

**BOTANY 2022, *AJB* Reports for Associate Editors
Background Information for the Annual Meeting
on Zoom
Tuesday, 12 July 2022
Confidential for the Editorial Board**

It has been another interesting and challenging year!

Highlights:

- Continued negotiations with Wiley over a new 5-year contract
 - As discussed previously, the push in scientific publishing generally, and Wiley specifically, is away from subscriptions and licensing to more fully Open Access
 - Ramifications for the journals and for the Society—mission and financial
- Journal Citation Report (JCR), released by Clarivate on June 28, 2022
 - The **2021 Impact Factor for *AJB* is 3.325**, down from **3.844** in 2020;
 - The **5-year Impact Factor is 4.014**, up from 3.657 in 2020;
 - Our **Immediacy Index is 1.195**, up from 0.872 in 2020.
 - The 2021 IF for *Applications in Plant Sciences* is **2.577** (up from **1.936** last year).

We sincerely thank the editors, reviewers, and authors who support *AJB* and its sister journal, *Applications in Plant Sciences*.

- *AJB* Reviews and launch of the *AJB* Synthesis Series and Prize
 - 1 Review published in 2020; 10 in 2021; 1 so far in 2022
 - New Reviews Editor Kasey Barton
 - *AJB* Synthesis Update
- BSA Strategic Plan and our Commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility
 - Botany360 webinar
 - ECAB
 - Abstracts in languages in addition to English
 - Resources for finding reviewers
- Journal-specific Highlights and Stats: see the Appendix

Wiley Contract Negotiations

We are working through the specifics, with the help of BSA Executive Director Heather Cacanindin, Clarke & Esposito Consultants, and legal counsel, and hope to reach mutual agreement on terms and conditions with our partners at Wiley this fall. The new contract anticipates that most of the income in the next several years will come from funding for Open Access rather than through subscriptions and licensing.

The BSA and *AJB* support the principles of Open Access: It's in our mission to support *botany*, and we acknowledge that communicating and sharing discoveries is essential to the research process. All authors want their research to be read, and the fewer restrictions placed on access to their papers mean that more people may benefit from the research.

What this also means in practical terms is that most of the income for the journals, which supports our activities as well as those of the BSA at large, will be more reliant on the (author paid) fees that cover the articles published in the journals (*AJB* and *APPS*). The business model for Open Access, at its core, relies on decreasing the costs of publishing and increasing the *volume* of output.

AJB is currently a hybrid journal, meaning we are a subscription journal with a Gold Open Access option, funded through Article Publication Charges (APCs) or through Wiley's Transitional Deals (these are important). All papers (OA or not) are freely accessible without a subscription after one year (going back to 1997, when the first issues of the journal were published online as well as in print). Current APCs for *AJB* are \$1400 for members; \$2000 for non-members.

APPS is a fully Gold Open Access journal, which launched in 2013. It is a home for methods, protocols, and other genomic resources papers. All authors cover APCs either through individual funders or Wiley's transitional/transformational deals; some waivers are allowed. For *APPS*, the current APCs are \$1800, with a 50% discount for BSA members.

Open Access is great if funds are available, but not so great if an author does not have access to funds. To mitigate some of this, Wiley is continually negotiating "transformational agreements," which provide institutions access to read Wiley's academic journals and offer waived publication charges for researchers at those institutions who publish articles Open Access in Wiley's journals. In addition to deals in Germany (Projekt Deal) and the UK (Jisc), there are many new deals announced in 2022, including in Mexico (UNAM), France (COUPERIN), Australia and New Zealand (CAUL), Ireland (IReL), Italy (CRUI), the Netherlands (Sikt), Republic of Korea (NST), Slovenia (CTK), Spain (CRUE, CSIC), and several institutions and alliances in the US; for more information on the options, see <https://authorservices.wiley.com/author-resources/Journal-Authors/open-access/affiliation-policies-payments/funder-agreements.html>.

Stay tuned, and please encourage authors at your institution to publish in *AJB*! We welcome your research, too, of course!!

Journal Citation Report:

For more detailed information, see the Appendix and Journal Citation Reports – *AJB2*.pdf.

