

9-10 March 2018 Board Meeting Report for Publications, St. Louis, MO

The Publications Team is involved in the Society in numerous ways, but our main objective is supporting and delivering excellent publications that serve the botanical community, and through our efforts support the Society as a whole. The professional staff working on BSA publications includes Amy McPherson, Director of Publications and Managing Editor for *AJB*; Richard Hund, Project Manager for Publications and Production Editor of *AJB* and *PSB*; Beth Parada, Managing Editor of *APPS* and Assistant Editor for *PSB*; and Heather Cacanindin, Director of Membership, Marketing, and Subscriptions (and currently the Interim Executive Director of BSA). Sophia Balcomb works on a contract basis as Content/Assistant Editor for *AJB*. Our Director-at-Large for Publications is Sean Graham, now serving in his second term.

Publication Highlights

- **Partnership with Wiley, significant achievements**
 - Contract negotiation and transition from self-publishing to partnering with Wiley (!);
 - New home pages for both journals: *AJB*: [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/\(ISSN\)1537-2197](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/(ISSN)1537-2197) ; *APPS*: [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/\(ISSN\)2168-0450](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/(ISSN)2168-0450)
 - Entire back content of *AJB* digitized and available to members; content prior to 1997 to be sold to institutions by Wiley;
 - All recent issues of *AJB* brought over from HighWire, all *APPS* issues from BioOne.
 - New platform (Atypon) in development: will create a hub for BSA publications when this is “live” (sometime this spring);
 - There have been challenges along the way: the contract negotiations took longer than expected (contract signed July 2017), and the transition has been difficult, specifically with regards to production. This is largely due to the compressed amount of time to adapt to new systems, processes, and teams—both for us and at Wiley. But we think we have turned the corner!

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF BOTANY

Current Impact Factor: 3.05, up from 2.811

Average days to first decision = 33.3 days

No. of MSS handled in **2017**: 520 new submissions; 458 revisions

2016: 460 new submissions; 407 revisions

As of 28 Feb. **2018**: 82 new submissions; 103 revisions

Acceptance Rate in 2017: 42%

Out of 172 articles published in 2017, including “Highlights,” 33 articles (19%) were set as free and 22 (13%) were paid Open Access. This compares with 213 articles in 2016, in which 27 articles (13%) were set as free and 22 (10%) were paid OA.

Special Issues

- “Patterns and Processes of American Amphitropical Plant Disjunctions: New Insights,” led by Michael Simpson, Matt Guilliams, and Leigh Johnson, **November 2017**
- “Wood: Biology of a Living Tissue,” special section led by Jochen Schenk, **February 2018**
- “Using and Navigating the Plant Tree of Life,” led by Doug Soltis, Pam Soltis, Michael Moore, Emily Sessa, and Stephen Smith, **March 2018**

- “The Tree of Death” (clarifying the role of fossils in phylogenetic reconstructions), led by Gar Rothwell, Ignacio Escapa, and Mihai Tomescu, **Mid 2018**

“News & Views” section:

“On the Nature of Things” (OTNOTs) essay features, performance over the past 2 years:

- Top 5 Most Highly Cited (as of January 2018):
 - “The remarkable repeated evolution of herbicide resistance” (Feb. 2016), Regina Baucom (13)
 - “Pathways for making unisexual flowers and unisexual plants: Moving beyond the ‘two mutations linked on one chromosome’ model” (April 2016) Susanne Renner (12)
 - “New frontiers in the three-dimensional visualization of plant structure and function” (Feb. 2016), Craig Brodersen and Adam Roddy (10)
 - “Forest and landscape restoration: Toward a shared vision and vocabulary” (Nov. 2016), Robin Chazdon and Lars Laestadius (10)
 - “Unpacking a century-old mystery: Winter buds and the latitudinal gradient in leaf form” (June 2016), Erika Edwards, Elizabeth Spriggs, David Chatelet, and Michael Donogue (7)
- Top 5 Most Highly Accessed (as of January 2018):
 - “New frontiers in the three-dimensional visualization of plant structure and function” (Feb. 2016), Craig Brodersen and Adam Roddy (6701)
 - “The remarkable repeated evolution of herbicide resistance” (Feb. 2016), Regina Baucom (5187)
 - “Digitization of herbaria enables novel research” (Sep. 2017), Pamela Soltis (4472)
 - “Chasing unicorns: Nodulation origins and the paradox of novelty” (Nov. 2016), Jeff Doyle (4263)
 - “Herbarium specimens as exaptations: New uses for old collections” (July 2017), J. Mason Heberling and Bonnie Isaac (4063)

AJB went online-only in January 2017. Print-on-demand is an option with Wiley moving forward.

In 2018, Pam Diggle is beginning the 4th year of her 5-year term as Editor-in-Chief. New Associate Editors include: Craig Brodersen (Yale University), Cate Macinnis-Ng (University of Auckland, New Zealand), Georgiana May (University of Minnesota-St. Paul), and Simon Poppinga (University of Freiburg, Germany). For the current editorial board, see [AJB Board](#).

HighWire (former *AJB* Online Host) Items

- Our current contract ends on 31 October 2018; we are paying minimal fees for data storage but not sending new content there.

