

Happy Anniversary to *Aquatic Mammals* and to the European Association for Aquatic Mammals!

This year, 2022, is special for both the *Aquatic Mammals* journal and the European Association for Aquatic Mammals (EAAM). This year marks reaching the half-century mark for the journal and the association, and we have much to celebrate!

Both the journal and the association were established in 1972 by Willem Dudok van Heel, following similar trajectories in the early years (Dudok van Heel, 2009). While the annual symposia allowed colleagues to gather and share experiences, ideas, and results from studies, the journal provided a platform to disseminate processes and results to a wider audience.

In 1972, Dr. Dudok van Heel organized the first well-attended meeting at Harderwijk (Dudok van Heel, 2009; Dudzinski et al., 2014). Following the meeting, Dr. Dudok van Heel started *Aquatic Mammals*. The journal has always been, and continues to be, a platform for any topic related to any aquatic mammal, including scientific study, husbandry and care, health and medical issues, transport, and more. Each managing editor elevated the journal in scale, technology, and options. Dr. Victor Manton, the second managing editor, expanded the content and scope of the journal with letters to and from the editor, and references to content in other journals and on related society websites. Under Dr. Paul Nachtigall's oversight, an editorial board was created and the subscriptions that Dr. Manton had initiated were fostered. The journal was cultivating a fledgling financial stability that would offer independence. Dr. Nachtigall also required all submitted manuscripts to be peer-reviewed. This at first saw a minor drop in manuscripts, but eventually it facilitated growth and a solid scientific offering to all readers. Dr. Jeanette Thomas assumed the mantle of managing editor from Dr. Nachtigall in 1999. Under her leadership, manuscript submissions became more standardized with Manuscript FastTrack, and our website was created, now offering a wealth of information, not just published articles. Processing accepted manuscripts into their final form was moved from England to the United States, and the DOI (discrete object identifier) was established, with *Aquatic Mammals* an early adopter of this trend. Dr. Thomas was instrumental in securing two additional society sponsors to cement



the journal's continued existence: IMATA and AMMPA. I assumed the managing editor role from Dr. Thomas in 2010. We have continued to grow with six issues now published annually—both online and in print. *Aquatic Mammals* also offers a hybrid open access format for articles and short notes. Our Historical Perspectives (HP) series has been around for more than a dozen years with nearly 100 interviews and more than three dozen HP essays published. Special issues to celebrate facility anniversaries (e.g., Dolphinarium Harderwijk, Zoo Duisburg) and various topics continue to be a staple of the journal, and our authors hail from nearly all continents! The journal has come a long way over 50 years!

EAAM has similarly come a long distance, gathering leading experts, not only from Europe but also from other parts of the world, to membership and to our annual symposiums. The association has grown to be a reference for marine mammal professionals and facilities. It has developed high standards and an accreditation process that assures the best care and welfare for the marine mammals in zoological settings. EAAM Standards and Guidelines have become the reference point for many European Governments.

Several millions of people have visited EAAM-accredited facilities where animal welfare and science merge to provide unforgettable memories and experiences.

New generations of specialists are constantly inspired, trained, and educated in EAAM-accredited facilities. They represent the future. This commitment to animal welfare, education, research, and conservation will lead to better success for the protection of nature—especially the aquatic

environments and the aquatic mammals inhabiting them.

We hope you have enjoyed participating in the meetings and membership in EAAM, and reading *Aquatic Mammals* over the last 50 years. We will continue to offer meetings and camaraderie that facilitate the exchange of ideas within the association. We will similarly foster and promote the inclusion of manuscripts on a variety of topics on aquatic mammals and hope that you find the content and science engaging and stimulating for the next 50 years, beginning with this issue in Volume 48!

So, Happy Birthday to both the *Aquatic Mammals* journal and the European Association for Aquatic Mammals!

Sincerely,

Kathleen M. Dudzinski, Ph.D.
Managing Editor, *Aquatic Mammals*

Renato Lenzi, President, European Association
for Aquatic Mammals

Guillermo J. Sánchez Contreras, DVM,
President-Elect, European Association for
Aquatic Mammals

Javier Almunia, Ph.D., Past-President
European Association for Aquatic Mammals

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EAAM contact: info@eaam.org

Aquatic Mammals contact:
business@aquaticmammalsjournal.org



**European
Association for
Aquatic Mammals**

Devoted to marine mammal
conservation since 1972.

