

Editorial

Jose C. E. Mendoza, Managing Editor

Happy New Year to all! The year 2016 has come and gone, and it has been almost a year since I took the helm of the journal. As always, there have been many notable events and developments – which I would now like to highlight. With its 64th volume fully published, the Raffles Bulletin of Zoology (RBZ or ‘the Bulletin’) celebrates its 28th year of existence, and has been fully electronic for three years (see Ng, 2010; Tan, 2014). The Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum (LKCNCNHM), publisher of the Bulletin, also celebrated the first anniversary (in April 2016) of its new state-of-the-art gallery and research building, located in the cultural hub of the National University of Singapore’s Kent Ridge campus. Not surprisingly, it has emerged as one of the essential go-to places for researchers, tourists, and local museum-goers alike.

The Bulletin itself has also undergone some changes in its staff. Tan Heok Hui completed his term as Managing Editor, a position that he has held with distinction since 2010 (Ng, 2010; Tan, 2011), and has passed the baton on to me (Fig. 1). Heok Hui has taken a challenging portfolio within the LKCNCNHM, that of Head of Operations, although he has kindly agreed to stay on as one of our Associate Editors for Ichthyology. As Managing Editor, Heok Hui has presided over the publication of five regular volumes (vols. 59–63) and 11 supplements (nos. 24–34), collectively comprised of 458 articles and monographs – some of which are now among the most highly cited in the Bulletin’s history (e.g., Kottelat, 2012, 2013). The output on the Supplements is particularly remarkable, with a wide variety of topics covered, from proceedings of scientific meetings and compendia on various field expeditions spearheaded by the LKCNCNHM, as well as important monographs on the diversity and systematics of selected taxa at the regional and global scale. Heok Hui was also responsible for bringing the Bulletin to fully electronic mode and for updating the format of its articles to the current form (Tan, 2015). The Bulletin’s yearly Journal Impact Factor, published by Thomson Reuters, has settled around the 0.9–1.0 range (Fig. 2), a respectable figure for a journal with a focus on Southeast Asian zoology and a strong emphasis on traditional taxonomy.

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Fig. 1. Left: Tan Heok Hui, Managing Editor (2010–2016); Right: Jose C. E. Mendoza, Managing Editor (2016–present). (Photo credits: Tan Heok Hui)

In all this, Heok Hui was ably assisted by Jeremy W. L. Yeo, who ran the RBZ machine like clockwork, attending to administrative, copy-editing, and production matters with efficiency since 2013. Jeremy moves over to the operations department of the LKCNCNHM this year. We wish Heok Hui and Jeremy all the best as they turn a new leaf in their careers. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to John S. Ascher and Leong Tzi Ming, our erstwhile Associate Editors in Entomology and Herpetology, respectively, who have finished their terms last year, for their highly valued service to the Bulletin.

I officially assumed the managing editorship of the Bulletin in April 2016, after a 3-year stint as Associate Editor for Carcinology. I consider it an honour to be in the company of those distinguished gentlemen who have held this post in the past, as well as a huge responsibility to continue and promote the tradition of excellence fostered by the Bulletin. Such big shoes to fill! Joining me in the editorial team is Hwang Wei Song, who has been appointed Assistant Managing Editor. Wei Song is my colleague at the LKCNCNHM specialising in the systematics of assassin bugs, and has been helping me in the management of the Bulletin as well as serving concurrently as Associate Editor for Entomology. Two new Associate Editors have also joined us: Evan S. H. Quah (Universiti Sains Malaysia) for Herpetology and Toh Tai Chong (National University of Singapore) for Marine Ecology and Conservation. We have also engaged a new Copy & Production Editor, Clarisse Y. D. Tan, who shall assist in copy-editing, production, and publicity for the

