

## **Systematic Biology Annual Council Meeting: 26 June 2004, Fort Collins, Colorado**

**Attending:** David Cannatella (President); Mike Sanderson (Past-President); Pam Soltis (President-Elect); Keith Crandall (Executive Vice President); Kevin Johnson (Program Director); Scott Edwards (Awards Chair); Chris Simon (Editor); Roderic Page (Editor Elect); Debbie Ciszek (Managing Editor); Richard O'Grady (Treasurer); Joel Cracraft (Trustee), and Councilors Paul Lewis, Priscilla Tucker, Kelly Zamudio, Anne Yoder, Francois Lutzoni, Bruce Baldwin, Shannon Hackett, John Wiens, David Hibbett, David Penny, Elizabeth Jockusch

**Not Attending:** Brad Shaffer (Councilor), Terry Yates (Trustee)

**Robert Harington & Liz Furgeson** Blackwell Publishers: Contract expires 2007 or 2008 with Taylor & Francis. RH & LF present options with Blackwell Publishers. Blackwell has 70% Society-owned journals. They specialize in such. Most prices are lower due to societies determining pricing. 98% return rate with society publishing. Blackwell works together as a partner in journal publishing. Interested in working as a global team both Blackwell and societies. Blackwell particularly wants to focus on evolutionary biology and has four (*Molecular Ecology*, *Cladistics*, *Journal of Evolutionary Biology*, *Evolution and Development*) of the top ten journals. They are very interested in *Systematic Biology*. They are making ecology and conservation biology a focus of media campaigns. Cannatella, Simon, and Ciszek had a pre-meeting with RH and LF, discussed open access, electronic options, society benefits even in the era of print journals demise. David Penny asks about open access. RH responds this is mainly in fields with large resources. The current paradigm is expensive for individual authors (on the order of \$1500 per paper). Richard O'Grady asks about online access to journals, which has been problematic with T&F due to technical difficulties of subcontractors. RH responds that members of society should get online access automatically. Membership doesn't need to support the entire journal. LF says they have set up journals through society sites instead of being required to go through Blackwell's site. Rod Page asks about supplementary material with systematic research (data sets, etc.) and the ability to house these on a website. LF suggests Blackwell is looking at such options and developing solutions currently. One option is a satellite website with direct link to supplemental material.

**James Rodman, NSF** Has been asked by the board to update the council on systematics at NSF and specifically on how NSF handles phylogeography proposals. JR reminds us that for the last year there have been three rotators for four slots – NSF needs rotators to serve the community at NSF! JR charges council to think of creative ways to encourage members to find ways to get more members to NSF. We are missing one voice in the halls of NSF. If you're interested, contact program officers or division directors at NSF. Presents handouts for consideration to publish with council minutes (not published here but available at [www.nsf.gov](http://www.nsf.gov)). Many activities at NSF bearing on systematic biology; Fiber, Microbial Observatories, Plant Genome Research, Tree of Life, Planetary Biodiversity and Inventory – no new money at the moment, REVSYS, DDIG. Phylogeography is handled by Population Biology, which now has two panels with one focusing on ecological studies and the other focusing more on core population biology

including phylogeography; phylogeography proposals involving multiple species are jointly reviewed by Systematic Biology panel. See updated NSF website for explicit description on new population biology clusters. JR discusses Linne as a “big bucks” potential to put funds into museums and taxonomy. Not a good time to ask for new dollars. Budgets are tight and NEON is getting up and running. The Evolutionary Synthesis Center is also getting off the ground in the fall. Therefore, it is a difficult time to ask for more money. But JR proposes minimally to pay attention to the research collections program at NSF. It has had the same budget for five years and needs the community support to help increase its budget. With the new cluster, PIs should contact program officers to help in assignment of grant proposals. Joel Cracraft suggests that Linne should be pursued as it is still 4-5 years out. If we do not push it, it won’t happen. Ecological community and biodiversity managers will benefit greatly through this initiative.

