

## Editorial

Dear Myrmecologist!

First up, we'd like to say a massive thank you to everyone who contributed to volume 11 – authors, referees, members of the editorial advisory board, as well as all those who helped with linguistic revisions, proof reading and other crucial, yet rarely thanked tasks. Our thanks also go to an increasing number of people transmitting feedback on *Myrmecological News*. We had some lovely compliments, heaps of constructive criticism and plenty of excellent suggestions. Thank you all!

The feedback also confirmed that the track we pursue – one we believe will genuinely differ from that of other journals – is a good and timely one: *Myrmecological News* is a completely independent, international, peer reviewed, non-profit journal. It offers means of publication on all fields of ant research, in a lively mix of research and review articles, as well as of arresting colour reproductions, book reviews, and reports of important events in the community. Turn-around times are brief (for volume 11, primary editorial decisions based on peer reviews were made after 30.7 days on average). Aiming at high quality in contributions, we wish to assist authors in communicating their research, rather than fostering competition for print space. Satisfied authors are one of the two most rewarding things we experience.

The other thing that drives us is the fantastic, ever increasing number of readers – it may be indicative that the journal's newly released homepage attracted visitors from nearly 50 nations on all continents during its first eight weeks online. *Myrmecological News* obviously fills a lacuna in the publication landscape.

We have a new homepage! Thanks to a generous donation by Beate Lattanzi-Schödl and Alexander Schödl in honour of their late brother and *Myrmecological News* editor Stefan Schödl, we were in the position to hire professional IT experts for this job. The features of the new homepage, at <http://www.myrmecologicalnews.org>, include Online Subscription ("Continue accessing the non-printable PDF files of all papers or opt for full access of printable PDF files by subscribing to the online version"), E-mail Alert ("Sign up now to receive an E-mail whenever new Online Earlier articles are published or print volumes are out"), and Online Earlier ("Readers and authors may now enjoy fully edited and proof-read articles, ready for print in future issues, published early online").

Under the current version of the ICZN, Online Earlier publications are not taxonomically recognised. Hence, to avoid confusion, we take care that articles which propose changes of zoological nomenclature are only published online after publication of the print version. Despite that, *Myrmecological News* is a platform for ant taxonomy. So, in answer to the question we were asked repeatedly in the past months: The streamlining of *Myrmecological News* is meant to help overcoming the taxonomic impediment and hence, yes, we continue to strongly encourage submission of taxonomic papers!

An outstanding feature of volume 11 is the inclusion of thirteen invited review articles, authored by some of the top experts in their fields and spanning a wide range of topics. These include neurobiology, cognition research and signal chemistry, social organisation, ecosystem engineering, community ecology, conservation genetics, and climate change biology. This series of reviews is intended to build up a collection of standard references in a variety of myrmecological subdisciplines. The series will be ongoing and eventually will also include reviews focusing on major ant life history strategies, thus after nearly two decades taking up the thread laid by Hölldobler and Wilson's milestone book "The Ants". In these, *Myrmecological News* will encourage interdisciplinary approaches, considering core questions in ant biology through the powerful combination of traditional and cutting-edge technologies.

Volume 11 is the first of three issues to be evaluated for inclusion in the Web of Science. Inclusion would further increase the accessibility of articles and would formally attest to the quality of our science. It is a challenging aim in times of extreme competitiveness among journals and multinational publishers. We are optimistic, however, that through the ongoing concerted effort, and especially through citation of *Myrmecological News* contributions, inclusion in the Web of Science will be feasible.

We hope you will enjoy volume 11.

Cordially yours,

Birgit Schlick-Steiner, Herbert Zettel, Florian Steiner  
Townsville and Vienna, August 2008

Die aufmerksame Beschäftigung mit kleinen Objekten hat den in unserer Zeit unschätzbaren Vorteil, dass die überfüllte Welt wieder an Stille, der schrumpfende Planet an Ausdehnung gewinnt. Für den, der das Treiben der Ameisen verfolgt, vergrößert sich die Landkarte. Der Feldrain wird zur Heerstraße, der Sandhügel zum Himalaja. Dieser Effekt wird durch die wachsende Freizügigkeit nicht vermindert, sondern potenziert.

Ernst JÜNGER, 1967, "Subtile Jagden"

*In modern times, the attentive study of tiny objects has the priceless advantage of re-instilling our overpopulated planet with a measure of silence, of briefly reversing our shrinking world. Those who pursue the hustle and bustle of ants find themselves in an expanded landscape in which the furrow becomes a boulevard, the sand mound a Himalayan peak. This effect is not diminished by our larger scale, but rather enhanced by it.*

*Translation: M. Stachowitsch, R.H. Crozier*