

13 September, 2017.

Dr. David Flores, President
SAREM
Dra. Cibele Bonvicino, President
SBMz

Dear Cibele and David:

I am pleased to submit a brief report on the editorial process of *Mastozoología Neotropical*. The data for 2011-2016 are final, whereas the data for 2017 are up to August 31.

General comments

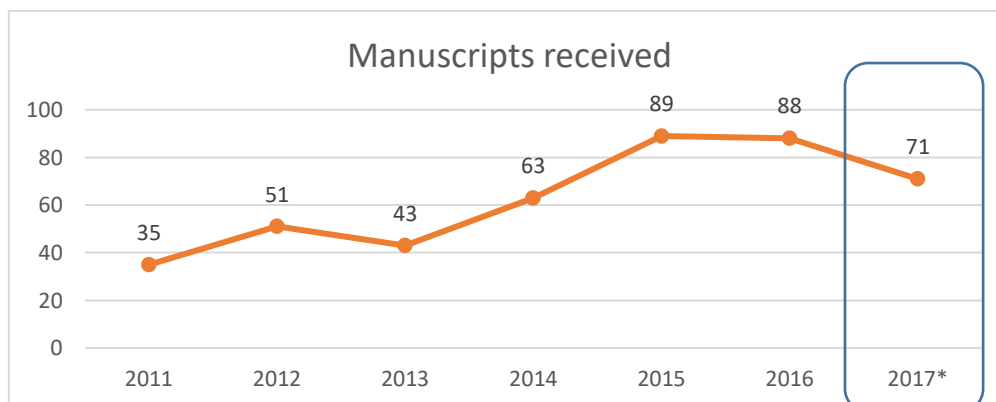
As you know, the agreement of co-edition of the journal between SAREM and SBMz was activated since the production of volume 23 (2016). From an editorial standpoint, the changes were processed without difficulty and are reflected since in all aspects of the journal, including both paper and online versions. Files in pdf format are now marked to facilitate automated indexing. The launching of a webpage for the journal separate from the SAREM page is the major step needed to complete the process and is in the hands of site administrator Gabriela Ruellan.

New guidelines for authors were adopted in March 2017. These include an updated description of the scope of the journal and adjusted a series of stylistic aspects, such as the elimination of postal addresses, greater standardization of the organization and in text references to supplementary online materials, and set limits in the number of figures and tables per manuscript. The journal citation style has been adjusted; it mimics *the Journal of Mammalogy* with the sole (and, hopefully, provisional) exception of the use of “&”, rather than “y”, “e” or “and” in citations, regardless of the language of the manuscript. The journal citation style is available for download and use in software such as Mendeley, Zotero, and Endnote. At the same time, we launched the “OJS” online system for receiving and managing submissions. This free software has its obscure aspects and limitations, but in general it has resulted in a positive change and is working well. If nothing else, it serves as a repository of manuscripts and editorial exchanges that does not depend on my downloads from an email and tracking annotations on a spreadsheet. At this point, only 5 manuscripts received before the adoption of the new system are waiting for an editorial decision.

We have continued the gradual process of rotating Associate Editors. In March 2017, Luis Borrero, María Busch, Carlos Galliari, Marcela Lareschi, Tadeu Gomes de Oliveira, Fabiana Umestu, and Susan Walker completed their terms, and Ariovaldo Cruz-Neto, Liliana Dávalos, Raúl González-Ittig, Cecilia Lanzone, Romeo Saldaña-Vázquez, Paula Taraborelli, and Roxana Zenuto began theirs.

Trends in the reception, evaluation and publication of manuscripts

The following information concerns standard research manuscripts (articles and notes) submitted by the initiative of their authors (thus excluding editorials, commentaries, special sections, etc.) between 2011 and 31 August 2017.



Submissions jumped to nearly 90 in both 2015 and 2016. In 2017, submissions have consistently been ahead of the corresponding numbers in previous years, so the final number is expected to be similar or somewhat higher than in recent years.

The following table summarizes the results of the editorial process in recent years, by year of submission.

