

INSECTA MUNDI

A Journal of World Insect Systematics

Insecta Mundi Reorganization proposal 2014: “Success is killing us” and “It is not magic”

Insecta Mundi continues to grow in popularity and the frequency of manuscript submission continues to increase. In short, the “Managing Editor” task has become too large for any single person. Our success is killing us. After discussions with the Editorial Board and CSE Board of Directors regarding production flow and processes, and it was agreed that NOW is the time to reorganize for Insecta Mundi’s future health.

Insecta Mundi is a journal completely produced by its members. All labor from manuscript writing to publication release is volunteered. I believe Insecta Mundi remains the ONLY totally free open access publication outlet for systematic articles. If we are to continue to produce and grow at our current rate, we must increase our staff so that no single person is overwhelmed.

There are several definable major functions in the publication process for Insect Mundi. Each function has several important activities. Most functions can be done anywhere in the world. The only requirement is the person has adequate computer access and programs to do the necessary work. These functions are:

- I) Authors and Reviewers**
- II) Chief Editor**
- III) Review Editors**
- IV) Layout Editors**
- V) Post Production staff**
- VI) Miscellaneous tasks**

We need assistance with all steps in the process, it is not produced by magic, but mostly we need to expand our base of Review and Layout Editors. Below is a discussion of the different functions listing the more major tasks of each function.

I) Authors. Authors are required to seek two quality reviews (#1 on the flow chart) and provide reviewer’s comments upon submission (#2 on the flow chart), as well as follow manuscript formatting guidelines. **Reviewers** frequently fail to provide truly fair yet critical and thorough reviews. In addition, some do not know journals have submission guidelines! Too frequently, authors fail to obtain quality reviews or to clean manuscripts adequately before submission, relying on the paid journal staff to do this for them. This is not acceptable, because Insecta Mundi has no paid staff. Authors need to work at copy editing for consistency and technicalities.

Insecta Mundi has grown to a point where the cleaning task is a full time job. Authors and reviewers MUST realize Insecta Mundi is free only because THEY are required to do the work asked of them. In the past, with the Managing Editor handling all manuscripts, it took only one problematic manuscript to disrupt the manuscript flow for all. In the future, if authors cannot help us help them, the manuscripts will be rejected.

II) Chief Editor. This role is vital to keep an organized flow of all manuscripts, manage and oversee all functions related to manuscript production and distribution, and act as liaison between the public and journal at both ends of the process. Because this is such a vital role, the Board of Directors approved a yearly stipend for this position. There also needs to be an assistant who can help fill in if the Chief Editor is unable. The tasks of this position include:

Receipt and Distribution. This task is a focal point for manuscripts or other journal related communications. Messages or queries regarding Center for Systematic Entomology membership, dues, information on journal production, etc., are answered or forwarded to appropriate parties. The Chief Editor can reject poor or inappropriately submitted manuscripts. If a submission is deemed adequate, it is routed to the appropriate Review Editor for consideration or assigned to another Review Editor if none are available for a specific subject.

Author/Members. Make sure one author on each paper is a member. This will take some coordination with the treasurer, and should be confirmed before sending a manuscript to the Review Editor.

Keep a current bulk e-mail address list. For sending regular notices to members, a bulk e-mail list needs to be kept up to date. This will require occasional coordination with the treasurer and bookkeeper.

Statistics of Flow. The Chief Editor keeps track of production statistics for reporting to the Board of Directors or members as needed. Example: average length of time between receipt and release, numbers of articles per year, or pages printed per year.

Organization of staff. This position keeps track of the staff and their roles. Asking for regular reports to confirm the entire process is working smoothly and that all necessary tasks are being done. Seeking help from others to find assistance covering roles as it becomes necessary.

III) Review Editors. With the increasing numbers of submitted manuscripts, Review Editors need to take on the entire editing process for each manuscript. Once received, they need to work with authors to clean and correct submissions to journal standards, have it approved for acceptance by another Review Editor or Editorial Board member, work with Layout Editors to create a page proof, have the proof approved by the author, and then send it on to be completed by the Layout Editor and Chief Editor.

Appendix 1 at the end of this discussion is a tabulation of the number of articles per taxa published since 2007. I propose we have 10-15 Review Editors covering various categories. Of course, if someone wants to volunteer to do more or split a subject out, that may be acceptable. Papers received for which there are no specific Review Editor will be assigned to some other Editor.

Past editors are available to help teach new Review Editors the process and answer questions. This task mostly requires organization and attention to details. Should a Spanish article be submitted, our two Spanish Editors are available to help any Review Editor who is not fluent in Spanish.

Review and Author Correction (#4 on the flow chart). Review manuscript for clarity, consistency, and conciseness. Make sure it follows journal style requirements (headings, citations, literature cited style, etc.) and that all items in the guidelines are followed. Check to see cited references are in the Literature Cited. Check plates and captions to confirm they are cited correctly and in a form that is easily usable by our Layout Editors. If the manuscript is deemed in poor shape, additional specialist reviews can be sought, it can be returned to the author to start over, or it is simply rejected.