**Approval of Minutes:** unanimous

**Report on the Coordinating Council Meeting:** Pam Soltis reports on joint meeting. Presentation from Mark Courtney at NSF covered much of what Jim Rodman covered with the addition of a discussion of the OPUS (Opportunities for producing understanding through synthesis) potential program discussion at NSF. Tim Beardsly (editor of *BioScience*) discussed opportunities for evolutionary biology presentations in this journal. They are trying to broaden their image. Current meeting was discussed. Mike Antolin reported 1300 participants, 750 talks, 4000 authors. MA suggested that the societies should contribute to the development of a joint software to use for future meetings so the tool does not need to be reinvented each year. Recommendation that next year’s meeting develops software with longer-term idea in mind. The recommendation is for \$5000 (per society??) to contribute to this focus. Alaska meeting hosts are willing to develop such software. Secondly, need to designate a person or committee to interact with local organizing committee to develop program. Three options; 1) local committee, 2) society program officer or secretaries to develop, 3) some joint committee including local organizers and society designees. Upcoming meetings; 2005 Fairbanks Alaska 10-14 June (make travel plans early, website is up and running), 2006 Stony Brook 23-27 June, 2007 Auckland New Zealand, with proposals for 2008 Minnesota and 2009 Indiana University. Next year SSB is responsible for running this joint meeting.

**Symposia proposals:** Kevin Johnson presents proposals for symposia for next year’s meeting. Megan Porter “The Subterranean Realm: Model Systems in Evolutionary Biology”, David Baum “The Missing Piece of the Evolution-Education Puzzle: Teaching phylogenetics at introductory undergraduate and precollege levels”, Sydney Cameron “Mimicry as a source of diversity: Paradox revisited”, Chris Simon “Phylogeography: the interface between population biology and systematics”, and Adam Shedlock “Genome Analysis and Molecular Systematics of Retroelements”. Council ranks proposals to eliminate a few from discussion. Baum proposal ranks highest with Shedlock and Simon proposals for discussion. Shedlock and Baum proposals are accepted for next year. We need a new program chair as Kevin Johnson’s term is expiring.

**Election Results:** Keith Crandall presented election results; Scott Edwards President

Elect with the following new councilors (Jeffrey Boore, Sydney Cameron, Louise Lewis, Maureen O’Leary, and Scott Steppan).

**Award Results:** Scott Edwards \$12,000 budget for Graduate Student Awards. SE recommends an increase in budget for the awards. Presents award winners. Of 40 applicants, seven 2004 SSB Graduate Student Research Awards were made to the following individuals; Rachelle Adams (UT Austin), Ashley Egan (Brigham Young University), Micah Dunthorn (University of Massachusetts), Rachel Novick (Yale University), Elin Claridge (UC Berkeley), Jill Holliday (Florida State University), and Santiago Ramirez (Harvard University). Ernst Mayr award competitors presented in extended symposium. There were 18 abstract submissions with 15 invited to compete. Scott Edwards reports the winner of the 2004 Ernst Mayr Award was Christopher Witt from Louisiana State University with a talk titled “A re-examination of the phylogenetic evidence for molecular punctuated equilibria” authored by himself and Robb T. Brumfield. Keith Crandall reports on Mini-Peet awards and Travel Awards. Of a total of 26 applicants, four Mini-PEET Awards were made to the following individuals; Michael Medrano (University of New Mexico), Tiago Quental (Harvard University), Mike Dickison (Duke University), and Trevor Hodgkinson (University of Dublin). Of 24 total applicants for the Travel Awards, five awards were made to the following individuals; Ruxandra Bucur (Romania), Héctor Romero (Uruguay), Amadou Sall (Senegal), Damodara Rao (India), Claudia Silva (Mexico). The total budget for the Mini-PEET Awards was \$15,000 with \$14,600 allocated. The total budget for the Travel Awards started at \$12,000 but was increased by consent of the Executive Council to \$15,000, of which the entire amount was allocated. Scott Edwards presents concern about travel money to student award winners – future travel support should not be extended as it is impossible to budget in advance. Crandall presents Vicki Funk’s concerns about funding international folks. This includes the ability to deduct an annual membership fee from the award amount, a statement about US IRS regulations to be included in the award announcement, and the proposal of a “key” for each award winner detailing all the necessary paperwork for payment. Congratulations to all the SSB award winners on their well-deserved recognition!