***AJB* Reviews and launch of the *AJB* Synthesis Series and Prize**

Reviews:

We launched our Reviews series in *AJB* in 2019, following a Wiley-BSA strategy meeting in Chicago (and much discussion prior to that). The decision was based, in part, on an analysis showed that reviews contribute disproportionately to impact factors. We published our first Review in October 2020. To date, we have received 18 submissions and published **12** Reviews ([https://bsapubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/toc/10.1002/\(ISSN\)1537-2197.Reviews](https://bsapubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/toc/10.1002/(ISSN)1537-2197.Reviews)).

Jannice Friedman (Queens University) led the effort to set the guidelines and recruit authors through September 2021—we are grateful for her tremendous contributions. In fall 2021, we sent out a call for applications for a new Reviews Editor. Among several impressive candidates, Kasey Barton (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa) was chosen to serve a 2-year term that began October 1, 2021.

The current Reviews team, led by Kasey, with support from Emily Sessa, Pam Diggle, and Amy McPherson, is **actively recruiting contributions**. Please reach out with suggestions of topics and potential authors to the team at reviews@botany.org.

AJB Synthesis Papers and Prize

The call for applications for the [AJB Synthesis Papers and Prize](#) went out in December 2021. The new *AJB* Synthesis section will feature invited contributions by early-career scientists that concisely summarize and synthesize a focal research area or question. Contributions may focus on newly emerging areas or provide new perspectives on established areas. All Synthesis papers submitted, peer-reviewed, accepted, and published prior to July 1, 2023, will be considered for the first *AJB* Synthesis Prize.

We received 20 applications and requested reference letters for 13 of the applicants. A subset of 8 of these were invited to submit a 3000-word, single-authored synthesis on their chosen topic. From the published papers, one will be chosen to receive the \$2000 prize. The ad hoc committee organizing the effort includes Sean Graham (chair), Kasey Barton, Emily Sessa, Pam Diggle, Lucia Lohman, and Amy McPherson.

BSA Strategic Plan

In 2021, the BSA developed a 5-year strategic plan, approved by the membership, which is available on the BSA website:

https://botany.org/file.php?file=SiteAssets/home/BSA_Strategic_Plan_2021.pdf.

In support of the BSA's commitment to *outreach and collaboration*, the Editors-in-Chief of *AJB* and *APPS*, along with early-career researcher Brittany Sutherland and Amy McPherson, hosted free author webinars in May 2022 on “demystifying the publication process” as part of the BSA's new **Botany360** series (<https://botany.org/home/resources/botany360.html>). An article summarizing the main highlights is being published in the *Plant Science Bulletin* this summer.

In the spirit of *diversity, equity, and inclusion*, we work with an Early-Career Advisory Board (ECAB), with the leadership of Director-at-Large for Publications Emily Sessa. The ECAB is a group of early-career botanists who engage with and advise the editors of the *American Journal of Botany*, *Applications in Plant Sciences*, and the *Plant Science Bulletin* in several ways, including recommending timely topics for review papers,

participating in editorial discussions, organizing “Twitter takeovers” to highlight papers in our journals, and advising on issues of importance to the publications team. From over 50 applicants, 10 were selected to serve on the 2022-2024 Early Career Advisory Board for BSA Publications, based on diversity of interests and backgrounds. See <https://botany.org/home/publications/ecab.html>.

Also in the spirit of *DEI*: as of June 2022, although articles are published in English, authors have the option to include a translation of the abstract in other languages to be published with the article. This is a small step in an effort towards broadening accessibility to the content of our articles.

To help our editors *expand diversity, equity, and inclusion* when extending invitations to reviewers, please consider such community-created resources as

[Diversify EEB \(https://diversifyeeb.com\)](https://diversifyeeb.com),
[EEB early career reviewer list \(https://sites.google.com/view/ecrdatabase/home\)](https://sites.google.com/view/ecrdatabase/home),
and [Women in Plant Biology \(https://plantae.org/community/groups/women-in-plant-biology/\)](https://plantae.org/community/groups/women-in-plant-biology/).

If you have additional resources to share, please let us know.

We are also issuing more *open calls* for special issues to expand our author base, and *open calls* for people to join our editorial teams as Review and Recruiting editors for *AJB* and *APPS*.

