

## International Relations Committee

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### **Mission:**

The Board of Directors established the International Relations Committee in 1960 to maintain and enhance communication between members of the Society and mammalogists outside North America. The mission of this Committee is to advance the field of mammalogy by encouraging and facilitating international collaboration among members of the ASM and mammalogists from other countries.

### **Information Items:**

#### **(1) On-going initiatives:**

**(a) The Sponsored Membership Program:** This Committee has continued to receive nominations and requests, and has worked towards expanding the geographical distribution of sponsored memberships. The co-chairs have been contacting the heads of numerous national and regional mammal societies in developing countries, board members of the International Federation of Mammalogists, and colleagues at universities and museums in developing countries for recommendations. This effort continues to generate a large pool of names of deserving young mammalogists to be considered for sponsored memberships. Many of these candidates have been successfully processed and are being sponsored. During the past year the number of sponsored members has grown from 18 individuals from 15 developing countries to 30 persons from 22 countries spanning the globe from Latin America to Asia. The focus of efforts has shifted from Africa to Latin America and eastern and southwestern Asia. Members are strongly encouraged to nominate suitable potential young individuals for sponsored memberships. In addition to the IRC efforts at finding worthy individuals for sponsored memberships, many members also sponsor individuals independently of this program. Clearly any such multiple-year sponsorship commitments from donating members are always helpful and additional sponsorships by members outside of the IRC program are always welcome. Finally the IRC would like to thank those individuals who donated to the ASM's Donation Fund that helps cover the dues of sponsored members and those regular members who have committed to directly cover the dues of selected individuals for sponsorship.

**(b) The Buddy System and proofreading of foreign language summaries:** The Buddy System was set up to provide assistance to international authors who are not speakers of English as a first language. The authors are referred to the Buddy System by editors after they have submitted a manuscript for publication if the appropriate editor thinks that the English writing needs improvement or enhancement with foreign language summaries. An *ad hoc* subcommittee for this program continues to work on finding better ways to advertise this service and to coordinate

efforts. Barbara Blake, with the assistance of Alicia Linzey, promotes and coordinates this program with the Publications Committee.

The details of the buddy program and names of buddies, proofreaders, and translators are published in the April issue of the *Journal*. The list of buddy reviewers is constantly being updated. It is especially helpful if buddy reviewers will list their scientific area(s) of expertise when offering to serve as reviewers.

The *Journal of Mammalogy* also publishes foreign language summaries for many articles, including all those from Latin America. These summaries are proofread by ASM members. The names of proofreaders and translators are also printed in the April issue of the *Journal*. Note that Barbara Blake is always looking for additional proofreaders. Please contact her directly ([bhblake@uncg.edu](mailto:bhblake@uncg.edu)) if you have such native language skills and are willing to help with this valuable service.

The following individuals deserve a special acknowledgment for their efforts: Buddies: Darin Croft, Carlos Iudica, William Lidicker, Jr., and Karen McBee; proofreaders for foreign language summaries in the *Journal*: Juan Pablo Carrera, Nicté Ordóñez-Garza, Miguel Pinto, Marylène Ricard, Sergio Solari, and Marcus Vieira; and translators for foreign language summaries in the *Journal*: Nicté Ordóñez-Garza, Mariella Superina, and Shobi Lawalata. The latter proofread a summary in Indonesian, a language need infrequently required, for a paper on Indonesian mammalogy in the *Journal* by Jake Esselstyn.

**(c) Links to Mammal Societies of the World:** Committee members continue to serve as links with mammal societies throughout the world, providing information on mammal meetings to appear in the *Journal of Mammalogy* and other international publications. A specific subcommittee is working to maintain a list of international mammal societies and their web pages on the ASM website. This is an on-going task and we are looking for volunteers to assist in this interesting and important task, namely to help collect and maintain an up-to-date list of links to the mammal societies of the world. Contact the IRC co-chairs if interested.

For more interactions with international activities, among others, in mammalogy, members are also invited to join Facebook's ASM site at:

<http://www.facebook.com/American.Society.of.Mammalogists?fref=ts>

**(d) International Meetings and the International Federation of Mammalogists (IFM):** An invitation from Australia to host the next International Mammal Congress was accepted in 2013. IMC-12 is scheduled to be held in Perth, Australia, in 2017. During the IMC-11 in Belfast, Northern Ireland, ASM member William Licker, Jr., completed his term as Federation President and was replaced as President by ASM member Ricardo Ojeda from Argentina, also co-chair of IRC.

The IFM maintains a presence on Facebook which can be accessed at

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/197157050399156/>. Members are invited to join this site for more information on the Federation's activities.

**(e) ASM SAREM Student Membership Award:** In 2008 the SAREM (Argentine Mammal Society) and the ASM Board established an annual award for the best SAREM student member presentation at the SAREM Annual Meeting. The award goes to a student member from a developing country and is an online membership to the ASM, including all member rights and subscriptions to ASM's signature publications: *Journal of Mammalogy* and *Mammalian Species*. The IRC was able to endow this award in 2011 through a generous contribution from Jim and Carol Patton, so that henceforth the online membership award will be given to each outstanding SAREM student for three years, and the funding of the membership award will no longer come from the general fund budget. The 2014 awardee for best student paper at the annual SAREM meeting is Mariana Viglino, Laboratorio de Paleontología, Centro Nacional Patagónico – CONICET, Puerto Madryn, Chubut, Argentina.

**(f) African Graduate Student Research Fund:** This fund has been fully developed and added to the list of other funds found on the Society website and in the membership solicitations. An *ad hoc* committee has been established for this fund. Details of the progress for the year can be found in their separate Annual Report. Chair of the *ad hoc* committee is Jacob Goheen. If interested in the efforts to establish this endowment fund or to work on its activities, contact Jacob R. Goheen ([jgoheen@uwyo.edu](mailto:jgoheen@uwyo.edu)). Starting an endowed research fund is a slow process that requires persistence and patience. Any help with its activities or contributions to this new research fund would be greatly appreciated.

## **(2) New Initiatives:**

**(a) Endowment Fund for an ASM Student Award for the Colombian Mammal Society:** Because of its international reputation, international students place a high value on being associated with the ASM. The IRC had received a request from the Colombian Mammal Society to develop an ASM Student Membership Award for the outstanding student presentation at the Annual Meeting of the Colombian Mammal Society. This award would be patterned after the ASM award given to the outstanding student presentation at the Annual SAREM Meeting, namely a three-year on-line sponsored student membership in the ASM. Efforts to fund this award had been tabled but are now being considered again. Preliminary efforts for such an award involve finding a source to establish an endowment fund to support this award similar to what was done for the ASM SAREM Student Award so the award can be funded in perpetuity from sources other than the General Budget. Initial contacts have been made with the Colombian consulate in Houston to seek their help in developing a list of American corporations with vested business interests in Colombia in hopes that one of them might donate sufficient funds to set up an endowment account. Anyone interested in supporting this effort or who might know of a potential source for such support is asked to contact the IRC. If we are successful in finding a source of endowment funds for this award and receive ASM Board approval for it, the award will be comparable to the SAREM Award.

The Committee welcomes new initiatives from any members. The co-chairs would like to thank the support and commitment of all Committee members. Thanks to all!

**Action Items:** None.

**Respectfully submitted,**

Ricardo Ojeda, Co-Chair & Duane A. Schlitter, Co-Chair

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