

SMALL CARNIVORE CONSERVATION

Volume 52 & 53 | December 2015

The journal of the IUCN SSC Small Carnivore Specialist Group

Editorial:

Small Carnivore Conservation in the Open Access, online era

We are in a period of time when access is paramount to the ability of science to better inform decision making. The Small Carnivore Specialist Group has met this challenge by developing a community forum through Facebook, and now moving the journal *Small Carnivore Conservation* completely online. As a journal composed entirely of volunteer editors, we also seek to develop a knowledge product that is streamlined in its efficiency, which can quickly review and publish manuscripts and which is not resource dependent. Therefore we are moving the journal entirely online, and in a new format and style to better accommodate the new venue.

Small Carnivore Conservation SCC, the official journal of the IUCN SSC Small Carnivore Specialist Group, is among the oldest journal of the Species Survival Commission and the IUCN, originally named *Mustelid and Viverrid Conservation*, and was first published in Belgium in 1989. As such, SCC defined a pathway and highlighted the importance of having such periodicals for most groups, an example that was rapidly adopted by other specialists groups such as Cats, Canids and Otters. Historically, SCC has been the leading journal for small carnivore (Ailuridae, Eupleridae, Herpestidae, Mephitidae, Mustelidae, Nandiniidae, Prionodontidae, Procyonidae, and Viverridae) research publication, providing a reliable and timely source of information for most of these families globally. Along its history, SCC has undergone a number of changes in order to advance and improve the journal from the time of its conception by Harry Van Rompaey in 1989 till date; the journal has changed both in scope and contents, adapting to the constant changes and challenges. The first change was the inception in 1992 of a new name, *Small Carnivore Conservation*, in order to include all 'small carnivore' families as it currently does. Further, in 2006, SCC expanded its scope by including more Editors and a new structure in order to fill the needs for maintaining the journal at its highest quality. The editorial team also made a huge effort to promote the publication of information from regions underrepresented in the journal otherwise: namely Africa and the New World. By including editors from these neglected regions, SCC is now proud to have a broader and frequent participation of authors from most of the globe and covering most of the species; a special issue on the Americas (volume 41) in 2009 (edited by J. Schipper, E. Eizirik, K. M. Helgen, J. F. González-Maya, M. Tsuchiya-Jerep and J. L. Belant) and a special issue on Africa (volume 48) in 2013 (edited by E. Do Linh San and M. J. Somers), are a good indicator of the global coverage of

our journal. So far, *SCC* (incl. Mustelid and Viverrid Conservation) is proud to have published 569 papers on almost all aspects of small carnivores' biology, ecology and conservation around the world.

In recent times, the world is more and better connected, with internet becoming a powerful and efficient way of sharing, distributing and disseminating scientific information. Once again in 2006, *SCC* in addition to the traditional publishing process of a printed periodical also came live online with a new website, where all the issues of *SCC* were archived and made available. Printing and distributing was an even larger challenge in terms of financial and logistic aspects of publication. Given the enormous opportunities and facilities that internet allows for rapid, high-quality publication of scientific research, and in order to cope with the fast-evolving world of publication, *SCC* is moving completely online (thus eliminating the print version) and adhering to the policies and global rules of the Open Access publishing, in order to stay updated and facilitate and accelerate dissemination of small carnivore research. From this volume (52 & 53), *SCC* becomes an online-only journal, and is taking the steps to include the Open Journal System, DOI coded among other modern technologies that facilitates the distribution and reach of our journal.

SCC has also gotten a facelift. In this issue we have updated our layout, taking advantage of the online-only approach, the second change in format in 26 years. Using the same template but with a fresh and renewed aspect, including full-colour figures and layout, and incorporates the requirements for the journal to be properly indexed by academic motors and internet search engines. We hope that these changes will have a greater effect on how our journal is reached and hopefully help to disseminate more efficiently small carnivore research to a wider audience. Additionally, we have expanded the editorial board, to include expertise in various aspects of the worlds' small carnivore ecology and conservation. The new editorial board is a combination of some of the most senior editors of the journal and some new and young field biologists, in order to be as inclusive and representative as possible. Our website is also renewed and updated with many new sets of information and repository of all the issues published since 1989, with full PDF access to all articles and issues.

We are living in a new era driven by the internet and globalization, therefore, we believe that these adjustments will help *SCC* to be up-to-date with the new challenges and enormous opportunities this new fast-paced world provides. We are more than grateful for the enormous and invaluable work of our previous editors, including Divya Mudappa, Will Duckworth and Jerrold Belant, which kept the journal at its best and even increased the quality and rigour of the manuscripts published, also promoting the participation of many new authors and the coverage of many species and regions. Thanks to their enormous and incredible work, *SCC* is now considered the best outlet for small carnivore research in the world; thanks!

Finally we would like to welcome the new Editorial Board and many new members of the IUCN SSC Small Carnivore Specialist Group, and we hope that this new era of *SCC* Small Carnivore Conservation 52 & 53: 1–3

will bring many good opportunities for the group but especially for the small carnivores around the world. We hope that you will enjoy the new face of *SCC* and we expect the journal to maintain its rigour and high-standard, with each issue becoming a sound and reliable source of information for the conservation of the worlds' small carnivores.

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