

2021 WSSA Committee Report Summary for 2020 and Action Plan for 2021

Committee Code and Name: P4- Invasive Plant Science and Management

Committee Chair: Antonio DiTommaso

Board Coordinator: Chris Willenborg

Committee Members Rotating Off:

None

Appropriate Replacements:

None

Summary of Activities

- What were the committee's goals for 2020?

Our major goal for 2020 was to strive to maintain a high quality journal with high visibility and hopefully to increase submission numbers relative to 2019, especially from international authors. No Associate Editor positions were terming during this coming year, so no reappointments or replacements were required. We planned to continue to work closely with CUP staff and the WSSA Director of Publications as we continue to improve and refine the manuscript submission process and our *Instructions for Authors* guidelines. We also planned to continue to work to reduce the turnaround time from submission to decision and publication.

One concrete way we hoped to achieve this goal was to introduce a new “series” in IPSM in 2020 to be called: *Biology of Invasive Plants*. These reviews are intended to collate published and unpublished material information on the biology and ecology of emerging plant invasion problems globally. They would assemble background material to lay a foundation reference source concerning the biology and ecology of the focal species. However, they will go further, highlighting invasion risks and their management. The *Biology of Invasive Plants* series is intended to provide a useful resource for a broad range of readers, including biologists, ecologists, risk assessors and policy advisors. The global nature of plant invasion risk means that the series will appeal to a global audience.

- List the committee's accomplishments (since the last annual meeting):

In 2019, the IPSM impact factor (0.905) increased markedly from that of 2018 (0.672), but was lower than its high of (1.210) in 2015. The 5-year impact factor increased from 1.030 (2018) to 1.218 in 2019, not far below the 2015 high (1.330). The 53 submissions in 2020 was equal to submissions in 2019, but a decrease of 14 from 2018 and 16 below the 69 submissions received in 2017 (see Table below). Although submissions stabilized this past year, we are hopeful that submissions will increase in the coming years. Despite the same number of submissions in 2018 and 2019, the total number of pages in the four 2020 issues (291pages) increased 14% relative to 2018 (251pages), and 41% relative to 2017 (209 pages). The percent acceptance rate of

manuscripts increased to 58% relative to the 32% acceptance rate in 2019 and 48% rate in 2018. Relative to 2019, the quality of submitted manuscripts in 2020 increased as seen by the marked increase in the percentage of accepted manuscripts, although 17% of manuscripts were rejected by the Editor without the need for peer-review.

Year	Submissions Jan 1-June 30	Submissions July 1-Dec 31	Total Submissions	% acceptance	Number of pages
2011	48	45	93	52	467
2012	52	40	92	65	514
2013	43	65	108	57 (52/60)	594
2014	45	40	85	61	642
2015	29	27	56	35	452
2016	34	42	76	46	320
2017	28	41	69	41	355
2018	33	34	67	48	207
2019	29	24	53	32	251
2020	25	28	53	58	291

The number of days from submission to first decision for peer-reviewed manuscripts in 2020 decreased to 41 days relative to the 47 days in 2019, and 49 days in 2018. This value is still substantially lower than levels prior to 2016 (see Table below). When all manuscripts including those rejected by the Editor and not sent out for peer-review are considered, then the number of days from first submission to first decision was 33 days. The average time to review decreased from 20 days in 2018 to 17 days in 2019.

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
Days to first decision	41	47	49	41	41	63	63.6	64.3	74.0	81.9	89.3

One concrete way we hoped to increase submissions, visibility and impact of IPSM was the introduction of a new “series” in IPSM in 2020 called: *Biology of Invasive Plants*. The new series was successfully launched in issue 3 (July-September) of 2020 with a 5-page editorial introducing the series by co-series editors (Dr. Darren Kriticos, CSIRO, Australia, and Dr. David Clements, Trinity Western University, Canada), and myself. The first species account was published in the same issue and focused on the invasive evergreen shrub, firethorn (*Pyracantha angustifolia*). To encourage submissions of species accounts, page charges will be waived for the first two accounts and future accounts will receive a 50% page cost reduction from CUP. The first account was made available online on November 16 as an “open access” article on the CUP core website. The full text for this article had been accessed 318 times as of January 14, 2021. A second species account is scheduled to be published in the second IPSM issue of 2021. We continue to work closely with Cambridge University Press (CUP) staff and the WSSA Director of Publications to facilitate the manuscript submission process and make the journal website as visually attractive and informative as possible.

