

Editorial

Source: Willdenowia, 39(1) : 5

Published By: Botanic Garden and Botanical Museum Berlin (BGBM)

URL: <https://doi.org/10.3372/wi.39.39123>

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“Willdenowia”, including its precursors, becomes 115 years of age in 2010.

In 1895 the journal was founded as “Notizblatt des Königlichen Botanischen Gartens und Museums zu Berlin”, initially to publish contributions on the institution’s collections and activities and research papers written by its staff and associated botanists. Soon it developed into an internationally recognised journal. In contrast to other journals edited at that time by the Berlin Botanic Garden and Museum, such as “Botanische Jahrbücher für Systematik, Pflanzengeographie und Pflanzengeschichte”, the “Notizblatt” was published inhouse. Until World War I, a special focus was on colonial botany, with contributions on economic and useful plants, mainly from the German colonies. In 1919, after the German Revolution, the journal was renamed “Notizblatt des Botanischen Gartens und Museums zu Berlin-Dahlem” and its focus changed more towards plant taxonomy, with a wealth of papers mainly by researchers of the Berlin Garden and Museum published. After the fatal destruction of much of the institution’s collections and facilities in World War II the “Notizblatt” had to be discontinued in late 1944 and could be revived only in 1953. The first post-war issue appeared as “Mitteilungen aus dem Botanischen Garten und Museum Berlin-Dahlem”, but has been continued with its present title commemorating Carl Ludwig Willdenow (1765-1812), Director of the Botanic Garden, first Professor of botany in Berlin and author of the fourth edition of Linnaeus’ “Species Plantarum”.

During the 1980s, the character of “Willdenowia” underwent considerable changes, as did comparable journals published by other botanical institutions, responding to changes in the international scientific world. “Willdenowia” became a peer-reviewed journal, its authorship international and papers were already increasingly published in English before this became mandatory for research papers in 1999.

The scientific world has since been changing at an accelerating speed, partly due to the revolution in information technology, partly due to the economisation of science.

Technically, “Willdenowia” has fairly well kept pace with the recent innovations in the publishing sector:

- Starting from 2004 an online edition has been published in parallel with the print edition and at the same

time online access to the issues back to 1996 has been provided.

- Since 2007 back issues with a moving wall of three years have been offered non-exclusively online through JSTOR back to 1895.

- Since 2007 the BGBM has been a member of CrossRef, and unique digital object identifiers (DOIs) have been assigned to all papers in “Willdenowia”, back to 2004.

- In early 2008 the online edition of “Willdenowia” became open access for all issues from 1996 onward.

With respect to the transformation of botany into impact factor driven plant science, reflecting the progressive subordination of the scientific sector under the rules of economy, “Willdenowia”, however, has somewhat dragged behind ongoing changes. To gain ground is therefore a major task for the near future.

First steps have now been taken:

The previous inhouse Editorial Council has been transformed into an international Editorial Board. Besides the three inhouse members seven new members from abroad constitute the newly founded Editorial Board (see preceding page). They will be accompanying and supporting “Willdenowia” with their advice and constructive criticism.

To enhance visibility and distribution, and thus to increase the impact of papers published in “Willdenowia”, dissemination of the online edition (from vol. 26 of 1996 onwards) has been outsourced to Ingenta-Connect. Open access is not affected by this step.

Starting with the new issue in your hand, appearance and style of “Willdenowia” have been refreshed. Changing to the larger, meanwhile common DIN A4 format better accommodates the increasing figure and tabular materials.

In contrast to recent tendencies in other journals in the field, the scope of “Willdenowia” continues to focus on the entire fields of plant, algal and fungal taxonomy and systematics as the core of biodiversity research and also to cover related fields such as floristics, plant geography and plant conservation. It is felt that there is a strong demand to publish monographic works alongside with hypothesis-driven studies. “Willdenowia” wants to serve both demands.

Norbert Kilian, Editor of “Willdenowia”