**Financial Report:** Richard O’Grady presents updated figures for 2003-2004. Travel Award distributions not yet included.

***SSB Finances for 2003, as of December***

2003 Income:

Editorial Office (T&F)	\$25,000
Royalties & Memberships	\$45,931
2002 Annual Meeting	\$6,506
Misc.	\$3,892 (JSTOR, CCC, etc.)
<b>TOTAL INCOME:</b>	<b>\$81,329</b>

2003 Expenses:

Editorial Office	\$44,664
Officers Travel	\$2,000
Symposia	\$8,000
Awards	\$12,119
Mini-PEETs	\$16,920
AIBS Public Policy Office services on behalf of SSB	\$3,000
Misc.	\$1,500 (AIBS dues, NSCA dues, etc.)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>\$88,203</b>
<b>SURPLUS/DEFICIT:</b>	<b>(\$6,874)</b>
<b>CHECKING BANK ACCOUNT BALANCE:</b>	<b>\$129,969.78</b>

***SSB Finances for 2004, as of June***

**2004 Income:**

Editorial Office (T&F)	\$26,250
Royalties & Memberships	\$43,004
2003 Annual Meeting	\$10,633
Misc.	\$3,839 (JSTOR, CCC, etc.)
<b>TOTAL INCOME:</b>	<b>\$83,726</b>

**2004 Expenses:**

Editorial Office	\$26,800 (committed/disbursed so far)
Officers Travel	\$2,000 (projected, based upon prior years)
Symposia	\$8,000 (budgeted based upon prior years)
Awards	\$13,698
Mini-PEETs	\$14,600
Travel Awards	\$15,000
Accounting & Tax services	\$3,000
Website	\$5,000 (projected based upon agreement with Ruedi)
AIBS Public Policy Office services on behalf of SSB	\$3,000
Misc.	\$1,000 (AIBS dues, NSCA dues, etc.)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>\$92,098</b>
<b>SURPLUS/DEFICIT:</b>	<b>(\$8,372)</b>
<b>CHECKING BANK ACCOUNT BALANCE:</b>	<b>\$143,243</b>

**Trustee's Report:** Joel Cracraft reports that 2003 was a good year for SSB. The large cash amount is an aberration from the consolidation of multiple accounts. Most of that cash is now invested. Cracraft presented the need another trustee (the board of trustees typically has three members). Council votes unanimously to appointment of Vicki Funk as a third member of the Board of Trustees.

### *Trustee's Report*

The past year was finally a good one for the market. The Nasdaq ended the year up 50.01%, Standard and Poor's 500 closed up 26.38% and the DOW gained 25.32% for the year. The SSB reserve fund faired extremely well, experiencing a gain of 34.32% (\$131,063) over the value on 31 December, 2002. The Trustees are also happy to report that all but two of the society's accounts which were distributed over 7 accounts in 6 states have been consolidated into one in Albuquerque and the remaining two will be moved soon. The high percentage of the fund in cash and year's end reflects the fact that to consolidate our accounts some had to be liquidated which we did near the end of the year. All but 10% of our cash reserves were reinvested in mutual funds after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year so the current distribution is approximately 90% equities and 10% cash. The Trustees have chosen to maintain a balanced portfolio primarily of mutual funds instead of individual stocks. Although some consider this a conservative approach, we feel this offers the potential for the greatest amount of growth with the least amount of risk. The status of our investments and the distribution of funds as of 31 December, 2003 is provided below.

