
The Editor-in-Chief, At-Large Director for Publications, and Editorial Office of the *American Journal of Botany* are grateful to our dedicated Associate Editors, Special Issue Editors, reviewers, and authors for their thoughtful and diligent work over the past year.

We are pleased to report on a successful Volume 101, 2014, for the *American Journal of Botany*. We handled 580 new submissions plus 373 revised manuscripts, and published 191 articles. The total number of pages published in 2014 was 2188. Submissions were received from 53 countries, with the highest number from the United States, China, Brazil, Canada, and Japan. Twenty percent (20%) of our Associate Editors are from countries other than the U.S., and 35% are women. The average time to first decision in 2014 was 41 days, and so far in 2015, this number has improved to 30.5 days. Our overall acceptance rate for *AJB* (including invited papers for special issues) was 30% in 2014 (41% in 2013; 43% in 2012).

The Journal Citation Report was released by Thomson Reuters on June 19, 2015. The Impact Factor (IF) for *AJB* modestly increased to 2.603 from 2.463—our first increase in 5 years. We recognize that to improve *AJB*’s IF significantly, we need the help of the Associate Editors and BSA Board members to attract at least a handful of highly citable papers. Our main goal is to serve the science and to promote the work we publish in traditional (e.g., press releases) and modern (e.g., social media) channels. A few “bestseller” articles would be welcome as well.

**Advances in 2014**

In October 2014, we published the Special Issue, “Speaking of Food: Connecting Basic and Applied Science,” with special editors Briana L. Gross, Elizabeth A. Kellogg, and Allison J. Miller. This popular special issue helped expand the scope of the journal, and our monthly “*AJB* Centennial Reviews” highlighted and provided an updated look at important research published throughout the first 100 years of *AJB*. Early indicators show that both the Special Issue and these articles have not only been heavily read and well received, but are already being cited in the literature.

- **Karl J. Niklas** - The evolutionary-developmental origins of multicellularity
- **Brian L. Anacker** - The nature of serpentine endemism
- **Joseph H. Williams, Mackenzie L. Taylor, and Brian C. O’Meara** - Repeated evolution of tricellular (and bicellular) pollen
- **Norman C. Ellstrand** - Is gene flow the most important evolutionary force in plants?
- **Gar W. Rothwell, Sarah E. Wyatt, and Alexandru M. F. Tomescu** - Plant evolution at the interface of paleontology and developmental biology: An organism-centered paradigm
Advances in 2015
We owe a debt of gratitude to Judy Jernstedt for her leadership as Editor-in-Chief from 2005 through 2014. On January 1, 2015, Pam Diggle officially took over the role of Editor-in-Chief, but prior to that (throughout 2014), she conducted formal and informal research, through Skype interviews, a seminar, a professional scholarly publishing conference, and multiple conversations, to better understand the role of journals in today’s world and ways that we might strengthen AJB’s position in that crowded space. Under Pam’s leadership, we began the new year with new features: a News & Views section that includes (1) a new essay type titled “On the Nature of Things,” which provides succinct and timely insights and musings into various aspects of plant science (and is open access upon publication); (2) a monthly Highlights page that offers a quick glance at noteworthy articles in a particular issue (and is also free to view upon publication); and (3) a journal-page redesign, launching in July, to freshen up a look that has been in place for decades.

The "On the Nature of Things" essays have been heavily accessed so far this year, and much like the AJB itself, the topics have been multi-disciplinary:

- **Douglas E. Soltis, Clayton J. Visger, and Pamela S. Soltis** - The polyploidy revolution then...and now: Stebbins revisited
- **Sarah B. Yakimowski and Loren H. Rieseberg** - The role of homoploid hybridization in evolution: A century of studies synthesizing genetics and ecology
- **Jung-ok Heo, Pawel Roszak, Kaori M. Furuta, and Ykä Helariutta** - Phloem development: Current knowledge and future perspectives
- **Susanne S. Renner** - The relative and absolute frequencies of angiosperm sexual systems: Dioecy, monoecy, gynodioecy, and an updated online database
- **Roger D. Meienheimer** - The plastochron index: Still useful after nearly six decades
- **Christine M. Roche, Jennifer J. Loros, Kevin McCluskey, and N. Louise Glass** - *Neurospora crassa*: Looking back and looking forward at a model microbe
- **Christopher H. Haufler** - Ever since Klekowski: Testing a set of radical hypotheses revives the genetics of ferns and lycophytes
- **Tara A. Enders and Lucia C. Strader** - Auxin activity: Past, present, and future

