactions have been most encouraging. We know that there is a strong demand for WILDLIFE BIOLOGY and it will surely find its niche in the jungle of scientific publications.

Harto Lindén
Editor-in-Chief