STATUS OF ASSETS	<u>31 DECEMBER, 2002</u>		<u>31 DECEMBER, 2003</u>	
	Market Value	%	Market Value	% of fund
Cash and Money Market	\$113,030	29.6	\$248,259	48.4
Common Stocks	\$268,882	70.4	\$264,710	51.6
Value of Reserve Fund	\$381,912		\$512,969	
% Change		-11.9		+34.32
Annual Allocation to Operations	0		0	
Net Reserve Principal	\$381,912		\$512,969	
Change in value for year	-51,535		+ \$131,063	
Change in value since 31 December, 2000			+ \$111,365*	

**\*Includes a single donation of \$30,000 which we invested per the donors request in the American Balanced A Fund. On 31 December, 2003 that fund had a value of \$ 31,609.**

**Editor Report:** Chris Simon presents Editor's Report. Presents proposal to increase institutional subscription rate to cover the costs of additional pages. Scott Edwards recommends shortening papers coming out in SB. David Penny suggests page charges after 10 pages to encourage shorter pages (and increase revenue). Shannon Hackett suggests that with a goal for an increasing society membership, submissions will continue to increase. Thus the limit of pages will continue to be problematic. Simon moves to raise our institutional subscription rate by \$9 in addition to the Taylor and Francis annual increase proposed as %7.2. This will allow for 32 additional pages per issue per year to be published and thereby reduce time to publication. Motion passes unanimously. Still some free subscriptions available for international researchers. Best student paper awards presented. Melissa James from Taylor and Francis offers book coupons for runner up for the best student paper awards. David Cannatella thanks CS for her efforts as Editor.

### **Editor Report**

**Impact Factor Statistics:** Impact factor statistics were released in June of 2004 for 2003. Systematic Biology's impact factor has risen from 7.112 to 7.740. The top journals in the newly created category "Evolutionary Biology" are: TREE, Systematic Biology, Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics, and Molecular Biology and Evolution, in that order. Because TREE is a review journal, we are once again the most highly ranked primary research journal in Evolutionary Biology. Note that the impact factor scores are comparable across categories.

**Transition to the New Editor:** Thanks again to Rod Page for accepting the position as editor elect. The transition is going smoothly. The system of one-year overlap works extremely well. Rod receives all new manuscripts and I handle revisions of articles begun in earlier years and fill the journal/work with the publisher. This gives Rod time to learn the job and me a gradual decrease in workload. I estimate that I will still be handling about 24 manuscripts in October. Other journal editors to whom I have spoken wish they had such an overlapping system.

Debbie Ciszek has agreed to stay on as Managing Editor (remaining half time) and this will help Rod tremendously since she knows how the journal runs and is familiar with the T&F Staff. Debbie's raise, approved by the executive council last year, went into effect at the beginning of this year. I have volunteered to continue to manage her salary through the University of Connecticut so that she can receive US health care benefits. She will receive regular cost of living raises each year and higher raises if Rod and the council decides she merits them. She has been doing a superb job. My duties would be very difficult without her.

**More journal pages needed for 2004:** Our contract calls for 104 to 144 pages per issue. We have gone over that in several issues early this year. Our current contract allows up to 864 printed pages annually including TOC, front matter and back matter. Here's the page count for 2004: Feb = 180; Apr = 188; based on proofs: June = 165; Aug = 134 (we withheld a couple of articles which we could put back in); estimate for Oct = 144 (we could withhold some articles but we would rather not). So, after October we will have used 811 pages. Our contract allows up to 864, so that leaves us 53 pages for December before the hypothetical extra charge kicks in. The index generally occupies approximately 35 pages and the minutes and officer's reports about 6 pages. We would like the council to approve spending \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for either 150 or 200 additional pages. If 200 pages are approved then we could raise the number of pages in August and October and speed the publication of several articles (the proofs are finished for a couple of extra articles). From the manuscript statistics at the end of this report you can see that the total number of submissions has increased every year from 119 (2001) to 139 (2002) to 160 (2003). The average time to return first reviews is 4 months and average time to publication is 12 months. I do not think that we should increase the number of issues per year (it would be detrimental to the health of our editor elect and managing editor). But I do think it would be good to increase our page budget from 864 to 1000 pages per year.