**Advances in 2015**

- **Douglas E. Soltis, Clayton J. Visger, and Pamela S. Soltis** - The polyploidy revolution then...and now: Stebbins revisited
- **Sarah B. Yakimowski and Loren H. Rieseberg** - The role of homoploid hybridization in evolution: A century of studies synthesizing genetics and ecology
- **Jung-ok Heo, Pawel Roszak, Kaori M. Furuta, and Ykä Helariutta** - Phloem development: Current knowledge and future perspectives
- **Susanne S. Renner** - The relative and absolute frequencies of angiosperm sexual systems: Dioecy, monoecy, gynodioecy, and an updated online database
- **Roger D. Meienheimer** - The plastochron index: Still useful after nearly six decades
- **Christine M. Roche, Jennifer J. Loros, Kevin McCluskey, and N. Louise Glass** - *Neurospora crassa*: Looking back and looking forward at a model microbe
- **Christopher H. Haufler** - Ever since Klekowski: Testing a set of radical hypotheses revives the genetics of ferns and lycophytes
- **Tara A. Enders and Lucia C. Strader** - Auxin activity: Past, present, and future

**Advances in 2015**

- **Kenneth J. Feeley** - Moving forward with species distributions
- **Christopher T. Martine and Alison N. Hale** - Parasitism disruption a likely consequence of belowground war waged by exotic plant invader
- **Jannice Friedman** and **Matthew J. Rubin** - All in good time: Understanding annual and perennial strategies in plants
- **Andrew L. Hipp, Daniel J. Larkin, Rebecca S. Barak, Marlin L. Bowles, Marc W. Cadotte, Sarah K. Jacobi, Eric Lonsdorf, Bryant C. Scharenbroch, Evelyn Williams, and Evan Weiner** - Phylogeny in the service of ecological restoration
- **S. Luke Flory** and **Carla M. D’Antonio** - Taking the long view on the ecological effects of plant invasions
- **Christine E. Edwards** - Looking to the future of conservation genetics: The case for using quantitative genetic experiments to estimate the ability of rare plants to withstand climate change
- **Maciej A. Zwieniecki, Aude Tixier, and Or Sperling** - Temperature-assisted redistribution of carbohydrates in trees
- **Shelley H. Jansky, Julie Dawson, and David M. Spooner** - How do we address the disconnect between genetic and morphological diversity in germplasm collections?
Upcoming Special Issues/Papers/Commentaries

- “The Ecology and Evolution of Pollen Performance”: Special Issue Editors Joe Williams and Susan Mazer
- “Evolutionary insights from studies of geographic variation: Establishing a baseline and looking to the future”: Special Issue Editors Julie Etterson, Jesse Bellemare, Steve Franks, Chris Herlihy, Heather Schneider, Jason Sexton, Nicole Soper Gorden, and Jenn Weber
- “The evolutionary importance of polyploidy”: Special Issue Editors Mike Barker, Brian Husband, and Chris Pires

We are excited about these topics and interesting groups of papers and anticipate that they will bring new readers and interest to the journal. They also traditionally attract higher citations.

Subscriptions

The current renewal rate for AJB is around 95% of our 2014 year-end total. Overall, subscriptions are 84% online--only and 16% in print and online (for members and institutions). For institutional subscribers only, 56% are online--only and 44% are in print; for individual members, 94% are online--only and 6% are in print. [Subscriptions in print include online access.] Our print numbers continue to decrease: this year we are printing 700 copies (as compared with 790 in July 2014 and 892 in July 2013).

The board has been approached about an institutional subscription price increase for 2016. These amounts are as follows:
- U.S. / Canada & Mexico / All Other Nations online only: $800 (3% increase)
- U.S. online and print: $900 (8% increase)
- Canada & Mexico online and print: $930 (8% increase)
- All Other Nations online and print: $960 (4% increase)

The price increases reflect our focus on de--emphasizing print editions to help defray increasing postage rates and moving to an online-only format in the near future (probably 2017). Current print numbers indicate that we still have a demand for print among our institutional customers, although it is declining rapidly. For the July 2015 issue, we printed 360 copies for U.S. institutions, 100 for non--U.S. institutions, 97 for U.S. BSA members, and 87 for non--U.S. BSA members. This reflects an overall drop of 90 print copies from the July 2014 issue.

