

MYCOTAXON

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EDITORIAL CHANGES COMING FOR MYCOTAXON

PAVEL LIZON¹ & RICHARD P. KORF²

¹*Department of Cryptogams, Institute of Botany, Dúbravská 14, SK-84523 Bratislava, Slovakia*

²*P.O. Box 264, Ithaca, New York 14851-0264, U.S.A.*

We are pleased to announce changes that we firmly believe will improve the journal and simultaneously allow us to retire gracefully from the editorial duties that have become too arduous for both of us. Effective with the close of volume 88 (the October-December 2003 volume) we shall both step down: Pavel from his position as Editor-in-Chief, and Dick from his position as Assistant Editor. Pavel will assume a new position, Consulting Editor, to work with the new Editor-in-Chief in making the transfer seamless. Dick will continue as Business Manager for Mycotaxon, Ltd., having already shed his duties as the corporate webmaster. We each have other responsibilities.

Dr. Lorelei Norvell, of Portland, Oregon, will be the new Editor-in-Chief, effective with volume 89. She is well known to most taxonomist-readers. Not only can she rely on Pavel and Dick to make the transition, but she will have the full support of an active Editorial Advisory Board of eminent mycological taxonomists and nomenclaturalists. That Board has recently been engaged in a lively discussion amongst themselves and with the current Editors on ways to allow *Mycotaxon* to refocus on its original goal, to serve as a journal “devoted to the taxonomy and nomenclature of fungi and lichens.” Strict interpretation of those two disciplines has been suggested, and Lorelei will oversee their implementation. We will begin the process of limiting the scope of the journal with volume 89. Here are the two areas subject to changes:

1) Does a checklist constitute “taxonomy”? Good checklists are very helpful in taxonomic work, but only if they are based on cited or referenced specimens, do not cover only a very small locality, and reflect many years of collections. Nomenclatural novelties should not be proposed in a checklist, but rather included in a separate, “taxonomic” paper. Checklists, the Board has concluded, should be seen as in need of constant updates, and thus should be posted on the worldwide web—rather than in a regional or international journal. Such checklists are far more easily searched on the internet than in printed copy, and electronic versions can be easily and regularly updated as data accumulates. A one or two page paper announcing the posting of such a floristic data set and of its focus and extent would, however, be welcomed in *Mycotaxon*.

2) When do studies in phylogenetic systematics constitute “taxonomy and nomenclature”? Much depends on how one uses the terms “taxonomy” and “systematics.” Most members of the Board and the Editors consider taxonomy a part of systematics, but understand that phylogenetic systematics is not necessarily taxonomy. A paper proposing a new interpretation of phylogeny without in turn requiring or suggesting specific nomenclatural novelties would appear *not* to be taxonomic in our strict interpretation of

“taxonomy.” Such purely “phylogenetic” (or, on the same grounds, purely “ecological”) papers should probably be submitted to another journal. Pavel and Dick, trained as alpha taxonomists, would be the first to admit that we lack the credentials to assess whether authors are sufficiently rigorous in basing a paper on cladistic or molecular analyses. It was never our desire to publish papers that would have been rejected by other journals using high standards in these areas. The difficult job of drawing the distinction for *Mycotaxon* as it evolves will be at the sole discretion of the new Editor-in-Chief.

It is with a sense of pride that we leave these problems in more able hands than ours. We have great faith in Dr. Norvell’s abilities to work with authors and to improve the journal.

Authors should keep a wary eye on our website, <www.mycotaxon.com>, for the most recent information on submission of manuscripts during the next several months. Volumes 87 and 88 are still under Dr. Lizon’s direction, and if any of you have checklists or phylogenetic studies you’d like to see appear in *Mycotaxon*, you still have time to submit them for publication. The new Editor-in-Chief will give sympathetic consideration to papers in a series already partially published in our journal.

Given the proposed revision of editorial policies, and the change in editorship, Dick, in his role as Business Manager, has determined that *Mycotaxon* will publish only two volumes in 2004, volumes 89 and 90, each consisting of two quarterly numbers. Depending on the flow of acceptable papers, our new Editor-in-Chief may choose to expand to three or four volumes a year in future years.