**Best Student Paper Awards for 2004:** The awards for this year go to: **Stéphane Aris-Brosou** 52(6) Least and Most Powerful Phylogenetic Tests to Elucidate the Origin of the Seed Plants in Presence of Conflicting Signals under Misspecified Models; and **Rachel Collin** 52(5) Phylogenetic Relationships among Calyptraeid Gastropods and their Implications for the Biogeography of Speciation. The awards committee consisted of Chris Simon and David Cannatella. Based on 21 eligible student papers.

**Taylor and Francis.** A new production editor, Jennifer Gunning, is taking over from Kim Shigo. We will be sorry to see Kim go because she was very responsive and an excellent partner in publishing. I can only assume that she is moving up in the company. Frequent job changes are an unfortunate aspect of the commercial publishing world.

The T&F UK Office requested that we consider a 15% one-time price increase. Our contract limits us to a 10% increase per year. I suggested to Melissa that we would not want to do that given the current climate of price-gouging large publishing companies and free access journals. Our current institutional rate is \$ 173. With a annual 10% increase this rate would be: 2005- \$190.30; 2006- \$209.33; 2007- \$230.26; 2008- \$253.28; 2009- \$278.61; 2010- \$306.48.

Our current T&F contract has a term of five years, "from May 21, 2002 to May 21, 2007 and shall apply to the five volume-years covering Volumes 52 through 56 of the Journal scheduled for publication in the years 2003 through 2008 (2007?)." This means that a new contract will need to be negotiated starting in early 2006 to give time to get comparative bids from other publishers. Twenty one student first authors were eligible for the award. The quality of all the contributions was exceptionally high and the decision was difficult.

T&F has preformed very well and the overall quality of the printing, layout and figures

has been high.

**Free Subscriptions.** Taylor and Francis has generously agreed to provide 50 additional free subscriptions of the journal to libraries in developing countries (bringing the total to 100 free subscriptions). We have had 83 requests so far. The Society has an additional 15 free subscriptions to give away to any individual (as stated in the contract); T&F sends me five additional issues each printing and sends Debbie one.

**Subscriptions and Dues.** In the first contract with T&F, the publisher agreed to handle the subscriptions and dues. In the current contract this agreement was changed (to help improve membership handling). The contract now reads, "The Society shall maintain its list of individual members and collect membership dues. To provide for the Publisher's fulfillment of individual subscriptions, the Society shall forward to the Publisher each year of this agreement an amount equal to \$21 for each full member and \$15 for each student member, as per Para. 3(g) herein. The Society shall also send the Publisher six times a year, at the times required by the publisher, mailing labels for the issues of the Journal to be mailed to individual subscribers." Burke Associates Inc. (BAI) is now handling our membership lists, receiving dues, and providing accounting services for tax purposes. This was supposed to occur at the beginning of 2003 but was delayed to the beginning of 2004. Because of our treasurer, Richard O'Grady, is also the head of AIBS (which uses BAI to handle AIBS business), BAI did not charge SSB a fee. Now that Richard is retiring as treasurer, SSB needs to negotiate a price for BAI services.

**Total Number of Subscribers: Institutional:** 686 institutional subscribers and 1 individual, non-member. The institutional rate seems to have increased from 671 in February of 2003 to the current 686 we calculate for the end of Feb 2004. The individual subscriptions are not inclusive of the free subs we are providing on your behalf to "needy" institutions (raised from 50 to 100). Despite our low cost, institutional subscriptions have dropped as follows: 908 institutional subscription (1998); 883 (1999); 2000 (869); 2001 (860); 2002 (842); 2003 (671); 2004 (686) (figures from Melissa James via Richard O'Grady). **Members:** pulled from the Burke Associates database for year end 2003 by Heide Scheiter-Rohland (for Keith): Emeritus 58; family 13; life 7; regular 1228; student 376; sustaining 8; Total 1690. (We promise them 1,300 full rate + student members in our contract.)

