

## CONCERNING THE JOURNAL OF POLLINATION ECOLOGY

From James Thomson, Editor-in-Chief

### SPECIAL ISSUES

In conjunction with the annual meetings of the Scandinavian Association for Pollination Ecology (SCAPE) held in Lund, Sweden, 24-27 October 2019, it was decided to solicit written papers for publication in a pair of coordinated Special Issues of the *Nordic Journal of Botany* and the *Journal of Pollination Ecology*. After receiving abstracts, the two editorial teams allocated the submissions to the journal that seemed more appropriate. Those decisions were necessarily somewhat arbitrary, so readers interested in pollination should examine both issues for papers of interest.

### EDITORIAL TRANSITION

Faithful JPE readers will know that the idea for the journal arose from conversations at past SCAPE conferences. It took wing through the altruistic and determined efforts of Carolin Mayer (now at the Institute of Life-Earth-Environment, University of Namur, Belgium), who conceived that an online-only journal could offer both free publishing for authors and free access for readers, if the effort could be supported by extraordinary volunteer efforts. Carolin single-handedly built JPE essentially from nothing. Peter Kevan's publishing concern Enviroquest (Guelph, Ontario) provided access to an ISBN number; Carolin customized an editorial management system from the Open Journal Systems software made available by the Public Knowledge Project at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, British Columbia. She recruited a highly qualified board of Associate Editors and established a rigorous process of peer review.

For several years, Carolin served as sole Editor, but a change in her employment made it impractical to devote as much time as was needed to handle all the aspects of journal production. At the 2016 SCAPE meetings at Abisko, Jane Stout and Jeff Ollerton reported that JPE could use an academic Editor-in-Chief to take over the evaluation of manuscripts while Carolin continued

as Managing Editor in her indispensable role of assembling and producing the issues. I found myself agreeing to take on the EiC position for about five years.

As that period has elapsed, I am convinced that JPE needs a younger Editor-in-Chief with more extensive networks of active researchers. Therefore, I am stepping down from that post, to be replaced by Maria Clara ("Cala") Castellanos of the University of Sussex in the UK. Her experience of fieldwork in diverse ecosystems on three continents makes her well suited to take on the challenges of running a global journal. She is committed to JPE's foundational values of altruistic service to the academic community, and she will be creative in pursuing those values in the face of new trends in scientific publishing, such as preprint sites, social media, predatory journals, etc. I will remain involved with JPE as Editor Emeritus.



**Maria Clara Castellanos, JPE's new EiC !**

### IMPROVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

We have striven to improve JPE's visibility and professional reputation. Several additional AEs have been added to allow us to entertain a broad range of submissions. With initial funding from the International Commission for Plant-Pollinator Relationships, again facilitated by Peter Kevan, we have established membership in the Crossref organization, giving us access to DOI numbers for our published papers, in addition to other advantages.

We also applied to have JPE publications indexed by both Scopus and Clarivate (Web of Science). We are now listed by both operations, although the actual listing of our papers remains in progress. We will continue to pursue such opportunities to make JPE papers more easily available and to increase the journal's attractiveness to authors. We have also purchased a much-needed upgrade of our editorial management software, which will solve numerous bugs and non-intuitive features that have frustrated authors and editors alike. The upgrade is currently installed for testing.

Unfortunately, the increasing operational load of the journal means that our previous no-revenue, all-volunteer business model has become unsustainable. We have spent the last several years investigating whether JPE could be adopted by an established publisher who could provide the necessary funding while preserving our quixotic

operation. We have been disappointed: potential non-profit publishers have been unable to provide the necessary revenue, and for-profit publishers would impose unacceptable changes that would include high costs for authors, subscribers, or both. At this time, our best alternative for remaining independent is to institute modest publication charges to authors. The details of this scheme will be worked out in conjunction with JPE's imminent change in leadership, but we anticipate keeping the costs low. Authors with research funding should not find these charges a deterrent, and we expect to entertain requests for waivers by researchers in difficult circumstances. JPE is affiliating with the open-access consortium cOAlition-S, in the hope that better systemic arrangements can be found to counter the takeover of scientific publishing by a small number of for-profit concerns. Cala Castellanos will bring a thoughtful and energetic approach to these efforts.