

Notes from the Editor

*Come gather 'round people, wherever you roam,
and admit that the waters around you have grown...
For the times, they are a-changin'.*

Bob Dylan, 1963

The Times, They are A-changin'

Indeed, some important changes to *California Fish and Game* have occurred in the editorial and publication processes over the past six years. First, we revised the format for manuscripts that are intended for this journal. We also have a rejection rate that is on an upward trajectory; in the past, many authors merely viewed *California Fish and Game* as a “last ditch” journal in which to publish material that had been rejected by at least one (and likely, several other) more “prestigious” professional journals. The Associate Editors and I have worked very hard to counter that trend, and we believe substantial progress has been made.

Following direction provided by higher authorities, we have successfully initiated electronic publication of the journal, and it is now available at no cost to scientists and other interested parties throughout the world. As part of that process, we have obtained an ISSN (International Standard Serial Number) for the electronic version of the journal, in addition to our existing print ISSN. Both ISSNs ensure that *California Fish and Game* will continue to be indexed by literature search services on an international scale.

In addition, the journal now sports color covers portraying one or more images of a species or habitat that is the subject of a paper in the current issue. Further, several new Associate Editors joined the editorial staff, and were invited because of their areas of expertise and abilities to network with potential reviewers, as well as their willingness to make objective recommendations regarding the merit of manuscripts that are received. Among those that have assisted this editor in the capacity of Associate Editor are Walter Beer, Cherilyn Burton, Liam H. Davis, James Harrington, Paul Hofmann, Peter Kalvass, Nina Kogut, Dave Lentz, Scott Osborn, Steve Parmenter, Laura Patterson, Kevin Shaffer, Levi Souza, Joel Trumbo, and Jeff Villepique. These individuals have worked in a concerted effort to enhance the quality of material published in the journal. As AEs, they have been responsible for seeking reviewers, distributing manuscripts, evaluating reviewer comments, synthesizing those comments, and making recommendations as to the acceptability of the manuscripts they handle. Ultimately, the final decision on acceptance rests with the Editor-in-Chief, but those decisions are greatly facilitated by input from the AEs.

A major change occurred with the retirement of Ms. Debra Hamilton who, over the past six years, served as Production Editor for *California Fish and Game*. After 27 years of state service, Debra retired on 3 September. She was a stickler for detail, and she and I worked diligently to provide the most error-free issues of the journal that we thought were possible, albeit none were ever perfect. Debra also dedicated her skills to enhancing the quality and appearance of the journal, and her interest and endeavors made it possible to move forward with electronic publication. Thank you, Debra, for your efforts, your professional approach to publication of *California Fish and Game*, and for all of the exploratory work you did on behalf of electronic publication

and the concept of print-on-demand, which I am hoping will become the norm.

Concomitant with this issue, Ms. Carol Singleton has replaced Debra as Production Editor. Carol is employed as a Marketing Specialist in the Office of Communications, Education, and Outreach, and has extensive familiarity with the technology and software used to produce the journal. Carol and I have worked to streamline the protocol for processing manuscripts that Debra and I established, and Carol has made a number of meaningful suggestions that will facilitate the process of turning an edited manuscript into a formal publication. Thank you, Debra, for a great run and thank you, Carol, for stepping up to support the continued production of *California Fish and Game*.

Finally, this will be the last issue published under my editorship. Together, the Associate Editors, the Production Editor, and the supervisors and managers within the Office of Communications, Education, and Outreach have strived for excellence in the production of the journal. I am optimistic that the incoming editor will continue in that tradition, and that he or she will be able to move forward with initiating print-on-demand and further facilitating electronic publication. Print-on-demand technology will enable individuals interested in obtaining hard copies of the journal to do so at no cost to the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Electronic publication has been much more difficult to implement than originally anticipated by its early advocates within the Department. Nevertheless, that technology facilitates the more rapid release and dissemination of information, although the process is more complicated than originally anticipated.

I have enjoyed serving as Editor-in-Chief and working to help resolve the many challenges that have arisen over the past several years. It has been a good run, and I wish the incoming Editor-in-Chief every success in ensuring that *California Fish and Game* remains California's longest-running, continuously published scientific journal.

Vernon C. Bleich, Ph.D.
Editor-in-Chief
California Fish and Game

ABOUT THE COVERS

FRONT.—Controversies surrounding the natural distribution of beavers (*Castor canadensis*) are abundant, but interest in the role of those large rodents in ecosystem function is increasing rapidly. On pages 281–240 of this issue, Jeff Baldwin explores the potential for beaver populations to play a meaningful role in mitigating climate-driven changes in California's highlands. Photograph courtesy of Steve Hersey.

BACK.—Water, always a subject of interest in California, has been the subject of many recent contributions to the literature on salmonid life histories. On pages 241–266, Michael Wallace and his coauthors explore the importance of stream-estuary ecotones in Humboldt Bay, California, to juvenile coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*). The upper photograph is of tidal brackish-water habitat in Lower Freshwater Creek Slough; the center-left image is of the freshwater stream-estuary ecotone in Martin Slough; an incoming tide from Freshwater Creek Slough at the mouth of Wood Creek is pictured in the center right-image; and in the lower photograph, a California Department of Fish and Wildlife and Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission field crew is pictured seining tidal freshwater habitat in Martin Slough. Photographs courtesy of Michael Wallace, California Department of Fish and Wildlife.