APPLICATIONS IN PLANT SCIENCES

Current Impact Factor: 1.492 up from 0.911

Average days to first decision = 29 days

No. of MSS handled:

- **2017:** 178 submissions (95 non-Primer Note)
- **2016:** 178 submissions (81 non-Primer Note)
- As of 26 Feb. **2018:** 28 submissions (16 non-Primer Note)

No. of MSS published:

- **2017:** 85 (54 non-Primer Note)
- **2016:** 95 (23 non-Primer Notes)

Acceptance Rate in 2017: 55%

Note that we published fewer papers in 2017 than in 2016, but a higher number (and even higher ratio) of non-Primer notes. A lot of Primer Note submissions are getting Sent Back to Authors or Returned Without Review.

Special issues:

- “Studying Plant-Pollinator Interactions in Changing Environments”: Special Issue Editors Diane Byers and Shu-mei Chang. **June 2017**
- “Green Digitization: Online Botanical Collections Data Answering Real-World Questions”: Special Issue Editors Gil Nelson, Pam Soltis and Shelley James. **February 2018**
- “Methods for Exploring the Plant Tree of Life”: Special Issue Editors: Jeremy Beaulieu, Matt Gitzendanner, Michael McKain, Norm Wickett, and Ya Yang. **March 2018**

The editorial board’s goal is to increase the number of methods papers published and to potentially phase out Primer Notes. While we have not reached this goal yet, progress has been made.

As of July 2015, the number of Primer Notes publishing per issue has been limited to six or fewer; this is because these tend to be lower impact articles.

Article Processing Charges (APCs) increase/Invoicing: Changes were made to APCs in fall 2016: a new category was added, with the BSA member category divided to differentiate between BSA members with an active membership for longer than two years (increased from \$350 to \$450) and less than two years (\$800); charges for nonmembers increased from \$1200 to \$1400.

Editorial Board: Theresa Culley’s second 3-year term as Editor-in-Chief started in August 2015. Two new Associate Editors joined the APPS board in 2017: Seung-Chul Kim (Sungkyunkwan University, Suwon, Korea) and Jill Wegrzyn (University of Connecticut, Storrs). Theresa received departmental funding in 2017 to support an editorial assistant, Benjamin Merritt, a graduate student in her lab. Ben continues to provide significant support for both Theresa and the editorial office, particularly in evaluating Primer Note submissions. The term for APPS’s new Reviewing Editor board started September 1, 2016. For the current Editorial Board, see [APPS Editorial Board](#).

PLANT SCIENCE BULLETIN

With Mackenzie Taylor serving as the Editor-in-Chief, *PSB* continues to be an important resource for BSA members and as a “calling card” to encourage non-members to join. The publication serves, in

particular, as a strong resource for the Society's initiatives in public policy and education. Once *AJB* and *APPS* are established on the new Atypon platform at Wiley, we may have more opportunities to better tie *PSB* to our other publications and publish news faster. Mackenzie works closely with Rich, Johanne, and Rob.

- *PSB* is printed three times per year (March, July, and October) rather than quarterly, to better coincide with the annual news cycle.
- Two challenges/opportunities concern the *PSB*'s future and its past.
 - 1) Our attempt to create a stronger online presence with quicker posting of news has been attempted with minimal success, in part because the platform for this is functional but not engaging. We also have limited staff time to devote to this. With better news outlets, blogs, and Facebook/Twitter feeds available to our members, we need to assess how to carve out our own niche to highlight the research and the concerns of BSA members.
 - 2) The other issue concerns past *PSB* issues. Although past issues are searchable at <http://botany.org/PlantScienceBulletin/issues.php>, members don't have an easy way to "flip" through them. We may want to consider scanning past issues as searchable PDFs and hosting them on the BSA site or a third-party site (e.g., JSTOR). These ideas are in progress and need further discussion.

Miscellaneous re: BSA Publications

1. OA / Author Pays model for *AJB*

Several factors enter into making articles Open Access (OA): funder requirements, availability of funds, author preference, etc. This presents challenges and opportunities for *AJB*, which is a hybrid model (subscription-based while allowing authors to pay to make articles OA). The percentage of authors willing to pay OA charges has increased steadily over the past few years:

2017: 13% paid OA content.

2016: 10% paid OA content

2015: 5% paid OA content

2014: 4% paid OA content

2. Social media presence

We use our social media platforms, press releases, and direct e-mails to spread the word about our research and articles. Our social media followers continue to expand each year.

Facebook: 24,500 followers (21% increase over last year)

Twitter: 5500 followers (23% increase over last year)

As for efforts, we continue to see the number of followers expand, and we promote our publications, conference, PlantingScience, and items of interest to our members and to the scientific community as a whole. The Wiley transition has provided the Altmetrics tool, which allows us deeper understanding of who is responding to our research, what kind of follower they are (professor, reporter, etc.), and where they're accessing our Twitter feed.

The main goal of BSA publications is to serve the mission of the Society: to promote botany, the field of basic science dealing with the study and inquiry into the form, function, development, diversity, reproduction, evolution, and uses of plants and their interactions within the biosphere.

Goals and Functions for Both *AJB* and *APPS*, outlined in the BSA Strategic Plan

- Increase impact factor
- Strengthen Editorial Board
- Attract and support high-impact authors
- Achieve fast turnarounds
- Publish special papers and special issues (most helpful if they appear early in the year) and follow up with regular articles if we want to strengthen these sections in the journals
- Define and establish our niches.