

EDITORIAL

“And now for something completely different: the Wildlife Biology in Practice”.
The quest for a new wildlife journal in “open-access” format.

This is the first issue of a new Journal on the field of Wildlife Research. Your first reaction to this first issue of **Wildlife Biology in Practice** will probably be a mixture of despondency and surprise. In fact, you might think of **Wildlife Biology in Practice** as yet another journal covering the area of Wildlife, although Journals entirely dedicated to Wildlife outside the American Continent are not particularly abundant. However, the innovation stands on the fact that you will be looking at the first Wildlife Journal published in “open-access” format. Furthermore, this Journal aims at increasing the number of submitted papers related with Wildlife in Europe (without prejudice to the other parts of the World), allowing at the same time, all Wildlife researchers to fully and freely access the journal.

This and the next two issues are a selection of papers presented at the XXVIth IUGB Conference and Xth International Perdix Symposium held in September of 2003 in Braga, Portugal. These events were organised by the Portuguese Wildlife Society, the Entre Douro e Minho Agriculture Directory, the Institute of Nature Conservation, the Universidade do Minho (Dep. of Biology) and the Universidade de Aveiro (Dep. of Biology). Both events were attended by biologists, foresters, veterinarians, modellers, managers, hunters, environmentalists, students and other interested parties. A total of 197 participants representing 27 countries attended both meetings, presenting 62 oral communications and 92 posters.

One of the most important things about Wildlife is that this discipline is not only the object of scientists, but it is also important for a large number of concerned citizens and institutions of modern society. Undoubtedly, the wildlife science is an interdisciplinary subject and thus the knowledge achieved must be widely distributed and available for all. Hunting associations, environmental associations, local organizations, tourism organizations, policy-makers, state agencies and local communities may profit from the increment of wildlife research. With so many people and institutions focusing their attention on our work, it is understandable why this journal represents such a challenge to us. Wildlife scientists are called upon to give their opinion about conservation and exploitation actions and management of wildlife resources. So, the only way to guarantee that our discipline is widely accepted in the society is to make a huge effort in the dissemination of our results, allowing a free access to all of those who need our published data. The “open-access” format is presently the best way to ensure Wildlife Science for all.

The existence of this new Journal is an attempt of a group of researchers to increase the availability of good scientific papers dealing with all aspects of Wildlife Research. It has been a challenge to make this journal a reality. The stakes increase as we hand over the first issue to the reader. The most struggling ordeals in the edition of this journal in the following years will be the establishment and maintenance of logistics and resources. However, we think that the biggest challenge is set for all wildlife researchers. In fact, we have only taken the first steps. It is now up to you to follow them, thus helping to implement the **Wildlife Biology in Practice** as a successful Journal.

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