

Editorial

With this issue WILDLIFE BIOLOGY initiates its 5th volume. This may be a suitable time to check the status of the journal and to see whether we are fulfilling our intentions with the journal.

WILDLIFE BIOLOGY is the largest project in NKV's history; so far we have spent more than NOK 2.5 mill (equivalent to approximately USD 350,000) on it. Have our expectations been fulfilled and has the journal found its position amidst the steadily increasing number of journals? Although our view is severely biased, our answer is a loud roaring yes: WILDLIFE BIOLOGY has its merit and has found a vacant niche.

Our answer is based mainly on the reception of the journal in the scientific community. Since the establishment in 1995 the number of submitted articles has increased steadily. This has enabled us to keep a high rejection rate, securing publication of high-quality papers. With great pleasure we have noticed that papers published in WILDLIFE BIOLOGY are being cited still more often.

We have a very well-functioning board of Associate Editors who, undoubtedly, have been essential in making WILDLIFE BIOLOGY rapidly known and acknowledged in the scientific community. Despite being heavily engaged in scientific activities, they have devoted themselves unselfishly to the journal. We would like to express our sincere thanks to all Associate Editors, past and present, for their excellent work and great effort.

We do not mean to say that we have experienced no disappointments and problems in establishing WILDLIFE BIOLOGY. One of our intentions with WILDLIFE BIOLOGY was to create a suitable forum which would enable wildlife managers to keep informed about the progress in wildlife research. So far only few wildlife managers have subscribed to WILDLIFE BIOLOGY which shows that we are still far from fulfilling this intention. Another problem has been the financial situation of the journal. Our intention was to ensure rapid and skilful handling of manuscripts; for that reason an Editorial Office with a professional staff was established. As probably experienced by most publishers of journals, however, the costs involved in such a task are extremely high. Without the dedicated effort of the staff at our Editorial Office, we would have failed. However, in the long run we can not expect a journal like WILDLIFE BIOLOGY to be based on extremely high amounts of voluntary labour.

In 1998, NKV initiated a process to increase and improve the financial basis for WILDLIFE BIOLOGY in order to reduce NKV's commitment in the financing of the journal. As part of this process we implemented page charges. Reactions in the scientific community, however, showed that it was not ready to accept this practice in WILDLIFE BIOLOGY. Accordingly, the NKV board have decided to abandon mandatory page charges as of volume 5. The board would like to emphasise that we consider WILDLIFE BIOLOGY so important for the community of wildlife biologists that we are prepared to take the main responsibility for the financing of the journal, also in the years to come. This shows that we consider the launching of WILDLIFE BIOLOGY in the scientific community a success.

In the future, our main task will be to broaden the basis for the journal. For that purpose we need you, both as subscribers and submitters of manuscripts dealing with front-line research within wildlife biology.

Bernt-Erik Sæther
Chairman of NKV

Harto Lindén
Editor-in-Chief