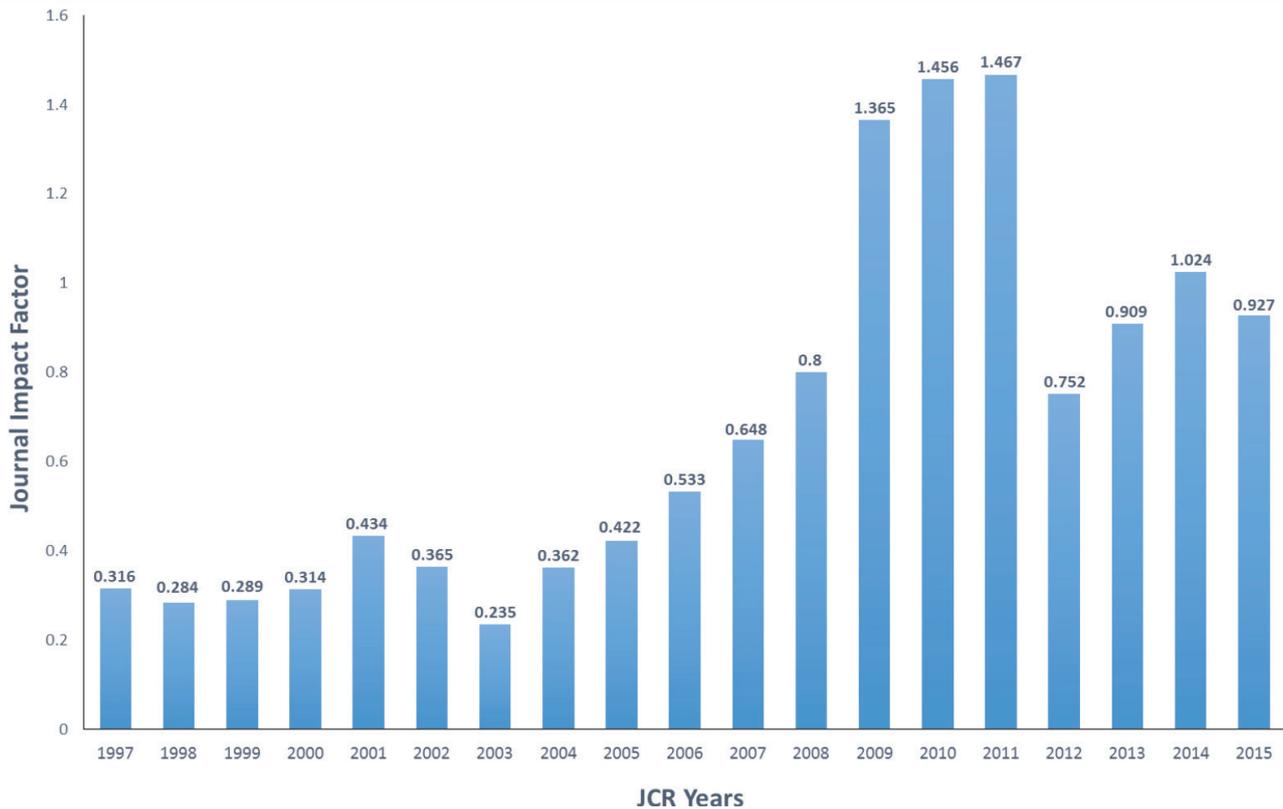


Fig. 2. Yearly journal impact factors of the Raffles Bulletin of Zoology for the years 1997–2015. Adapted from Journal Citation Report (JCR), Thomson Reuters.

Bulletin as well as for the LKCNHM's other publications. Welcome aboard, everyone!

The structure of the RBZ will continue with three main categories: i) Taxonomy and Systematics, ii) Conservation and Ecology, and iii) Perspectives. Perspectives articles are invited opinion pieces on the significant zoological issues of the day. Submissions for Short Communications are not accepted for the time being – the Editorial Board is re-evaluating this. Papers consisting solely of routine re-descriptions, checklists or new geographical records will not be published unless the editors regard them as of exceptional scientific interest. The Bulletin continues to be an open-access, peer-reviewed journal, with all published articles available free of charge to any person with an internet connection. Likewise, authors do not need to pay any publication charges for articles appearing in the normal volumes. I would also like to emphasise that the scope of the Bulletin remains focused on the fauna of the Southeast Asian region, although extra-focal papers may still be considered by the editors if they are of exceptional interest and have relevance to Southeast Asia. In such cases, I strongly urge prospective authors to accompany their submissions with well-written cover letters to justify their inclusion.

At this point, I would like to express my gratitude to Editor-in-Chief, Peter K. L. Ng, the members of the Editorial Board, and all the Associate Editors (Kevin W. Conway, Marcus A. H. Chua, Huang Danwei, Hwang Wei Song, Zeehan Jaafar, Sebastian Klaus, Jeffrey T. B. Kwik, Li Daiqin, Norman T.-L. Lim, Martyn E. Y. Low, Rudolf Meier, Tohru Naruse,

James D. Reimer, Frank E. Rheindt, Tan Koh Siang, Tan Siong Kiat, Peter A. Todd, Tran Anh Duc, and Darren C. J. Yeo), and to Chua Keng Soon and Kelvin K. P. Lim for their tireless support. Thanks are also due to our many reviewers, who have generously shared their time and expertise with us, and to the authors, who have trusted the Bulletin with their work.

In the year ahead and beyond, we look forward to a new, enhanced website, giving readers better access to our published material; a greater engagement in new (social) media; a bigger editorial pool and faster manuscript processing time; and continued excellence and quality in the articles we publish. We look forward to better things as the Raffles Bulletin of Zoology embarks on its 29th year this 2017.

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