

Editorial: Fresh faces, a new look, and a bright future for LAJAM

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Dear LAJAM readership,

It is our pleasure to write this Editorial chock-full-of news! Since our last issue we have made significant positive changes to LAJAM, both in shape and content. The first change you will have noticed is our new look. By working with Misa Faustino and Hime Navarro at Rota Criativa we revamped LAJAM's layout, making it more modern, clean, and yet keeping our traditional colors. We have also included two new categories of manuscript to our menu (Protocol & Opinion), of which you will be able appreciate examples in this issue. One of the most important improvements to the journal itself was the streamlining of our editorial process, making it a lot more agile and culminating in the 'Early View' feature, whereby an accepted manuscript becomes available even before the closing of an issue – you will have noticed this happening since August. This is an improvement we had been striving for a long time and now we hope this will stimulate our membership and readership to submit the results of their works for publication in our Society's journal. And now, with nine original pieces of work, we present to you LAJAM 16(1) 2021.

We have also been working on new Guidelines for Authors and Functioning of LAJAM. For the time being you may request that we send you the current guidelines by e-mail or submit your manuscripts in a free style following the scientific method. Having mentioned e-mail, we are also proud to announce that our workflow is now fully conducted online via the OJS platform, considerably reducing the exchange of e-mails containing manuscript versions.

And finally, we have also upgraded our team, by engaging our long-term contributor Daniel Gonzalez-Socoloske into the Managing Editor role, and by expanding our Editorial Committee to embrace nine new members from different countries and areas of expertise. With this strengthened team that shall work together for at least the next two years, we hope to bring in even more improvements, including long-sought indexing of LAJAM. We understand this is not a short-term task, but takes a mid- to long-term planning and commitment, and trust that with the dedication of this committee we shall achieve this goal in a few years.

Now this whole soul-searching process also brought us much closer to the board of directors of SOLAMAC, whose meetings we now take part in to help plan the future of LAJAM and SOLAMAC in tandem. We are in the process of revising both entities' statutes and SOLAMAC is now handling all of LAJAM's financial matters. And talking about finances, we must whole-heartedly acknowledge Yacu Pacha's continued support to our journal, thank you Lorenzo Von Fersen. And still in the support subject, we shall soon announce categories of support that different institutions or individuals can have to show their support to our Society's scientific venue.

And there is more coming: next year is going to be LAJAM's 20th anniversary! We are planning to launch a Special Issue with a subject to be announced later, and be actively involved in the SOLAMAC meeting in September! For the time being we are open to receive new submissions. From 2022 on, our issues will close in April and October, but papers will continue to be uploaded as they become accepted – send your manuscripts in! This second semester especially has allowed a number of our colleagues to get back in the field and try to assess what happened during the past two years that we have been land-locked by COVID-19. Let us know and share what you are finding out!

As to the current issue, we are excited to present to you four articles, three notes, one protocol and one piece of opinion. Every issue of LAJAM brings new information of aquatic mammal presence, and this time Pusineri and colleagues present the cetacean community in the French Guiana EEZ, and Meza-Yáñez and colleagues record pigmy sperm whales in Mexican Central Pacific for the first time.

The application of new technologies is central to Muirhead's article on passive acoustic monitoring of freshwater dolphins in Peru, and provided confirmation of the presence of a Southern right whale mother-and-calf pair in northern Chile by Garcia-Cegarra and collaborators. The importance of whale-watching vessels (along with citizen science contributions) as platforms of opportunity, especially when and where resources are limited, is highlighted by the works of Espinoza-Rodríguez on relative abundance of humpback whales in Mexico, and Cosentino and Oriá's unusual behavior by orcas towards short-beaked common dolphins in Baja California. Tourism visitation itself is the subject of Avila et al.'s work on humpback whales in a protected area in Colombia.

Furtado and collaborators inaugurate the Protocol category by presenting guidelines to collect, process and store biological material from giant and Neotropical otters, both live and dead, to standardize methods. Finally, Felix and Van Waerebeek also inaugurate our Opinion category by making a call to arms to our Society to start discussing ethical issues within our work, a very current issue that we should think about in our upcoming RT meeting in September 2022.

Enjoy your reading.
Sincerely,

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