

Editorial

A Celebration: JZAR's 10 year Anniversary

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Time flies when you're having fun. Keen followers of JZAR will have noticed this editorial is published in volume 10. We are celebrating our 10 year Anniversary of publishing the Journal of Zoo and Aquarium Research, JZAR to our friends and so it is time to look back at the last 10 years. The initial idea for developing 'our own' scientific journal resulted from the publication of the EAZA Research Strategy in 2008, in which the EAZA Research Committee identified routes to increase research activities and participation by the zoo and aquarium community. Although zoos and aquariums globally are involved in research, it was recognised that a considerable amount of that research was never published, and research reports often ended up on a dusty shelf. In addition, zoo and aquarium staff appeared to have limited access to scientific journals: full accessibility to many articles being expensive. To accommodate the need for sharing and publishing research results free of charge, JZAR was developed specifically as a double open access journal to serve the zoo and aquarium community as well as academic researchers involved in zoo research. Double open access, enables authors to publish, and readers view articles, both free of charge.

The first two issues of JZAR in volume 1 were produced in 2013 by an interim editorial board comprising members of the EAZA and BIAZA Research Committees and led by Geoff Hosey. The next volume was published under the expert guidance of the newly appointed Managing Editor, Eluned Price from Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust at Jersey Zoo. Eluned took up the first paid JZAR position at the EAZA Executive Office in late 2013 and was crucial in getting the fresh journal properly on its feet. Running and publishing the journal in those early years had many difficulties and challenges, primarily because JZAR was not hosted by an official publishing house (as this option was too expensive). All activities were fully reliant on volunteers within the zoo and academic communities.

JZAR further developed rapidly when Vicky Melfi took up the Managing Editor role three years later. Under Vicky's skilful leadership an efficient team of dedicated editors and volunteers was built. Progress included changes to the online journal system used to the publish articles, as well as new features on the journal website. In 2020 and 2021 a unique Digital Object Identifier (DOI) for each article was now included

on published PDFs and associated online information. The JZAR website also started offering options for sharing, liking and tweeting information on social media, as well as providing the facility to export different citation formats. Most recently JZAR now provides an 'online early' function to make accepted articles available pre-publication.

Overall, from 2013 to 2022, more than 280 scientific articles have been published in JZAR. The growth of the journal is clearly visible from the number of publications per year. Between 2013 and 2019 on average 6 articles were published per issue, about 24 per year. Starting in 2020 we saw an increase in the number of submissions, as well as an increase in the number of accepted publications. Now, each issue has on average of 10 articles published, about 40 articles annually. This boost in the journal's output required a new support structure. As of 2021, the editorial team was joined by Alice Doyle who provides day-to-day support as an Assistant Editor. The Editorial Board was expanded, and we have also started to organise regular meetings to discuss future developments and to further professionalise the journal. Most importantly, in this our 10th anniversary year of JZAR our team now includes three new paid positions in the editorial team. Alice Doyle who initially worked on a voluntary basis is now paid part-time, as is James Brereton who works as our typesetter. Harri Washington joined the team most recently as copyeditor.

So, what will the future bring to JZAR? Stiffer competition in the world of scientific publishing is not new, especially from MDPI journals which are popular with their short processing times, but they very recently created a new journal specifically targeting zoo scientists. However, such journals require authors to pay substantial fees to get their articles published; which puts them out of reach for many. Whereas the double open access model provided by JZAR, still supports and enables our community and is still the best concept in our opinion. But we do need to start investing more in the journal to stay competitive, to progress, be financially sustainable and further build upon successes in creating a more professional service to authors, reviewers, editors, and readers. I am convinced JZAR will still be around to serve you, the zoo and aquarium community, and will celebrate our next anniversary in 10 years from now.