We successfully negotiated another consortium arrangement with The Charlesworth Group to maintain subscriptions in China for 2015-2017. We are in the second year of a 3-year contract with Globe Publications to increase subscription sales in India. With the help of this in--country partner, we are marketing directly to librarians and plant scientists through monthly emails and personal visits. As a result, our subscriptions in India have increased from 15 to 22 in 2014 and we are currently at 23 subscriptions for 2015. Globe is currently working on our behalf to secure a consortial deal in India, which would bring a significant increase to our subscriptions in that country. We are also looking into opportunities to increase subscriptions in Latin America working with Charlesworth. Finally, we will begin exploring the potential of contracting with an outside agency to help with sales of the journal.

Open Access
Regarding Open Access (OA), in which AJB content is available for free viewing either via promotional means or via OA charges paid by authors to make their content free: Current OA charges are $750 for BSA members whose institutions also subscribe to the AJB, or $1500 for non-members. For the period July 2014 - July 2015, 14.6% of AJB content was OA (30 of 206 published articles); of this, 54% (16 articles) reflected articles we made free, such as the AJB Centennial Reviews and "On the Nature of Things" essays, and 46% (14 articles) reflected articles paid by authors. The Botanical Society of America maintains copyright of the articles unless an author requests a Creative Commons license mandated by a funder.

In June-July 2014, the Botanical Society of America conducted a survey of its members. The results of the survey indicated that among BSA member respondents:

- Authors were evenly split between positive and neutral opinions of whether Open Access is important. (Just 17% said it was unimportant.)
- Authors said that their sources for paying publication and Open Access fees were, in descending order: institutional/departmental funds, fees built into grants, and self-pay. Just over 20% have no funds, and 16% said that they don’t pay for OA or don’t publish in journals that require publication fees.
- When asked what a reasonable amount to pay for Open Access would be, 35% said $500 or less, and 16% said between $501 and $1000. However, 44% said they had no additional funds for OA charges.

We would like to expand the number papers that are OA as a revenue stream, without jeopardizing the value that institutional subscriptions are seen to provide.

The current AJB editorial staff includes Ms. Amy McPherson (Director of Publications and Managing Editor for AJB), Mr. Richard Hund (Production Editor), Dr. Sophia Balcomb (Assistant Editor/Content Editor), Dr. Beth Hazen (Manuscript Editor), Mr. Richard Earles (Copy Editor), Dr. Larry Skog (Copy Editor), Ms. Elaine Firestone (Copy Editor), and Ms. Mary Des Chene (Copy Editor). Dr. Balcomb has supported our outreach by writing press releases for EurekAlert and working with authors to compose the monthly Highlights feature.

- Comments and suggestions are always welcome from readers, authors, reviewers, staff, and Associate Editors. E-mail us at ajb@botany.org.
- All communications (electronic, mail, and telephone) should be directed to the Editorial Office, which is located in St. Louis, at the BSA headquarters at the Missouri Botanical Garden. The address is American Journal of Botany, P.O. Box 299, St. Louis, MO 63166-0299; tel. 314-577-5112; fax 314-577-9515; email to: ajb@botany.org; www.amjbot.org).

6. Journal Metrics

Total number of manuscripts submitted to AJB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section/Category</th>
<th>2015 (as of July 6)</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anatomy and Morphology</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biomechanics</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2014†</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bryology and Lichenology</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0†</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell Biology</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dev. BioL and Developmental Genetics</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecology</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Botany</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0†</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evolution &amp; Phylogeny</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genetics</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mycology</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0†</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paleobotany</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phycology</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0†</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physiology and Biochemistry</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Biology</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pteridology</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0†</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reproductive Biology</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systematics &amp; Phytogeography</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>311</strong></td>
<td><strong>575</strong></td>
<td><strong>485</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

†Note: We discontinued the following categories in 2013—Bryology & Lichenology, Mycology, and Pteridology. 
AJB has published 111 articles so far in 2015 (through July), which compares with 108 articles through July 2014. Average no. of days from an article entering production to date of publication (This includes composition, copy editing, proofing/corrections): 33 days for 2015 (thus far); 40 days for 2014; 45 days for 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Diggle, Sean Graham, Amy McPherson, and Richard Hund
Editor-in-Chief, At-Large Dir. Of Publications, Managing Editor, and Production Editor

10 July 2015