

The Arnold Berliner Award 2013

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The *Arnold Berliner Award* is presented for the first time this year, as part of the 100-year birthday celebration of *Naturwissenschaften* (Fig. 1, Thatje 2013). It is my great pleasure to announce the first recipient of the award, Dr Mark Young (University of Edinburgh), in this editorial.

Mark Young (Fig. 2) was nominated for his work on the iconic *Diplodocus*, which, as a sauropod dinosaur, belonged to the largest terrestrial herbivores to ever have roamed Earth. Their pure size may have pushed them to the evolutionary limits of vertebrate biomechanics. In his paper published in *Naturwissenschaften* (Young et al. 2012), Mark and his colleagues presented a compelling multidisciplinary approach demonstrating that the gigantic *Diplodocus* was unlikely to have employed its bizarre dentition for a previously suggested bark-stripping hypothesis feeding strategy, and that the rather unusual (aberrant) dentition of *Diplodocus* may have, instead, demonstrated an adaptation for food procurement rather than an adaptation to high mechanical bite force. This would suggest that *Diplodocus* had a skull which was seemingly over-engineered for muscle-driven biting alone; the reason for which may have been related to other behavioral or ecological traits. This paradigm-changing discovery was only possible by making use of

modern technology, the computed tomographic scanning of a fossil specimen of a *Diplodocus longus* skull from museum collection, and subsequent modeling of its biomechanics of feeding.

The *Arnold Berliner Award* was established in recognition of the founding editor of the journal. The award is sponsored by Springer Science+Business Media and is given annually for the best research article published in NAWI during the previous calendar year (Thatje 2012). Criteria are excellence in science, originality, and in particular interdisciplinarity,



Fig. 1 The Arnold Berliner Award Medal. Arnold Berliner (1862–1942) was the founding editor of *Naturwissenschaften* and the journal's Editor-in-Chief from 1913 to 1935

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Fig. 2 Mark Young, Arnold Berliner Awardee 2013, assessing a fossil specimen

overall mirroring Berliner's motivation for initiating NAWI. A jury, consisting of the board of editors and the Editor-in-Chief, selects the awardee. The Award is marked with the *Arnold Berliner Medal* (Fig. 1) and is accompanied by a biennial subscription to the electronic edition of *Naturwissenschaften*, a 500-Euro voucher for Springer books, as well as a cash prize of 250 Euros.

References

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