- What information was posted on the WSSA website?

A link to the IPSM home page via CUP was made available on the WSSA website homepage under the caption “WSSA Journals”. The announcement of an impact factor was posted. Press releases and blogs were posted highlighting the key findings of one selected article in each of the four issues in 2020.

- What amount of funds were requested? How much was spent?

Editor’s stipend

- What was the impact of the committee activities/accomplishments on the following: membership, publication, policy, legislation, and/or education?

The inclusion of IPSM in the publication portfolio of the society increases our exposure and will continue to bring in more diverse membership. In addition, it increases our influence politically. Despite lower manuscript submissions and a lower impact factor than our sister journals, IPSM continues to be an important outlet and resource for invasive plant species researchers and natural areas managers. This increased interest in IPSM by public land managers is highlighted by the increasing number of “Case Studies” that are being published in the journal. It is critical that we continue to maintain and enhance the presence of our scientific society in this important field of study.

- What is the current state of the committee’s projects and activities?

2021 Plan for Committee Activities

- Goals for 2021:

We will strive to maintain a high quality journal with high visibility and hopefully to increase submission numbers relative to submissions for the 2016-2018 period, especially from international authors. We will continue to work to reduce the turnaround time from submission to decision and publication. The term of several Associate Editors will be ending during this coming year, so reappointments or replacements will be required. We plan to continue to work closely with CUP staff and the WSSA Director of Publications as we continue to improve and refine the manuscript submission process and our *Instructions for Authors* guidelines including for the new series *Biology of Invasive Plants*.

- Plan of Action:

We will continue to work with the WSSA Director of Publications and CUP staff to more aggressively increase the visibility of our journal nationally and internationally. The ultimate goal is to increase the number and quality of submissions to our journal. One concrete way we hope to achieve this goal is to continue to promote our new *Biology of Invasive Plants* series. We are also planning to publish papers from two WSSA-sponsored symposia held in Maui, HI in February 2020. The two symposia are: *The Ecological and Biodiversity Impact of Invasive Grass Species and their Management* (Lisa Rew and Tim Prather –organizers), and *2020 Vision for Hawaiian Invasive Plant Management* (David Clements and Curt Daehler – organizers).

We are starting the 14th year of the journal. Since its launch, steady progress has been made and despite the drop in the number of submissions during the last two years relative to previous years, we are hopeful that submissions will rebound in the coming years as we observed this year with an increase in our impact factor. We would like to continue to decrease the time required from submission to first decision from the current 41 days, which still ranks amongst the best journals in this category, a feature increasingly important to authors. We will continue to promote the journal and move it forward. We will continue to reach out to well-known and established researchers in the field and encourage them to submit invited papers on topics of general interest that are relevant and timely or organize symposia of general interest to our readership. Undoubtedly, much of the success to date of the journal is due to the support of the WSSA Board of Directors and to the many authors, reviewers, Associate Editors, and the many WSSA members that support the journal.

Recommendations for Board/Society Action:

- Funds requested for 2021:

Editor's stipend.

Invasive Plant Science and Management Associate Editors in 2021:

Edith Allen	(UC-Riverside)
Jacob Barney	(Virginia Tech)
John Cardina	(Ohio State Univ.)
Stephen Enloe	(Univ. of Florida)
Songlin Fei	(Purdue Univ.)
Guillaume Fried	(Plant Health Lab, Anses, Montferrier-sur-Lez, France)
Catherine Jarnevich	(USGS- Fort Collins, CO)
Marie Jasieniuk	(UC-Davis)
Darren Kriticos	(CSIRO, Canberra, Australia)
James Leary	(Univ. of Florida)
Kelly Lyons	(Trinity Univ.)
Rob Richardson	(NC State Univ.)
Steve Seefeldt	(Washington State Univ.)
Ryan Wersal	(Minnesota State Univ.)