

Letter from the Editor

December 1st, 2013

Dear Palaeocommunity,

I am writing to inform you of some changes being made to *Palaeontologia africana*, the journal of the Evolutionary Studies Institute (ESI) of the University of the Witwatersrand (formerly the Bernard Price Institute (BPI) and the Institute for Human Evolution (IHE); <https://www.wits.ac.za/academic/research/17918/home.html>).

First, Professor Marion Bamford is stepping down as Head Editor after more than ten years of service. Marion presided over many improvements to the journal, including a streamlined submissions process, an updated layout, and an increase in quality and quantity of scientific submissions. Additionally, Marion initiated a forward-thinking digitization plan that will see the full contents of the journal available electronically by 2015.

Second, I will be taking over as Editor of *Palaeontologia africana* beginning with the December 2013 issue. Marion has graciously agreed to lead me through this transition process, and will remain on the editorial board afterwards. The main editorial board will now comprise:

- Dr Jonah Choiniere, Editor
- Dr Lucinda Backwell, Associate Editor
- Professor Marion Bamford, Associate Editor
- Professor Bruce Rubidge, Associate Editor

I would like to especially thank Drs Jenny Clack, Herby Klinger, Kevin Padian, and Kathleen Pigg for their service as consulting editors, and would like to introduce the new consulting editorial board:

- Dr Kieran McNulty, University of Minnesota, USA
Hominin Palaeobiology
- Dr Roger Benson, University of Oxford, UK, Dinosauria
- Dr Chris Sidor, University of Washington, USA, Therapsida
- Prof. Louis Scott, Emeritus, University of the Free State, Palynology
- Dr Juan Cisneros, Universidade Federal do Piauí Brasil, Parareptiles
- Dr Roger Smith, Iziko South African Museum, Karoo Stratigraphy
- Dr Thomas Lehmann, Senckenberg Forschungsinstitut und Naturmuseum, Frankfurt, Germany

I wish a warm welcome to the new and returning members and thank them in advance for their service. Other consulting editors will be added over the coming year.

Third, *Palaeontologia africana* will be making important

changes in the next three years. These are summarized here:

1. The full digital archive will be freely available online by 2015, with select issues being made available starting January 2014. The archive will be hosted by WIREDSpace, the Wits Institutional Repository on DSpace, and is permanently accessible at this link: <http://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/handle/10539/13253>. Issues are fully searchable using Google Scholar or other search engines, and PDF copies of articles can be directly downloaded in this manner.
2. In the next few years, we will be making a transition to a more electronic format, and as we increase our electronic distribution will be reducing the number of print copies of the Journal that we produce. This will not affect our distribution to libraries or members of PSSA who have requested a paper copy, but it will affect how reprints are distributed.
3. Starting with the December 2014 issue, we no longer accept hard-copy submissions of text or figures. A new e-mail address: palaeontologia.africana@gmail.com has been set up for submissions and can take up to 20 MB attachments. For attachments of greater size, you may contact the editors who will send an invitation to a shared folder on Dropbox.com.
4. *Palaeontologia africana* publishes abstracts for the biennial Palaeontological Society of Southern Africa meeting, and will be seeking to publish more abstracts for other African congresses of palaeontological research. We will also consider conference proceedings – please contact the Editor with proposals.
5. Currently, *Palaeontologia africana* does not have an ISI citation index, although it is covered by Google Scholar and is indexed in Biological Abstracts and the Zoological Record. Our goal is to obtain a citation index for *Palaeontologia africana* within the next five years, although this is partly dictated by factors outside of our control.
6. As submission quantity and publication schedule dictate, we are looking at moving from an annual publication schedule to either semiannual or even a rolling publication schedule. This change will not be implemented until at least January 2015.

Finally, the entire editorship of *Palaeontologia africana* would like to express their gratitude to the Palaeontological Scientific Trust (PAST) and the NRF (DST) for their continued financial support.

Sincerely,

Jonah Choiniere

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