

EDITORIAL

Adaptation and change are critical elements for survival in the modern world. The same is true for any scientific journal. Over the last few years, the RAFFLES BULLETIN has become one of the top journals on whole animal biology in the region and almost all the feedback we have received has been excellent. Despite this, we are not resting on our "laurels" as some weaknesses are still very apparent. Although we have had increased submissions of papers (many of which are of a very high quality) from an increasing number of authors, the RAFFLES BULLETIN is still viewed by many as an essentially taxonomic journal. One of the original objectives of the journal, however, had been to promote animal ecology, but papers in this field unfortunately, have been few and far between.

The executive editorial board sees this problem as a "shortcoming" which must be rectified. As such, plans are now under preparation to substantially reorganise the editorial board of the RAFFLES BULLETIN to reflect this new thrust. To this effect, we have co-opted a new staff member from the Department of Zoology, Dr. N. S. Sodhi, into the executive editorial board. Dr. Sodhi has published widely on animal ecology, ethology and conservation biology, and it is hoped that he will inject fresh ideas in this direction. New editorial board members are also now being actively sought to reflect the RAFFLES BULLETIN's drive to obtain more high quality ecology and conservation biology papers. We are hoping that with effect from the next issue (volume 44 number 2), the editorial board will be revamped substantially. With retirements and the influx of "new blood", we hope to be able to keep the journal relevant, up to date and hopefully, of increased significance to the scientific community.

With effect from the next issue as well, we will be starting a PERSPECTIVES column. Zoologists and ecologists (including members of the editorial board) will be invited to write pieces relevant to Southeast Asian whole animal biology which we hope will elicit discussion and the sharing of new ideas. As such, a forum page will also be started to deal with the anticipated influx of letters. Dr. Daniel Simberloff, the noted ecologist from Florida State University (USA) has kindly agreed to be the first contributor to our PERSPECTIVES column!

Simultaneously, the RAFFLES BULLETIN is also increasing its efforts to get more organisations and publications involved in abstracting and data-gathering services to list the journal and its contents. And, in keeping up with the times, we have also entered the electronic medium via the World Wide Web. These efforts, we hope, will help increase knowledge of as well as coverage of the discoveries published in the RAFFLES BULLETIN.

The success of the RAFFLES BULLETIN has been highly dependent on the services of the many referees we have called upon to help us over the years. Last year, we acknowledged their help by sending them reprints of the papers they had reviewed. We have decided that a better way would be to offer each referee 25 free reprints for a paper of theirs which is eventually accepted for publication in the RAFFLES BULLETIN. This will also help the journal get a wider selection of papers. This new policy will take effect for all referees after June 30th 1996. The policy of offering 50 free reprints for papers by members of the editorial board, however, remains unchanged.

There are also big changes occurring in the Faculty of Science, National University of Singapore. By mid-1996, the Departments of Zoology and Botany would have merged to form a School of Biological Sciences, the integration intended to result in more effective research and teaching. The RAFFLES BULLETIN, presently published by the Department of Zoology, will nevertheless still focus on whole animal biology, only that it will then be published by the School of Biological Sciences.

The working philosophy and format of the RAFFLES BULLETIN, however, will remain unchanged. We still hope to have an acceptance to publication turn-over time of six months and without the constraint of page charges. The present issue (volume 44 number 1) has again exceeded 200 pages, and the same is anticipated of the coming issue in November/December. Two supplement numbers are also in the pipeline, one of false spider crabs and another on a catalogue of birds in the Zoological Reference Collection (former Raffles Museum).

All in all, there are exciting times ahead for the RAFFLES BULLETIN.

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RAFFLES BULLETIN OF ZOOLOGY