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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

CHANGES

Members of the Cooper Ornithological Society and other regular readers of the *Condor* will have noticed a few changes in 2009, the journal's 111th year of publication. Perhaps the single most substantive change has been institution of the journal's first editorial board. I invite you to peruse the masthead and familiarize yourself with this august board. Its members do more than act as "mere" associate editors, however. Rather, these dedicated experts are "reviewing editors" who, whenever possible, prepare the reviews themselves. All submissions continue to receive a minimum of two reviews, but this process has cut the time to first decision substantially.

While at the masthead, note that the journal has a new editorial office based at the University of Oklahoma as well as a new managing editor based at the San Diego Natural History Museum. And, better late than never, the journal has gone fully to an electronic submission and review system, ScholarOne Manuscripts. Between addition of the board of reviewing editors and electronic submissions, the time from submission to print publication has also been cut markedly. Furthermore, the University of California Press, the *Condor*'s new publisher, has an "ahead of print" system that ensures quick dissemination of your research.

Yet these changes are only the ones made to date. Others are on their way, in the near term the most notable of which is that beginning with volume 112, the *Condor* will no longer publish Short Communications. Dropping one of the journal's staples since its inception may seem odd, but competition for journal space is higher than ever, and the Cooper Ornithological Society has opted to dedicate the *Condor*'s limited space to feature articles. Short papers that might otherwise have been treated as a Short Communication may still be considered, but such papers will have to synthesize data across species or systems or deal with a broad question. As of August 2008, short papers on single aspect of a single species' biology, however interesting, will no longer be considered.

In the future, the *Condor* will also begin to feature Correspondence, Perspectives or Commentaries, and review papers, including "mini-reviews"—briefer summaries of hot topics and current trends in ornithology. For each change made, I hope it is evident that our goal is to create the most vital print medium possible for rapid communication of key discoveries and important research in the field of avian biology.

SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY

Perhaps it is a sign of these hyper-competitive times, or perhaps the problem has always been here but in the past was rare enough to be dealt with easily, or perhaps we are growing more aware of the issue. Regardless, breaches of scientific integrity appear to be on the rise: plagiarism and fakery grab headlines routinely. Whatever the benefit the perpetrator perceives—be it fame or grant money or prestige—the chief cost appears to be the continued chipping away at the public's perception of science. In the United States, for example, it may seem that the public disdain for scientific data could not be eroded further, but I venture that with each revealed episode of deceit and chicanery, the naysayers win more converts. In this light, I would hope that it goes without saying that the *Condor* will not take matters of plagiarism or fakery lightly; indeed, it will not tolerate them at all. We will uphold the highest scientific standards, and we expect each of the journal's authors and reviewers to comply. Demonstrated failure to do so will result in the perpetrator's being barred from further submissions and having the offending papers pulled from on-line archives.

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