Competition for Authors: A challenge for all scientific journals is how to attract high-quality papers. We compete with journals large and small, both commercial and society owned. **We have a mission to promote good papers in botany that serve our community. We need your help! Publish in your Society journals and encourage your students and colleagues to do the same! We cannot stress enough how important this is to the future of our journals and the health of our Society.**

Open Data: We support Open Data through our data availability policies and support of Open Science badges. Beginning 1 February 2021, *AJB* requires authors to deposit data in publicly accessible repositories and to clearly state this in a “data availability” paragraph in their articles. Previously, this was strongly recommended.

Appendix:

JCR, Impact Factor, and Journal Information

The Journal Citation Report* was released by Clarivate on June 28, 2022.

The **2021 IF for AJB is 3.325**, down from **3.844** last year.

Journal Impact Factor is calculated using the following metrics

Citations in 2021 to items published in 2019 (468) - 2020 (413)	=	881	=	3.325
Number of citable items in 2019 (119) + 2020 (146)		265		

The 5-year Impact Factor for *AJB* is 4.014, up from 3.657 in 2020.

5 year Impact Factor calculation

Citations in 2021 to items published in [2016-2020] (3,051)	=	3,051	=	4.014
Number of citable items in [2016-2020] (760)		760		

The Immediacy Index is **1.195**, up from 0.872 in 2020.

Immediacy Index calculation

Cites in 2021 to items published in 2021	208		
Number of items published in 2021	174		
		$208 / 174 = 1.195$	

AJB:

- In 2021, *AJB* handled 407 new submissions for peer review, and published 182 articles. Manuscript submissions in 2021 were down 15% over 2020. So far in 2022, manuscript submissions are up 9% over last year. The total number of pages published in 2021 was 2463. Submissions were received from 51 countries, with the highest numbers from the United States (126), China (73), Brazil (24), Japan (17), Mexico (17), Spain (16), India (12), and Canada (11).
- We have 58 Associate Editors from around the world: 41% of our Associate Editors

are from countries other than the U.S., and 47% are women. See <https://bsapubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/hub/journal/15372197/homepage/editorial-board>.

- The average time to first decision in 2021 was 47.4 days (longer than we'd like, though not surprising due to the continued fallout from the pandemic); 2020 was 44.4 days; 2019 was 34.6 days; and 2018 was 35.2 days. So far in 2022, this number is 35.6 days.
- Our overall acceptance rate for articles in *AJB* was 40% in 2021 (37% in 2020, 38% in 2019, 41.5% in 2018, and 38% in 2017).
- In February 2022, we welcomed our new Assistant/Content Editor, **Dr. Staci Nole-Wilson**, who responded to an open call for applications. (Marian Chau stepped down from this role in December 2021.) The Editor Assistant/Content Editor checks papers that are tentatively accepted to make sure they adhere to our final requirements before they are officially accepted and sent to production; edits author highlights; and fills in with routine tasks (checking in original MSS, assigning out revised MSS, sending routine reminders, etc.) when the managing editor is away from the office for extended periods.
- Pam Diggle is in the third year of her second 5-year term as Editor-in-Chief.
- In late 2021/early 2022 we welcomed new Associate Editors Kasey Barton (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa), Meghna Krishnadas (CSIR – Centre for Cellular & Molecular Biology, India), Kangshan Mao (Sichuan University, China), Hanno Schaefer (Technical University of Munich, Germany), Robert Schaeffer (Utah State University), and Jennifer Tate (Massey University, New Zealand).
- Retirements from the Board include Russell Chapman, Barnabas Daru, R. Geeta, Louise Lewis, Aaron Liston, Mark Ooi, and Beata Zagorska-Marek.

Special Issues

Special issues raise the visibility of a journal and demonstrate the breadth of our content, as well as (often) help our Impact Factor, by attracting high-quality and potentially well-cited papers. We thank all the Special Issue/Section editors and contributing authors for their hard work in making their Society journal as strong as possible.