When fixable problems are found, return manuscript to author to correct. The amount of work this takes depends on the condition of the manuscript upon receipt and the abilities of the author to follow instructions to correct the manuscript. If authors can not comply, the manuscript can be rejected.

Second Look (#5 on the flow chart). Cleaned manuscript sent to another Review Editor or member of the Editorial Board for approval. This step helps any Review Editor by having another editor check on a manuscript, thus ensure all manuscript are as good as possible, and can be accepted for publication. This should not be another full review, but a quick look to see that the manuscript is in good shape and to get a second opinion approving it is ready for the next step. This also help all Review Editors learn from each other and produce a more uniform product. Manuscripts can be approved, approved after minor corrections, or not approved and sent to some earlier stage of the process. If a manuscript has a fatal flaw that can not be fixed by the author, then it can be rejected.

Additional corrections (#6 on the flow chart). If problems are discovered by the second Review Editor, then the manuscript is sent back to the author to correct . This step is often not necessary. When all is corrected in an approved manuscript, it can be accepted for publication. The date received and accepted are now placed at the end of the Literature Cited in the manuscript.

To Layout Editor for page proof (#7 on the flow chart). The Review Editor sends the accepted manuscript and plates to a Layout Editor to work on documents creating the page proof, returning the proof to the Review Editor.

Page proof to Authors (#8 on the flow chart). Review Editor checks the page proof for any corrections, and sends the proof to the author for approval. Authors frequently have a few changes also. Author approved proofs are sent to the next step for completion.

Corrected proof to Layout Editor (#9 on flow chart). All corrections and comments from author and Review Editor returned to Layout Editor to correct and complete the page proof.

IV) Layout Editors. These editors do not need to be knowledgeable in the subject matter at all! They only need to use a layout program to create appropriate PDF files for page proofs and ultimately for archive purposes. However, they need to learn Insecta Mundi styles and be able to check manuscripts as they layout the articles. It would be great to have as many Layout Editors as there are Review Editors. Layout editors work with Review Editors and each other to complete the final publication(#7, 9, 10 on the flow chart).

Completion (#10 in flow chart). One Layout Editor will be designated as Head Layout Editor, and act as a second focal point to keep appropriate order in manuscript completion. Once a manuscript has a corrected, author approved page proof, the Head Layout Editor is contacted to assign the final release number, date for release, and register the publication with ZooBank (who provides the registration link). The number, date, ZooBank link, and any other comments are returned to appropriate Layout Editors to complete the cover and final PDF.

The final PDF is returned to the Head Layout Editor who works with the Webmaster to post each new publication. Once all links are confirmed working, the Head Layout Editor sends an e-mail notification of new articles to the membership on the stated date of release (#11 on the flow chart).

V) Post Production. These are individual tasks that happen after release.

WebMaster. This task maintains the primary website for the Center for Systematic Entomology, which produces Insecta Mundi. They maintain the webpostings of Insecta Mundi from which all others can access the articles, and updates the SQL database with the publication details, so that the PDF is ready on the correct date.

E-distribution and Archiving. This task involves several vital steps to **a)** ensure all PDF releases are posted by our hosting institutions and most importantly, **b)** ensure all electronic releases are archived by an ICZN acceptable third party organization (like Portico). This latter task is necessary to keep Insecta Mundi a valid journal according to the ICZN.

Printing and Shipping. This task involves the annual creation of the printed versions of the journal: the limited paper copies for archival institutions and DVDs for members. Because of our access to very inexpensive printing, this is the only task that needs to stay with the editorial staff in Gainesville, Florida.

Print on Demand. We wish to develop a relationship with a web-based print on demand company so reprints of past articles may be purchased. Once that relationship is established, it will need to be maintained as new articles are released.

VI) Miscellaneous Tasks. These are one-time tasks that can be done by one person or a small team. These are not regular duties, but things that crop up needing help. Some examples I can currently think of are:

1. Confirm institutional repositories have ALL papers posted, including *Insecta Mundi* publications back to 1985. We know of a few problems and need to alert the host institutions, possibly providing them the files if necessary.
2. Registering all nomenclatural acts in *Insecta Mundi* publications with ZooBank. As required by the ICZN, we currently only register each publication. All nomenclatural acts in each article should be registered also.

VII) Editorial Board. While this group is not active in every manuscript, they are vital for the journal. This body helps the Chief Editor make decisions or answer questions on major concerns related to the journal. They can instigate changes in manuscript production and policies. They are also available to approve manuscript for Review Editors. New members are chosen by current members, from editors who have gained a high understanding of editorial processes.

