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# AHN

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AFRICAN HERP NEWS



I believe that the HAA has the potential to increase its membership base significantly, but to do this, it must ensure that it is fulfilling its mandate. I will endeavour to make sure this happens over the remainder of my term as chairman.

*Graham Alexander*

Chairman: Herpetological Association of Africa



## AFRICAN JOURNAL OF HERPETOLOGY EDITOR'S REPORT 2017

This report covers my fourth and final period as editor for African Journal of Herpetology (January 2015 to December 2016). Since my last report (African Herp News 53:5-7), the journal has continued in a steady fashion.

This year, 2017, we celebrate 60 years of AJH (volume 66) from the first volume and issue which appeared in 1957. Much has changed over this period (see *Afr. J. Herpetol* 60:89-100), and will continue to change as the journal moves into the future.

### TAYLOR & FRANCIS PUBLISHING AJH

Our arrangements with Taylor & Francis (T&F) for publishing AJH have seen stability and quality in the appearance of the journal. After some difficulties in the printing by UNISA for the African members, we have signed a new deal with NISC which we hope will better cater for HAA members.

Our members continue to have free access to all AJH pdfs right back to Volume 1 in 1965 via the T&F website (<http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ther20/current>). Each password changes annually, so make sure that you don't discard the emails that you receive from T&F issuing these. Contact the HAA secretary in case of doubt.

As anticipated, using T&F and their online platform has increased the visibility of AJH throughout the academic world. In total, during 2015 and 2016, there were 10 896 downloads of AJH articles from the Taylor & Francis online platform. North America was the top region of interest with 26% of downloads, followed by Africa (20%), North & Central Europe (15%), southern Europe (15%) and Asia (10%). Congratulations to Greenbaum et al (2015) for the highest download in 2015 with a massive 201 downloads of their paper describing a new central African Boaedon. For 2016 downloads, Rivero Suárez et al (2016) topped the group with 112 downloads. Most institutions currently subscribe to AJH in a package, bundled together with other life-sciences publications from T&F. From 2015 to 2016, our circulation rose from 2 249 to 2 403 libraries. In addition to subscriptions, downloads generate revenue for the HAA, and for the 2015-16 period the royalty payments amounted to R24 453.51.

For submissions, we continue to use an online system (ScholarOne: [mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ther](http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ther)) which really helps ease the complexities of editorial work. The ScholarOne system produces its own metrics which were carried in the last report, and continue below. The following metrics relate to 2015 and 2016 activity for original manuscripts submitted

to AJH on ScholarOne:

Mini-reviews	Reviews	Original Articles	Short Communications
0	1	47	11

It should be noted that while submissions have increased compared to the last period (total = 42), this includes inappropriate submissions (n = 11), mostly on non-African herpetofauna.

ScholarOne Metrics	Days
Average time to first decision	35
Average referee turnaround time	20
Average time to final decision	41
<b>Proportion Accepted</b>	<b>53%</b>

### ASSOCIATE EDITORS

As before, work on the journal has not been achieved by the editor alone but through a concerted effort from a committed editorial team. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the Associate Editors (AEs). Two new AEs were appointed during this period: Ed Stanley (Florida Museum of Natural History) and Jessica da Silva (SANBI). They join the now veteran AE: Jörn Khöler (Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt). Two AEs stepped down from their duties: Eli Greenbaum (University of Texas at El Paso) and Bryan Maritz (University of the Western Cape). I'd like to take this opportunity to thank them for their important contribution to the journal over many years and many more manuscripts than is appreciated from the final product. AEs take on a vital role investing a lot of their time in reading and assessing manuscripts, reading reviewer's reports and making recommendations. Their work lies at the heart of the quality of outputs that we see when we read AJH.

### SPECIAL EDITION

A new special edition of African Journal of Herpetology (Volume 66; Issue 2) will appear in October 2017. This will carry a series of papers as a memorial of the HAA founder, Don Broadley, who died in February 2016. This special edition is being edited by Graham Alexander, Aaron Bauer, Bill Branch, Mike Bates, Krystal Tolley, Martin Whiting and myself.

### METRICS

As many members will be aware, the world of scientific publishing is now largely governed by metrics, and you'll be happy to know that African Journal of Herpetology continues to be well represented by the metrics. Our Impact Factor (IF) sunk some in 2015 to 0.444. (from 0.792 in 2014).

*John Measey*

Editor: African Journal of Herpetology