2021:

- **Life Without Water**—a special issue on plant life in water-limited habitats and the diversity of ongoing research in arid-adapted plant groups, led by Karolina Heyduk, Michael McKain, and Olwen Grace, was published in February 2021 in *AJB* (<https://bsapubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/15372197/2021/108/2>); a companion special collection of previously published *APPS* articles was posted as a [virtual issue](https://bsapubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/toc/10.1002/(ISSN)2168-0450.LifeWOWater) ([https://bsapubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/toc/10.1002/\(ISSN\)2168-0450.LifeWOWater](https://bsapubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/toc/10.1002/(ISSN)2168-0450.LifeWOWater)) and promoted on social media. See <https://bsapubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/15372197/2021/108/2>.

- **Exploring the Potential of Angiosperms353, a Universal Toolkit for Flowering Plant Phylogenomics**—led by Bill Baker, Felix Forest, Lisa Pokorny, Steven Dodsworth, Jennifer Tate, and Sean Graham, this special issue was published in July 2021 issue (<https://bsapubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/15372197/2021/108/7>), and a joint “virtual” issue that includes related articles in *APPS* is available as well ([https://bsapubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/toc/10.1002/\(ISSN\)1537-2197.angiosperms353](https://bsapubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/toc/10.1002/(ISSN)1537-2197.angiosperms353)).

2022-2023:

- *Approaches to the Study of Quantitative Fitness-Related Traits*—led by Susan Mazer, Eugenio Larios (former ECAB-er), Ann Sakai, and Stephen Weller
- *Pollen as the Link Between Phenotype and Fitness*—led by Agnes Dellinger, Vini de Brito, Nathan Muchhala, Oystein Opedal, and Rocio Perez-Barrales

Production Changes

In August 2021, we transitioned both journals to Wiley’s New Journal Design (NJD)—a more structured PDF page layout that simplifies (and speeds up) production. In addition to changing our page design, the journals moved to a new production team in India, which has resulted in improved turnaround times. The NJD will also allow us to take advantage of Wiley’s Research Exchange (ReX), a simplified way for authors to submit manuscripts, once they adapt the system to Editorial Manager (right now, it’s only available for ScholarOne). See <https://authorservices.wiley.com/author-resources/Journal-Authors/submission-peer-review/research-exchange.html>.

Accepted articles being posted online for *AJB*

Beginning in October 2021, *AJB* began giving authors the opportunity for us to post their Accepted Articles online. With the author's permission, we can publish the accepted paper as a PDF prior to copy-editing and typesetting. It is given a Digital Object Identifier (DOI), which allows it to be cited and tracked, and it is indexed by PubMed. The paper will still be copy edited and the author will have an opportunity to respond to queries before the paper goes into proofs. The final copy-edited and proofed articles (i.e., the article versions of record) will appear in an issue; the link to the article in PubMed will automatically be updated.

Outreach for Publications

With more than 55,000 total followers on our social media platforms—35K Facebook fans, 17.1K Twitter followers, and 3K Instagram followers—we work hard to promote our authors’ research beyond publication and beyond the immediate BSA audience. We also encourage authors to use the tools at the Wiley site to promote their research via social media or direct e-mail.

