

NEWS AND NOTES

THE TIME COURSE FOR PUBLISHING A PAPER IN *THE CONDOR*

Scientists naturally are concerned that the results of their efforts be published expeditiously. Given this, it is worthwhile to briefly outline the handling of a manuscript during the nine-month average time from submission to publication in *The Condor*. When a paper is first submitted, I initially scrutinize it and it is entered into the editorial tracking system. I then identify reviewers and the manuscript is sent to them. This requires an average of three days (Fig. 1). Completing peer review takes an average of 59 days, including time in the mail. We request that referees return reviews within 30 days, and most do. However, some are late and some must be replaced because they are unable or unwilling to review a paper.

After all reviews are completed, I must decide whether the paper is potentially acceptable for publication in *The Condor*. An average of three days elapses between completion of the review process and transmittal of my decision to authors (Fig. 1). Of those eventually accepted, almost all require modification in response to comments by the reviewers and me. An author of a tentatively accepted manuscript has up to 75 days to complete such a satisfactory revision. Most return their revisions well before this time, with the average period being 51 days.

The paper then is copyedited, added to the issue of *The Condor* being compiled, and transmitted to Allen Press at the end of a three-month cycle. After typesetting, the first set of proofs are checked and corrected by Allen Press, the author, and the editorial staff. Second and third sets of proofs are checked and corrected by the editorial staff. The total time devoted to such copyediting, compilation, and production of an issue of *The Condor* averages 5.4 months, or nearly 60% of the total time between submission and publication. This time expenditure largely is beyond the control of the editorial staff. Even with rapid handling of proofs by my office, Allen Press typically requires about 3.8 months to produce the journal. There are other unavoidable delays. If an acceptably revised manuscript is received shortly before an issue is sent to press, it will be copyedited quickly and spend only a few days in the editorial office. If it is received immediately after an issue is sent to press, however, the quarterly cycle of the journal dictates that it will wait an additional three months. We try to minimize such delays, of course. For example, we hold no backlog of papers for future issues; all accepted manuscripts are published in the next *Condor* sent to press. Holding such a reserve for future issues would delay publication at least three months. Refraining from doing so also accounts for the variable length of individual issues.

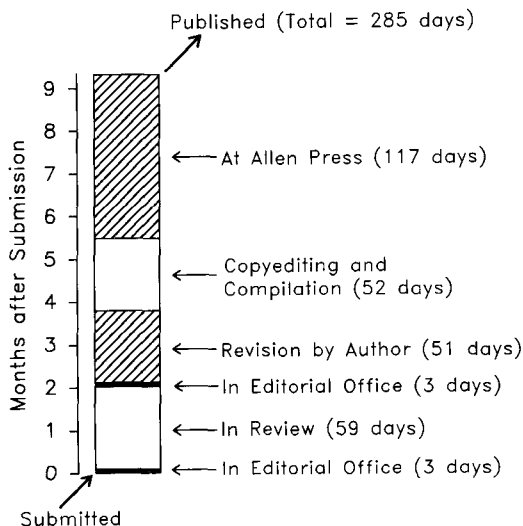


FIGURE 1. Time budget of manuscript flow. Values are averages for 124 papers published in 1992.

Of the 9.3 month average time between submission and publication, therefore, about four months largely result from the actions of authors and reviewers. The largest portion of this period typically is that spent by authors modifying their manuscript. If a paper is provisionally accepted for publication in *The Condor*, authors can significantly accelerate its publication by quickly returning a satisfactory revision.

Glenn E. Walsberg, *Editor*

NEW EDITOR NAMED FOR *STUDIES IN AVIAN BIOLOGY*

John C. Rotenberry has been appointed Editor of *Studies in Avian Biology*. He succeeds Joseph R. Jehl, Jr., who has resigned after five years in the position. Dr. Rotenberry is an Associate Professor of Biology at the University of California-Riverside and serves as Campus Director of the university's Natural Reserve System. He is also a member of the Editorial Board of the Ecological Society of America.

Persons interested in submitting papers for publication in *Studies in Avian Biology* should contact Dr. Rotenberry prior to submission. His address is as follows: Department of Biology, University of California, Riverside, CA 92521.