

EDITORIAL

Update from JEB and launch of Methods & Techniques

2010 was another good year for *The Journal of Experimental Biology* (JEB). Our 2-year impact factor remained high for a comparative physiology journal (2.72), with an average impact factor over 5 years of 3.254. We again received close to 1000 manuscript submissions, of which ~45% will eventually be published. Of the 55% of manuscripts that are rejected by the journal, approximately 10% are rejected prior to peer review; most of these editorial rejections are for manuscripts that are outside the scope of the journal, often because they have a more biomedical focus. The remaining manuscripts undergo peer review – a process that takes, on average, 40 days until an initial decision is reached. A similar amount of time is then spent on revisions, with an average total time from submission to acceptance of ~95 days. Unlike some journals, we try not to pressurize our reviewers too much – to allow enough time for serious reviewing. We feel that a well-conducted review process is an important step in the scientific process and benefits (almost) all manuscripts. Many authors spontaneously report that they view the final manuscript to be significantly improved as a result of the reviewers' feedback. Our editorial surveys also show that JEB authors consider time to publication an important issue but that this is less important than the quality of the peer review.

Another area highlighted in our editorial surveys is the need for somewhere to publish shorter papers describing new techniques or advances on current methodology. In response to this, we have launched a new article type: Methods & Techniques. The aim of this new section is to report significant innovative advances in methodology or data collection and analysis, preferably demonstrating the application of the new methodology to real physiological data, although we do not insist that a hypothesis is tested. Although shorter (<2500 words, with up to two pages of figures and tables) than traditional Research Articles (<8000 words, with up to four pages of figures and tables), Methods & Techniques papers will be subjected to the same rigorous peer review. Full details of manuscript requirements can be found on our recently revamped website (<http://jeb.biologists.org>). The first Methods & Techniques paper is published in the current issue (p. 17), and we hope that this new article type adds value to the journal.

We are introducing another new feature for 2011: Editors' Choice. Each month, we will select one article from those published during that month, which we will make freely available on the journal website, without a subscription barrier, for a period of 28 days from the time of publication. Each of the journal editors will choose at least one article over the course of the year, to ensure that the Editors' Choice papers reflect the huge breadth of topics covered by the journal. The first Editors' Choice paper –

Mechanics, hydrodynamics and energetics of blue whale lunge feeding: efficiency dependence on krill density – can be found on p. 131. Future Editors' Choice papers will be accessible from the journal home page (<http://jeb.biologists.org>) and Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Journal-of-Experimental-Biology/110771005628146>).

With a history spanning close to a century, JEB is still very much a classical journal with a large community of institutional and individual subscribers. However, the scientific publishing world is changing rapidly. Online-only subscriptions are becoming increasingly more important for the journal as the requirement for print copies declines. There is also more demand for deposition of articles within funding-body archives and institutional repositories, and we have a few authors opting for our 'open access' publication model (from 2011 onwards, all open access articles will be published under a Creative Commons License). JEB has very liberal access policies: 6 months after publication, all articles are made freely available online without a subscription barrier; in addition, articles in our 'special issues' are freely accessible on our website from the moment of publication. To ensure that authors can comply fully with the public access requirements of the major funding bodies, we offer a free PubMed Central deposition service for authors funded by the NIH, Wellcome Trust, HHMI and UK MRC. Authors funded by other bodies may deposit a post-print or final, accepted version of their article in a funding body archive or institutional repository 12 months after publication or as mandated by their funding body.

Editors and staff of JEB are aware of the fact that we serve a very distinct population of scientists. We realize that, maybe in contrast to other branches of modern science, our authors feel a genuine empathy for the animals they work with – and this is manifested in the papers we publish. We are proud to publish the results of your science and try hard to present your results in the best possible way. This is a major reason why we actively seek media coverage in the lay press for those articles we feel have an intuitive appeal for non-scientists. We also invite you to make suggestions as to how we could better serve our community.

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