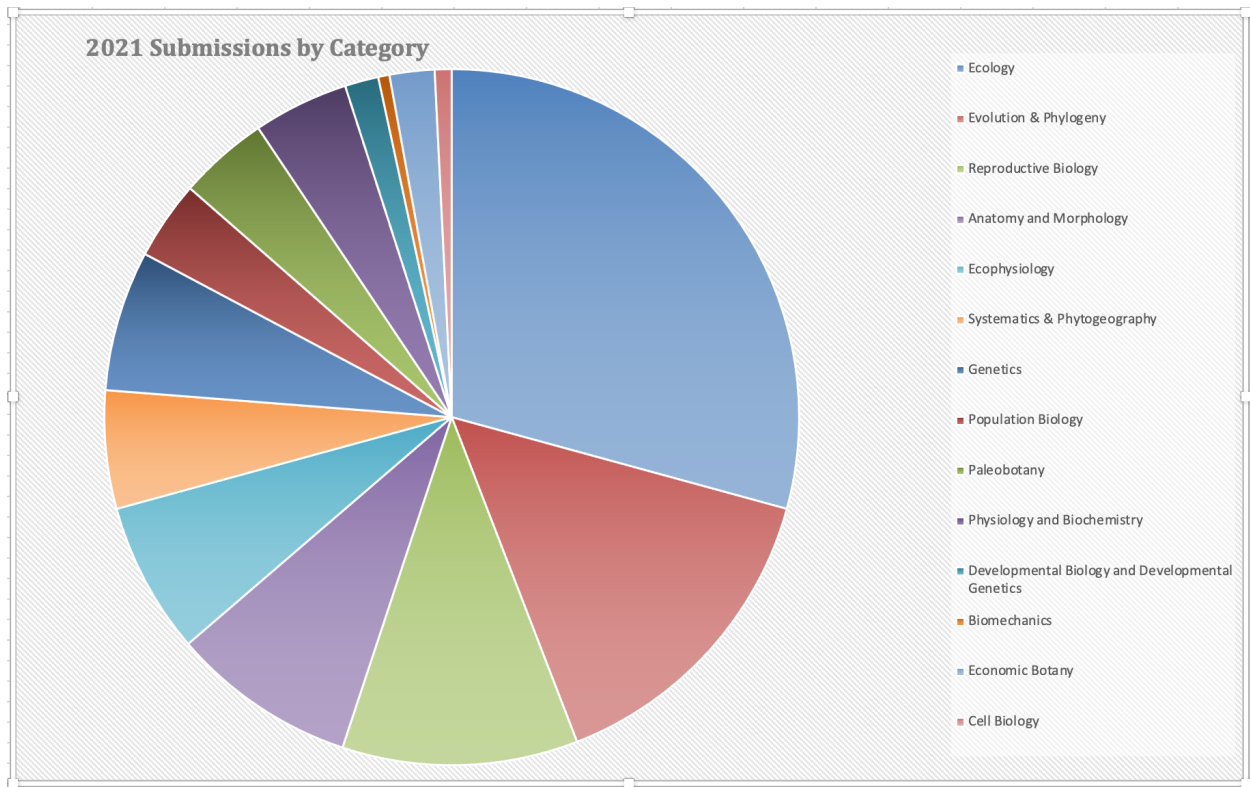
The BSA also recruited a **Student Social Media Liaison**—in 2021, **Teressa Alexander** (University of the West Indies, Trinidad) helped enhance the BSA’s social media reach by promoting the work and initiatives of BSA members.

Journal Metrics

Year	No. of MSS. Submitted.	Sub. to Ed. (days)	EIC to AE	Sub. to Review Inv.	Rev. resp. to inv.	Rev. complete after agreeing to review	Avg. time to 1st dec. (based on all dec. made in period)
2017	520	0.7	4.6	9	2.2	16.7	34.8
2018	478	0.8	5.6	10.3	2.3	17.1	35.2
2019	451	1	1.9	10.6	2.1	16.1	34.6
2020	491	0.7	1.6	11.9	2.2	20.7	44.4
2021	407	0.8	2.2	12.3	2.2	23.3	47.4

1st Decision	RWR	RWR	Full Review	Full Review
	% of Decisions	Average days	% of Decisions	Average Days
2017	33.2	4.9	66.7	48.2
2018	34.6	5.5	65.4	49.9
2019	35.4	5.5	64.6	34.1
2020	34.2	6.3	64.8	60.7
2021	32.7	7	67.3	56.8

Author Revision	Days for Rev 1	Days for Rev 2
2017	24.8	7.1
2018	25.3	8.9
2019	26.1	6.8
2020	31.6	9.5
2021	33.2	9.6



Authors are given the opportunity to select a category during the submission process, though this is not required. The chart legend corresponds to the wedges in a clockwise manner.

Section/Category	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Ecology	63	112	124	118	114	120
Evolution & Phylogeny	35	57	73	62	64	94
Reproductive Biology	31	42	37	51	41	44
Anatomy and Morphology	26	33	37	36	43	49
Ecophysiology	16	27	35	37	21	27
Systematics & Phytogeography	13	21	34	18	23	52
Genetics	10	25	36	29	31	28
Population Biology	7	14	13	19	21	21
Paleobotany	6	16	28	12	16	18
Physiology and Biochemistry	6	17	19	22	30	20
Developmental Biology and Developmental Genetics	5	6	9	13	13	7
Biomechanics	5	2	7	1	6	6
Economic Botany	2	8	5	2	4	4
Cell Biology	0	3	4	2	8	1
Education	0	0	0	1	1	1
Total	225	383	461	423	436	492

Submissions in 2022 through 6 July

The table above includes numbers, not percentages. These are submitted manuscripts, not published papers, and not all submissions list a category.