	2015		2016		2017 (31/8)	All	Resolved
Total without extras	89	100%	88	100%	71	100%	
Rejected	48	54%	50	57%	30	42%	61%
without review	30	34%	32	36%	16	23%	33%
based on reviews	17	19%	15	17%	12	17%	24%
without prejudice	1	1%	1	1%	2	3%	4%
Withdrawn	4	4%	2	2%	2	3%	4%
deadline not met	3	3%	0	0%	1	1%	2%
by authors	1	1%	2	2%	1	1%	2%
Accepted	37	42%	36	41%	17	24%	35%
Resolved	89	100%	88	100%	49	69%	100%
				Pending	22	31%	

The acceptance rates are lower than in earlier years as a result of a more demanding review process. Decisions are reached on a case by case basis, examining the scope and quality of each contribution. Acceptance and rejection rates are consequences of these processes, but there are no targeted rates. At the same time, as noted above, the number of submissions has increased, so we are accepting about the same absolute number of manuscripts per year.

In 2016, I reported reduced times for decisions for all outcomes, e.g., manuscripts rejected without review. The adoption of the online system created some glitches in this respect because some of the steps required to record and communicate a decision are obscure.

Focusing on manuscripts handled via OJS, the mean time to rejection without review was 13 days (18 and 8 days in 2015 and 2016, respectively); whereas the time to a primary decision after reviews was 52 days (94 and 70 days in 2015 and 2016, respectively). My interpretation is that there was some hesitation early on regarding the recording of direct rejections and, more generally, in handling processes through the new system, but that the overall efforts to ensure a reasonably expeditious review process are continuing to pay off.

As of August 31, 2017 (a month after the publication of the first issue of the year), there were 20 unpublished manuscripts accepted for publication. In recent issues, we have published 17-20 regular manuscripts per issue. More generally, we have a healthy number of accepted manuscripts at any point in time, so as to ensure the regular publication of each issue.

Trends in published articles and notes

In terms of language used in published manuscripts, there are no obvious changes in recent years. The table below shows the cumulative results since 2011 in published articles and notes.

Language of articles/notes 2011-2017a	%		Country of institutional affiliation of first author		
Spanish	118	53%	164	73%	Argentina, rest of Spanish-speaking Latin America, Spain
Portuguese	9	4%	42	19%	Brazil
English	97	43%	18	8%	USA, Australia, France, Germany, UK
Total	224	100%	224	100%	

English represents 43% of articles and notes, even though only 8% of these come from countries in which neither Spanish nor Portuguese are the main languages. Portuguese occupies a minor fraction of the articles and notes, even though almost 20% of these come from Brazil. On the other hand, authors from Argentina and other Spanish-speaking countries opt for Spanish in a sizable fraction of the cases.

In a recent editorial, Gabriel Marroig, José Priotto and I have argued in favor of an English-only policy for the future of the journal. I will not reiterate the arguments here, but the data show that sacrificing Spanish will be the more resisted aspect of that proposal.

The table that follows summarizes the distribution of publications by countries or regions, again based on the country of affiliation of the first author of each paper.

Country	Total	%
Argentina	90	40%
Brazil	42	19%
Rest of Latin America	73	33%
Other	19	8%
	224	100%

A significant detail is that Colombia is the third country represented in these counts and accounts for 12% of the total, corresponding to about 37% of the papers from Latin American

countries other than Argentina and Brazil. Thus, the authorities of SAREM and SBMz should consider negotiation the incorporation of the Colombian Society of Mammalogists into the editing agreement. Finally, 74% of the papers from outside the region come from the USA.

Special sections and issue

The second issue of 2016 (23:2) included a Special section of nine articles devoted to invasive mammals in Argentina, with Ricardo Ojeda acting as an Invited Editor. The first issue of 2017 (24:1) included a Special section of five articles devoted to the human aspects of mammalian conservation, with Erika Cuéllar acting as an Invited Editor.

SBMz and SAREM have approved our proposal to publish a special issue to commemorate the 25th anniversary of *Mastozoología Neotropical*. That issue will be edited by Gabriel Marroig, Eileen Lacey and Norberto Giannini, who are already working on its development. It will consist of concise perspectives on key topics in Neotropical Mammalogy, written in English and published online only. We hope to incorporate technical improvements in this online edition, with the ultimate goal of adopting them for all subsequent volumes of the journal.

Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to all Associate Editors, as well as, especially, to Silvina Pereyra, Gabriela Ruellan, José Priotto and Gabriel Marroig for their efforts in support of *Mastozoología Neotropical*.

Sincerely yours,



Enrique P. Lessa
Editor, *Mastozoología Neotropical*