

NEWS & VIEWS

The Center for Systematic Entomology plans to publish four Newsletters each year, but these are usually not kept as permanent records by libraries. Therefore, the some information is printed in *Insecta Mundi* concerning primarily changes in our journal as well as matters of record concerning the CSE.

Dr. David Wahl has been appointed a member of the editorial board of *Insecta Mundi*. He has helped with the in-house review of manuscripts, especially those using cladistics as a tool in evaluating data.

Dr. Michael C. Thomas, former editor of *Insecta Mundi*, also has joined the editorial board of *Insecta Mundi*, thus giving continuity to the editorship of our journal.

Dr. Ross H. Arnett, Jr. is currently the acting editor of *Insecta Mundi* and will continue in this capacity through volume 9, 1995. After that we hope he will be replaced by a new editor (see below).

Search for new editor continues. The CSE is looking for a new editor of *Insecta Mundi*. The candidates must have computer knowledge, and have access to a computer and a laser printer.

Journal management, following the schedule now in effect, will be explained to applicants. Most important is the ability to organize the work and to keep on schedule. A work schedule will be provided to those interested. The editorial board hopes the new editor will start with volume 10, 1996. Volume 9, nos. 1-2 (this issue) obviously has been completed. Type conversion is under way for volume 9, nos. 3-4. This issue will be mailed in October or early November.

Manuscripts have been received for at least volume 10, no. 1, 1996. Some of this is now being converted into type and will be available to the new editor.

A younger person active in publishing papers on entomological systematics is needed. The new editor should be familiar with cladistic techniques and be able to evaluate papers containing data treated in this manner.

The editor will be provided with necessary supplies and postage.

Those interested please write to or call:

Ross H. Arnett, Jr. Address: 2406 NW 47th Terrace, Gainesville, FL 32606; phone: (904) 371-9858; fax (904) 371-0962.

SOME QUESTIONS: IS IT BETTER TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE?

Several questions were asked at the last meeting of the Board of Directors concerning the functions of CSE as a World-class society. These questions are passed on to you. Yours answers, as they concern our Center, will be considered at future meetings of the Board, and appropriate action will be taken as needed.

Background.- Entomologists, as a group, are joiners. They join for one of two main reasons, sometimes for both:

1. For professional affiliation and to keep up to date in their field by reading the society journal.
2. For personal identification through membership, to be able to attend meetings, and (a small percentage) to be able to publish in the journal.

The abundance of societies devoted to entomological interests is so extensive that no single society obviously satisfies all entomologists.

Just having a society and a journal is not enough. It is not until a third reason for membership is introduced that a society begins to provide the necessary ingredients for success.

3. The third reason should be a desire to support and promote the field.

For a society to be successful it must receive in order to give the benefits members expect. It must receive this support through membership dues, donation of time, donations of gifts, and donations of intellectual guidance.

What does the society give?

The society must give its members professional (or amateur) status. Generally, but not always, one can become a member by paying dues. These societies benefit the non-professional by association with professionals. Most of us feel it is reasonable to have an open membership of this sort, but this is a misconception and it is detrimental for the professional, and may prevent their joining (guilt by association?).

1. Do you believe our current purposes are all they should be; are we doing the right things?

Most societies provide a peer-reviewed journal of dubious value. Publication is open to members (less than 10% publish). Articles are reviewed by an editorial board and by specialists selected by the editor before acceptance for publication. Seldom is the coverage of an article considered; usually only the format, spelling, style, and subject matter are important. An article is never turned down because it is of little interest to the bulk of the membership.

2. How do you rate the journal INSECTA MUNDI? Is the editorial board functioning properly? Should it be published quarterly, biannually, or annually, or perhaps 3 time a year?

Members of societies may think journals are a way to keep up to date, but the articles are far too specialized and incomplete for this. Most authors write for themselves and a handful of specialists. Generally, they do not provide enough information to integrate the new

(Continued on page 104)

(Continued from p. 64)

information into what has been published in the past. Critical information is left out. For example, a new species may be described leaving out characters needed to place the species in a genus, it is merely assigned to a genus with the assumption that it belongs there! Rare is the paper that enables the user to place the species in an existing key. Scratch journals as a benefit of membership. (In our case, free page charges is the most attractive benefit for authors.)

Personal identification through membership is different from professional status. Societies usually produce membership lists (we don't). Thus, a member may be found through the mails, by phone, and now by e-mail. This may be a benefit for specialists, and certain amateurs.

3. What does this contribute to the field? Would you like to have the membership list published?

Holding meetings is the greatest benefit a society can give, far more useful than specialized journals, but not because of the paper presentations. Symposia and poster presentations are usually well prepared and instructive. A good meeting must provide for informal meetings and hallway discussions. Let's face it, 10 minute paper sessions only provide plane tickets and are administrative nonsense at best.

4. Would you come to Gainesville or elsewhere to attend an annual meeting of the CSE?

No society can exist without free labor. The success of a society is entirely dependent on this free support, not by a handful of local members, but by a significant percentage of the membership. Unless there is a paid staff, most societies are run by the editor and treasurer. Members receive the journal and perhaps a newsletter. The treasurer deposits checks, pays bills, provides for mailing the journal and newsletter, and sends out membership notices. The president appoints committees, leads board meetings, writes newsletters, and checks the constitution to see if the society is following it. He also asks for committee reports.

5. Would you like a copy of the Constitution of CSE, and would you take part in promoting changes to improve it?

6. Should the irregular newsletter be continued? If so, will you contribute news? What else should be in a newsletter? Annual reports? Budgets? What else?

Originally local societies were formed to hold monthly meetings of the members. Some still do, and in entomological centers such as Washington, DC, Philadelphia, and on the west coast, these are successful. We do need to receive, so it is not only necessary for the membership to give, it is absolutely necessary for the success of the society.

7. Would you attend a monthly meeting in Gainesville? Daytime? Evening?

We have other activities. For example, we offer small grants and have a grants, gifts, and endowment committee.

8. What do you think we should do to promote this activity?

We have an annual election of officer. The nominating committee is entirely local, but as far as practical, we would like officers and board members to be representative of our membership.

9. Would you nominate officers if forms were sent?

We have set the membership fee based on our present membership and our activities. This, along with donations, seems to provide us with needed funds.

10. Is the membership fee about right; could it be increased to cover more activities (e.g., more grants) or is it too high and keeping out potential members?

Another activity involves the Lacey Act. We have a committee studying the effects of this act on systematic research.

11. Is this something of general interest to you, our members? Suggestions.

We hope to be considered a World-class society. Recently we have become a Direct Support Organization (DSO) of the Florida Department of Agriculture, and as such, received numerous benefits, including office and storage space, and the use of their facilities. However, this may make us appear to be a local society primarily serving the state of Florida. Even our name suggests this.

12. Is our name appropriate? Should this be changed?

13. Does our Direct Support Organization (DSO) status contribute to our goal of being a World-class organization?

If this analysis is correct, and for now, let's assume it is, where does CSE stand? Let us know by answering the above questions.

PLEASE SEND COMMENTS TO:

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