**Color photos and organism drawings.** The price for color figures (set by the printing company) has just gone down. Within an article, the price for the first page of color is \$900, and subsequent pages are \$450 (up to three). After four pages of color, the price is \$100 per page. The journal receives \$3600 to use for color illustrations for every volume year (not including the cover cost). We use our color budget to fund illustrations for authors who cannot pay for needed color. We have recently included a few color photos of organisms along with articles (submitted for the cover but not chosen). I like to encourage organismal photos and drawings because I know that all systematists appreciate them. I think it enhances the journal significantly. I encourage authors to include line drawings of organisms on their evolutionary trees. Also when there is empty space at the ends of articles (not apparent until the proof stage), I encourage authors to submit line drawings to fill the space. (In the next contract, it would be nice if the color budget increased each year.)

**Systematic Biology manuscript statistics:**

**International submissions:** In the year 2003, 51% of submissions came from outside the US, from 20 different countries. Once again, this is evidence that Systematic Biology is a very international journal. In 2002, 45% of submissions were from outside the US and in 2001, 62% of submissions were from outside the US. The first half of 2004 continues to demonstrate the international nature of the journal, with 67% of submissions from outside the US.

**Country of Origin of Submitted Manuscripts**

Country of residence, corresponding author	2001	2002	2003	2004 (1Jan-20Jun)
USA	45 (38%)	77 (55%)	79 (49%)	26 (33%)
Canada	8	14	7	6
Puerto Rico	1	0	0	0
Mexico	0	0	0	1
Columbia	0	1	0	0
Brazil	4	3	0	0
Uruguay	0	0	0	1
Argentina	2	1	2	1
UK	15	10	17	9
Ireland	1	0	0	0
Norway	1	1	0	0
Sweden	3	6	7	4
Finland	1	0	0	0
Denmark	1	0	2	1
France	4	6	8	4
Spain	0	2	5	2
Portugal	1	0	0	0
Belgium	1	1	2	4
The Netherlands	0	2	1	1
Germany	6	1	6	6
Austria	2	1	1	0

Switzerland	1	1	2	2
Italy	1	0	0	0
Greece	0	0	1	0
South Africa	2	1	3	0
Israel	1	1	1	1
Pakistan	1	0	0	0
India	0	1	0	1
PR China	0	2	4	2
Japan	4	1	1	1
Thailand	0	0	0	1
Australia	8	2	7	3
New Zealand	5	4	4	1
Fiji	0	0	1	0

**Manuscript processing time summary statistics:** Length of time to return first reviews and length of time to publication. Ms' are included only if they underwent full review and reviews were returned to the authors before 20Jun04. For some papers submitted in 2003, future publication dates were estimated. Symposia papers are not included because only part of the processing is done by the SB editorial staff.

Year Submitted	Time to return of first reviews (weeks)			Time from submission to publication (months)		
	2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003
<b>Mean</b>	16.6	16.3	16.8	13.4	12	12
<b>Variance</b>	69	55	46	38	18.5	17.6
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	8.3	7.4	6.8	6.2	4.3	4.2

**Current status of manuscripts:** This includes all manuscripts, including symposia and ms' returned without full review. The category "not revised" means the ms was accepted pending revision but the author declined to revise. "Withdrawn" means the author withdrew the paper before the reviews were completed.