In Conclusion. This reorganization in *Insecta Mundi* manuscript processing will reduce the load on the Chief Editor by spreading out the true editing processes into the hands of more Review Editors and more Layout Editors, and establish additional volunteer positions to better handle post-publication needs of the journal. If interested, please contact the Chief Editor to discuss helping.

You can help keep systematic publications out of the hands of high priced publishers by helping your fellow scientists publish in *Insecta Mundi*. Please think about the discussion above, and seriously consider volunteering to keep *Insecta Mundi* a cutting edge journal! It's only an onerous task without your help.

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APPENDIX 1: 2007-May 2014 Insecta Mundi papers by taxa counts

These are seven year totals. Divide any number by seven to estimate how many manuscripts are submitted each year for any taxa. Taxa without a number only have one paper submitted in seven years. Do you think you can handle that many papers a year?

Arachnida = 4
Myriapoda = 22

Coleoptera lists (total=16)
Coleoptera Checklist regional = 11
Coleoptera Checklist/survey other = 5

Coleoptera: Scarabaeoidea (total=72)
Coleoptera: Geotrupidae
Coleoptera: Glaresidae
Coleoptera: Lucanidae =6
Coleoptera: Ochodaeidae =2
Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae =61
Coleoptera: Trogidae list

Coleoptera: Cucujoidea: (total =25)
Coleoptera: Coccinellidae =7
Coleoptera: Endomychidae =2
Coleoptera: Erotylidae =2
Coleoptera: Laemophloeidae =2
Coleoptera: Laemophloeidae =3
Coleoptera: Phalacridae
Coleoptera: Propalticidae =2
Coleoptera: Silvanidae =6

Coleoptera: Cerambycidae = 36

Coleoptera: other Chrysomeloidea (total =31)
Coleoptera: Bruchidae=3
Coleoptera: Chrysomelidae =15
Coleoptera: Curculionidae = 12
Coleoptera: Scolytid list

Coleoptera Other (total =44)
Coleoptera: Bostrichidae
Coleoptera: Buprestidae =2
Coleoptera: Carabidae =5
Coleoptera: Carabidae: Cicindelinae =8
Coleoptera: Cleridae =6
Coleoptera: Dermestidae
Coleoptera: Dytiscidae =2
Coleoptera: Elateridae
Coleoptera: Eucnemidae =2
Coleoptera: Heteroceridae
Coleoptera: Leiodidae: =3
Coleoptera: Micromalthidae and Jacobsoniidae
Coleoptera: Omethidae
Coleoptera: Pyrochroidae =2
Coleoptera: Salpingidae
Coleoptera: Staphylinid catalog
Coleoptera: Staphylinidae = 6

Isoptera: Rhinotermitidae

Dictyoptera: Blattaria

Mecoptera = 7

Odonata =2

Orthoptera (total =6)
Orthoptera: Acrididae =2
Orthoptera: Eumastacidae
Orthoptera: Gryllotalpidae =2
Orthoptera: Tettigoniidae

Diptera (total =13)
Diptera: Asilidae =2
Diptera: Ceratopogonidae =3
Diptera: Conopidae
Diptera: Culicidae
Diptera: Keroplatidae
Diptera: Stratiomyidae
Diptera: Tabanidae =3
Diptera: Tephritidae

Hemiptera (total =28)
Hemiptera: Aleyrodidae =4
Hemiptera: Aphididae =3
Hemiptera: Cicadellidae =2
Hemiptera: Coccoidea =7
Hemiptera: Diaspididae =3
Hemiptera: Fulgoroidea
Hemiptera: Miridae
Hemiptera: Lygaeidae
Hemiptera: Psyllidae
Hemiptera: Rhizoecidae
Hemiptera: Psyllidae
Hemiptera: Pentatomidae
Hemiptera: Plataspidae
Hemiptera: Tingidae

Hymenoptera (total =16)
Hymenoptera checklists =2
Hymenoptera: Apoidea: Anthophila =3
Hymenoptera: Braconidae
Hymenoptera: Crabronidae =2
Hymenoptera: Ichneumonidae =3
Hymenoptera: Pompilidae
Hymenoptera: Stephanidae
Hymenoptera: Syricidae
Hymenoptera: Vespidae =2

Neuroptera (total = 9)
Neuroptera: Myrmeleontidae = 8
Neuroptera: Nymphoptera

Lepidoptera (total =23)
Lepidoptera checklist =2
Lepidoptera: Crambidae =2
Lepidoptera: Hesperidae =6
Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae
Lepidoptera: Noctuidae =2
Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae =5
Lepidoptera: Pterophoridae =3
Lepidoptera: Riodinidae
Lepidoptera: Tortricidae

Trichoptera (total =10)
Trichoptera
Trichoptera list
Trichoptera: Dipseudopsidae
Trichoptera: Glossosomatidae
Trichoptera: Goeridae =2
Trichoptera: Helicopsychidae
Trichoptera: Odontoceridae
Trichoptera: Philopotamidae
Trichoptera: Polycentropodidae