Corresponding Author Country	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
UNITED STATES	126	192	170	172	207
CHINA	73	70	85	75	66
BRAZIL	24	26	33	36	26
JAPAN	17	15	17	20	18
MEXICO	17	18	21	19	16
SPAIN	16	13	12	20	22
INDIA	12	16	6	14	14
CANADA	11	15	20	18	15
GERMANY	9	11	5	9	11
PAKISTAN	9	7	8	2	3
AUSTRALIA	7	6	3	5	5
CZECH REPUBLIC	7	5	10	4	1
IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF)	6	3	5	4	3
NETHERLANDS	6	4	0	2	2
UNITED KINGDOM	6	20	9	2	8
SWITZERLAND	5	5	2	4	0
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	4	2	2	1	2
SWEDEN	4	2	3	2	5
ARGENTINA	3	11	3	6	9
COLOMBIA	3	4	1	4	0
BELGIUM	2	1	0	0	3
DENMARK	2	0	0	2	0
EGYPT	2	3	0	1	3
FRANCE	2	8	8	10	6
ISRAEL	2	2	3	1	1
NIGERIA	2	0	6	1	3
NORWAY	2	0	1	2	4
TAIWAN	2	0	1	4	3
THAILAND	2	0	0	0	1
ALGERIA	1	0	0	1	0
AUSTRIA	1	1	1	0	2
BANGLADESH	1	0	0	1	0
CHILE	1	3	4	5	8
ETHIOPIA	1	3	0	1	4
FINLAND	1	0	0	0	0
HONG KONG	1	0	0	0	0
HUNGARY	1	0	0	0	0
IRELAND	1	0	0	0	0
ITALY	1	1	2	2	4
KENYA	1	0	0	0	0
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	1	0	0	0	0
PERU	1	1	0	0	0

POLAND	1	0	3	4	1
PORTUGAL	1	2	1	1	1
PUERTO RICO	1	0	0	0	0
SAUDI ARABIA	1	2	0	1	4
SINGAPORE	1	0	0	2	0
SOUTH AFRICA	1	1	1	5	1
SRI LANKA	1	0	0	0	1
TURKEY	1	0	1	1	1
VIET NAM	1	0	0	0	0

Total number of pages published

January – June 2022	Total: 1055
2021	Total: 2463
2020	Total: 1838
2019	Total: 1637
2018	Total: 2080
2017	Total: 1929

See the Wiley report for current production numbers.

AJB Impact Factor and ranking among Plant Science Journals, 2006–2018.

Year	Impact Factor	Rank
2021	3.325	72/238
2020	3.844	50/235
2019	3.038	48/234
2018	2.841	53/228
2017	2.788	49/222
2016	3.050	39/211
2015	2.811	43/209
2014	2.603	50/200
2013	2.463	52/196
2012	2.586	47/194
2011	2.664	47/190
2010	3.052	27/187
2009	2.684	29/172
2008	2.642	27/155
2007	2.512	26
2006	2.969	16

The Impact Factors for other botanical journals also experienced subtle, and not-so-subtle changes (thanks, Sean, for this information):

Annals of Botany 4.357 --> 5.04

New Phytologist 10.151 --> 10.323

Frontiers in Plant Science 5.753 --> 6.627

Journal of Systematics and Evolution 4.098 --> 3.544

IJPS 1.785 --> 3.142

Syst Bot 1.101 --> 0.933

Taxon 2.338 --> 2.586

Also: Annals Mo BG 1.850 --> 1.927

The current *AJB* editorial staff and freelance editors include Ms. Amy McPherson (Director of Publications and Managing Editor for *AJB*) and Mr. Richard Hund (Project Manager for BSA and Production Editor for *AJB*); and Dr. Staci Nole-Wilson (Assistant/Content Editor), Dr. Beth Hazen (Manuscript Editor), Mr. Richard Earles (Copy Editor), Dr. Larry Skog (Copy Editor), and Ms. Elaine Firestone (Copy Editor).