



The Bulletin has evolved to meet the needs of its readers and ever increasing quality of the submitted manuscripts. These three editions show changes from 1980 to the present, including the adoption of A4 format since 2013.

## The Bulletin in its 40<sup>th</sup> year

Welcome to *The Herpetological Bulletin*. This publication is not usually graced with an editorial but as we have been at your service since 1980 and have now reached the 150<sup>th</sup> issue, it is time to celebrate with some reflection.

It would be old fashioned to describe The British Herpetological Society (BHS) as a learned society but it has a modern role as the hub of a learning community. *The Bulletin* is pivotal to that community by encouraging scientific communications of a high standard from professional and amateur herpetologists alike. *The Bulletin* exists to help authors from around the world share their findings and their enthusiasm for amphibians and reptiles. Aspiring authors, sometimes people for whom English is a second or third language, find that *The Bulletin* has a sympathetic editorial team dedicated to helping them make the most of their publishable material and ensuring that it is readable, interesting, and enhanced with a flash of colour.

The history of *The Bulletin* has been one of gradual development in size, layout, and colour (Fig. 1). In 1980, the Council of the BHS decided that its newsletter should be transformed into *The Bulletin of the British Herpetological Society*, younger sister to the *British Journal of Herpetology*. It was to act as a venue for articles on natural history, captive care and husbandry, as well as news, views and notices from the BHS. This released *The Journal* to focus on more technical and esoteric scientific contributions, in an age that saw a sharp increase in these. The first *Bulletin* was type-set and appeared in only black and white. By issue #19 the first colour photos appeared between the covers, with illustrations of skins from the Northern Territory of Australia. By issue #23 the front cover also had a colour photo. At the same time, the content was changing gradually, with news and views and notices of the BHS moving to *The NatterJack* newsletter, making more room for natural history in *The Bulletin*. Issue #70 of *The Bulletin* saw its name changed to *The*

*Herpetological Bulletin* (similarly the *Journal* was renamed *The Herpetological Journal*) to reflect a more international outlook. Until 2014 (issue #127) all those working for *The Bulletin* were volunteer members of the BHS but since then a Managing Editor has been contracted to prepare the edited papers for publication, ensure the timely appearance of each issue, and to introduce innovations in layout and design.

Despite its modest beginnings, authors publishing in *The Bulletin* now enjoy some important advantages. These include its attractive A4 appearance and layout, the prompt publication of articles (usually within 3 months of receipt), no publication charges, a PDF of their work which they are free to distribute, and after one year any reader has free access to their work via the BHS website. And for readers, who are often also authors, additional benefits are that *The Bulletin* is issued quarterly and at a modest cost. Online access for a year to PDFs of *The Bulletin* and *NatterJack* is only £20 (or £18 for a student) and that includes membership of the BHS. For the enthusiastic collector, hardcopies of *The Bulletin* can be obtained at a modest extra cost.

*The Bulletin* has been a great success owing to the many and varied authors who have contributed to it, the hundreds of reviewers who have spent countless hours appraising manuscripts, and the thirteen BHS members who have held editorial responsibility for the final product. The future of *The Bulletin* is secure with the BHS. Innovations in layout and design will continue; for example this issue is the first to have live links to relevant video clips in the PDF files, and, for the foreseeable future, *The Bulletin* will be available both electronically and as hardcopy.

This issue of *The Bulletin* offers the usual wide range of articles, including - the appalling slaughter green toads in Greece to satisfy the tourist trade; the parasitism of amphibians by fly larvae and their predation by leeches; the captivity husbandry of glass frogs; and, the extraordinary defence behaviour of Bahamian dwarf boas. But the issue

starts with something different, a memorial to one of the founders of the BHS, Maxwell Knight. The BHS founders mostly came from scientific/medical backgrounds but Maxwell Knight had a naval education and his interests were particularly wide ranging, as you will read, but most

importantly he was unusually prescient in his concerns for the need to conserve nature. A reminder of these concerns is a fitting subject for the 150<sup>th</sup> Issue of a *The Bulletin* whose readers are dedicated to the future wellbeing of the creatures they love.

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Scientific Editors