\* "current" is as of 20Jun04

**Current status\* of ms' submitted in 2001**

Number of manuscripts submitted	119	
mean # weeks in review (stand. dev.)	15 (9)	
Number currently in review	0	0%
Number returned w/o review	14	12%
Number rejected	44	37%
Number not publishable in present form	1	0.8%
Number not revised	2	1.7%
Number withdrawn	1	0.8%

Number accepted, not yet published	2	1.7%
Number published	55	46%
Total rejected	62	52%
Total accepted	57	48%
Number Point of View submissions	30	25%
Number regular paper submissions	89	75%
Number POVs accepted, acceptance rate	16	53%
Number regular papers accepted, ac. rate	41	46%

**Current status\* of ms' submitted in  
2002**

Number of manuscripts submitted	139	
mean # weeks in review (stand. dev.)	13 (9)	
Number currently in review	0	0%
Number returned w/o review	17	12%
Number rejected	35	25%
Number not publishable in present form	2	1.4%
Number not revised	2	1.4%
Number accepted, not yet published	1	0.7%
Number published or sent to press	82	59%
Total rejected	56	40%
Total accepted	83	60%
Number Point of View submissions	37	27%
Number regular paper submissions	102	73%
Number POVs accepted, acceptance rate	15	40.5%
Number regular papers accepted, ac. rate	68	67%

**Current status\* of ms' submitted  
2003**

Number of manuscripts submitted	160	
mean # weeks in review (stand. dev.)	14 (7.5)	
Number currently in review	0	0%
Number returned w/o review	24	15%
Number rejected	48	30%
Number not publishable in present form	9	6%
Number not revised	1	1%
Number accepted, not yet published	22	14%
Number published or sent to press	56	34%

Total rejected	82	51%
Total accepted	78	49%
Number Point of View submissions	43	27%
Number regular papers	117	73%
Number POVs accepted, acceptance rate	21	49%
Number regular papers accepted, ac. rate	57	49%

**Editor-Elect Report:** Rod Page presents Editor-Elect report. Electronic set up of journal by October.

### **Editor-Elect Report**

#### **Associate Editors and Editorial Board**

Of Chris Simons' panel of Associate Editors, Keith Crandall, Cliff Cunningham, Nick Goldman, Junhyong Kim, Pete Lockhart, Bruce Rannala, Mike Sanderson, Ted Schultz, Jack Sites, Jeff Thorne, and Ziheng Yang all chose to step down at the end of 2003. Those of the "old guard" remaining are: Allen J. Baker, Thomas Buckley, Tim Collins, Dan Faith, Karl Kjer, Peter Linder, François Lutzoni, Gavin Naylor, Pam Soltis, Mike Steel, and, Jack Sullivan.

I have recruited the following new AEs: Frank Anderson, Olaf Bininda-Emonds, Ron DeBry, Marshal Hedin, Michael Lee, Paul Lewis, Norm MacLeod, Todd Oakley, Adrian Paterson, Kathleen Pryer, and Vincent Savolainen.

#### **Managing Editor**

Debbie Ciszek remains as managing editor, and has been very efficient in keeping me drowned in manuscripts. I tend to work from home in the evenings some nights, which minimises the effects of the time difference between Glasgow and Colorado.

#### **DOIs**

Early in the year the DOIs for recent issues of *Systematic Biology* online do not work (the system that resolves a DOI into a URL for the article did not recognise the DOI). This was apparently due to a problem with Metapress, the company that T&F use to provide online content. This has now been fixed.

#### **Manuscript Central**

The journal is moving to ScholarOne's Manuscript Central web-based manuscript submission system. A 32 page "Configuration Requirements Document" has been drafted by T&F, and was the subject of a conference call involving myself, Debbie Ciszek, and Vincent Lizzi (T&F) on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. It will probably take a couple more of these before the document is finished and a test system is ready to go.

### **Future matters**

Looming on the horizon is the issue of "Open Access". In other words, should *Systematic Biology* move to provide completely free access to the journal? For Scientific Societies the issues are complex. In May I had an informal chat with Catriona MacCallum (Editor of PloS), who is keen to promote Open Access as a model for Societies. She is, however, aware that the matter is not a simple one. The Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) site includes this statement:

“Society publishers-by clarifying the benefits of membership-should be able to provide Open Access to the journal's content without losing members. Stated differently, if a journal subscription provides the only incentive to society membership, then its relationship to authors and readers does not transcend the publishing function and the society may need to carefully reconsider its function and the value it delivers to its members. ”

This is the crux of the matter, and hence the issue of Open Access has implications beyond the journal itself.

