Highlights for coming volumes

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We are pleased to inform you that several special features and invited papers are being prepared in the coming volumes. As we announced in the last volume, *Population Ecology* has now special feature editors as the board members. They promote mainly the special features and invited papers and manage them to be published smoothly. We believe that special features and invited papers make *Population Ecology* more attractive for the wide readership as well as original research articles. Sometimes a special feature is related to a symposium in the annual meeting of the Society of Population Ecology, but it is not limited to such case. We always welcome a proposal of a special feature from you. Please refer to specific instructions for organizers of special features available online (<http://www.springer.com/life+sciences/ecology/journal/10144>).

In this issue we provide the special feature “Mathematical Models for Effective Environmental Management” edited by Hiroyuki Yokomizo and Gaku Takimoto. The four articles in this special feature are based on the presentations of the symposium in the annual meeting of the Society of Population Ecology in 2012, but each of them extends its content. We think that the importance of its viewpoint should be recognized to make the mathematical models effective for environmental management as argued in the preface by Yokomizo and Takimoto (2014), and hope it will become popular for better management in practice.

In the next few issues we plan to publish invited reviews related to presentations in the annual meetings and those by awardees of the Population Ecology Young Scientist

Award. The Award is a recognition of outstanding scientific contributions to the study of Population Ecology by a young scientist and given by the Society of Population Ecology. The preparation of special features based on symposia in the annual meeting in 2013 is also under way.

Editorial statistics

During the year 2012, a total of 174 manuscripts were submitted from authors located in 36 different countries. Forty-six (26.4 %) manuscripts originated from Europe, North America provided 34 (19.5 %), Asia (other than Japan) 32 (18.4 %), and Japan 27 (15.5 %). The rate of acceptance was 37.2 % for non-invited papers (no manuscripts for special features in 2012). The rates of acceptance of manuscripts from North America and Oceania were close to the average, while those from Japan and Europe were higher than the average.

The average time ($\pm$ SD) between the receipt of a manuscript and return to the first report to the authors was lengthened to 41.4 days ($\pm$ 31.5) in 2012 from 38.8 days ($\pm$ 32.3) in 2011 and 31.6 days ($\pm$ 27.8) in 2010. The first round of reviews was completed within 60 days for 122 manuscripts (70.1 %), while the number of manuscripts for which the first round of reviews was finished within 90 days was 163 (93.7 %). Sixty-one manuscripts (35.1 %) were rejected by the editors before being sent to reviewers. We raised the concerns about the frequent declines to review manuscripts. Then we would like you to accept a review invitation whenever possible because the handling editor considers you as the most appropriate person to evaluate the submitted manuscript. We are also encouraging handling editors and reviewers to respond to and complete editorial assignments in a timely manner.

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Photos on the cover page

The cover photos for this volume 56 were selected from one article each published in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014.

Killer whales *Orcinus orca* (upper left) occur around the world but have only recently expanded into Hudson Bay, Canada with the loss of sea ice. Inuit observations provided the input information into models that estimated how many beluga, narwhal, and bowhead whales are killed each year by killer whales (Ferguson et al. 2012).

Dendroctonus frontalis Zimm., the southern pine beetle, wings and elytra extended in flight form (upper right). This rice grain-sized beetle causes massive forest devastation in the southeastern United States. It now represents one of the best ecological examples of regime shifts, which result from beetle population switches between alternate stable states (Martinson et al. 2013).

In the brown garden snail *Cornu aspersum* (lower left), emigration propensity and dispersal speed vary across life-history stages, with subadults being more mobile and faster than adults (Dahirel et al. 2014). The photo shows a snail, marked with plastic tags, just as it leaves its shelter to forage or disperse.

Hawaii's endemic waterbirds are all endangered, but there has been significant management to increase their populations. Reed et al. (2011) analyzed population trends of three waterbirds and found that all have increased population size over the past three decades. The photo shows an adult Hawaiian stilt at James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge on Oahu (lower right).

References

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