

Changes in *The Prairie Naturalist* for 2017: Some Bumps in the Road During Transition

Greetings GPNSS members! By now it is obvious to most of our members and authors that *The Prairie Naturalist* (TPN) has experienced some delays in conducting journal-related business over the past few months. Publication of the June 2016 issue was slightly delayed and the December 2016 was mailed much later than planned. So I wanted to update our members on the current status, and other aspects of, TPN. As most of you know, when I transitioned into the Editorship of TPN, one of my first orders of business was to secure a new publication venue for the journal. Fortunately, the Department of Natural Resource Management (DNRM; formerly Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences) at South Dakota State University (SDSU) offered to host the GPNSS website and serve as the hub of day-to-day operations for TPN. However, we received word during summer 2016 that concurrent with ongoing departmental transitions at SDSU, hosting of the GPNSS website was no longer being supported (as evidenced by the “broken links” that many of you inquired about via email or phone conversations). These delays also partly track back to the fact that negotiations between GPNSS and DNRM to obtain access to journal and society-related information took longer than anticipated, so we got a late start on publishing recent TPN issues.

Our publication delays have meant authors have not received page proofs when they expected, though authors will continue to have opportunities to review proofs, as will the editorial staff, prior to publication. Another difficulty authors and reviewers may have encountered is uncertainty about how to communicate directly with our editorial board. Our acting Assistant Editor, Brandi Felts, has been working hard to develop a new GPNSS website (<https://greatplainsnaturalsciencesociety.com>) and to ensure that the transition is completed as quickly and as smoothly as possible. Until our transition is complete and the TPN is back up and running as it was prior to the transition, new manuscript submissions or status updates on previously submitted papers can be sent directly to me (cn-jacques@wiu.edu). Whereas all new manuscripts have been submitted directly to me since fall 2016, it is entirely possible that new manuscripts submitted prior to that (i.e., May–Sep 2016) may not have been received or entered into the peer-review process. If so, please resend your manuscript to me and I will promptly initiate peer-review. It will likely be at least another couple of

months before we are completely transitioned out of SDSU. We recognize that the transition has caused some difficulties for you, but please bear with us. The transition remains a high priority for the editorial board and GPNSS executive council. We thank everyone for their patience so far, and we are especially grateful to authors, associate editors, and reviewers who unknowingly were caught between a rock and a hard place early in the transition but who nevertheless patiently persisted. I encourage anyone with any problems or concerns with gaining access to information on the newly developed website, manuscript submission, or final stages of peer-review (i.e., manuscript production) to contact our editorial staff (theprairienaturalist@gmail.com) or me (see email above); a quick email to editorial staff often is the easiest way to clear up any confusion or resolve issues outright.

Lastly, I would like to welcome incoming and outgoing editorial board members for their service to GPNSS and TPN. In particular, Beth Scheihing has been appointed our incoming Assistant Editor, so will be relieving Jonathan Jenks and Brandi Felts of many of their duties as acting assistant editors over the past few months. Beth also will be working with current and future authors to facilitate the timely publication of TPN. Who knows, perhaps with a bit of arm twisting, I may be able to convince Beth to take on additional “website management” duties.

As with past issues of *TPN*, this issue has much to offer to the natural resource manager. A quick glance at this issue will reveal several articles that assess survival parameters and reproductive characteristics of fish and waterfowl populations. Readers will also find articles on grassland conservation throughout the Northern Great Plains. This issue also features a number of book reviews, ranging from a historical account of greater prairie chickens to the bee hunting enthusiasts among us to the botanical teachings of plants to the birds of Montana.

In closing, if you have any questions, comments, or helpful suggestions for improving *TPN*, please feel free to contact me. After all, this is your journal, and I very much appreciate your thoughts about it. Until next time, enjoy your winter everyone!

—Christopher N. Jacques
Editor-in-Chief