### **Systematic Biology manuscript statistics**

**International submissions:** In the year 2004, so far, 67% of submissions came from outside the US, from 20 different countries. Once again, this is evidence that *Systematic Biology* is a very international journal. In 2003, 51% of submissions were from outside the US; in 2002, 45% of submissions were from outside the US and in 2001, 62% of submissions were from outside the US.

<b>Country of residence, corresponding author</b>	<b>2004</b>
USA	26 (33%)
Canada	6
Puerto Rico	
Mexico	1
Columbia	
Brazil	
Uruguay	1
Argentina	1
UK	9
Ireland	
Norway	
Sweden	4
Finland	
Denmark	1
France	4
Spain	2
Portugal	
Belgium	4

The Netherlands	1
Germany	6
Austria	
Switzerland	2
Italy	
Greece	
South Africa	
Israel	1
Pakistan	
India	1
PR China	2
Japan	1
Thailand	1
Australia	3
New Zealand	1
Fiji	

**Current status of manuscripts**

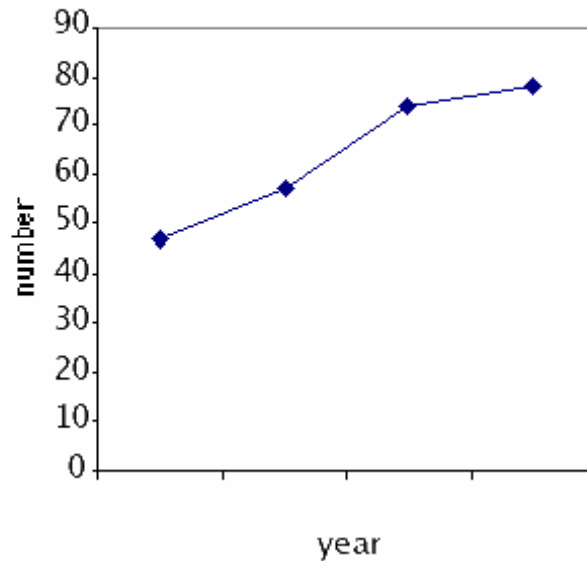
This includes all manuscripts, including ms' returned without full review. Note that the # weeks in review is biased to the low side because reviews that take longer are more likely to be ongoing, and therefore not represented in the statistic. "Current" is as of 20Jun04.

**Current status of ms' submitted in 2004**

Number of manuscripts submitted	78	
mean # weeks in review (stand. dev.)	6.2 (5)	
Number currently in review	35	45%
Number returned w/o review	19	24%
Number rejected	9	11.5%
Number not publishable in present form	5	6.5%
Number accepted, not yet published	10	13%
Number published or sent to press	0	%
Total rejected	33	77%
Total accepted	10	23%
Number Point of View submissions	13	17%
Number regular paper submissions	65	83%
Number POVs accepted	3	
Number regular papers accepted	7	

**Submission rate:** The number of papers submitted has increased by 66% from 2001 to 2004.

#papers submitted  
1Jan - 20Jun, 2001-2004



**SSB Website:** David Cannatella will appoint a committee to deal with the society website. Both society and journal websites need to be coordinated and directed by a smaller group. A committee will be composed of Cannatella, Rod Page, and one additional person.

**SSB Archive:** David Cannatella will explore options for SSB Archive, including materials at U of Texas and the Smithsonian. David Penny suggests not publishing minutes in journal but rather placing on Web site. Council unanimously approves web publishing of minutes if it satisfies IRS regulations for publication of financial statements.

**Data Sharing Society Summit:** Pam Soltis presents proposal from ESA on data archiving.