

PREFACE

From Japan through Asia to the world: building bridges in ornithological science

On behalf of the Ornithological Society of Japan, I would like to express my great pleasure at the publication of this first edition of *Ornithological Science*. This is an international peer-reviewed journal that will be published twice yearly. The purposes of the journal are to promote ornithological studies in Japan and other Asian countries, and to facilitate the exchange of information between ornithological scientists working both inside and outside Asia.

In Japan, China, Korea, and many other Asian countries, both the amount and importance of ornithological research are increasing. Research in Asia encompasses areas of ornithological science that have emerged relatively recently, including the behavioral ecology, conservation biology and molecular phylogenetics of birds, as well as more traditional fields such as bird distribution, population and community ecology and dynamics, and physiology. However, often the results of ornithological research carried out in Asia have been published in domestic journals solely in Asian languages. Although the work may be of high quality and great importance, language barriers and difficulty acquiring published materials can prevent foreign scientists accessing and understanding the research done by their colleagues. We would like to help remove these difficulties with the publication of *Ornithological Science*.

In Asia, there are so many interesting birds and subjects for research. Although we know that the amount of research being done in this region is increasing, we believe that many interesting and important studies of Asian avifauna remain unpublished. As a venue for the publication of original ornithological research, *Ornithological Science* is open to all scientists, and there are advantages to publishing within its pages, as described on the reverse of the front cover and in the editorial of this edition. The publication and dissemination of interesting work encourages further study, for example, by scientists extending research to other species and groups of birds. We hope that *Ornithological Science* will facilitate the development of ornithological research in this way.

As well as publishing original research, the editors of *Ornithological Science* would like to encourage scientists to contribute review papers on particular topics, to promote the understanding of different fields of research. Examples of topics for review could include the origin and evolution of birds endemic to Asia, mate selection and social structure of Asian birds e.g. babblers and pheasants, the present status and conservation of endangered birds in Asia, the use of molecular data for ecological bird studies, the use of GIS (Geographic Information Systems) for habitat and distribution analyses, and modern technologies used in migration studies. Producing reviews in a common language, based on previous publications in scientists' native languages, should give a better perspective on the state of research in various fields of Asian ornithology.

The avifaunas of different countries are, or used to be, connected to each other. Bird species of one area were differentiated from those occupying neighboring areas. Migratory birds move over a number of different countries. Therefore, in order to study the origin, distribution, ecology, migration and conservation of birds, international cooperation and collaboration are very important. During the last ten years, I have enjoyed collaborating with Korean, Chinese, Indian, Russian, and American ornithologists to satellite-track the migration of cranes, swans and storks. We have obtained an enormous amount of valuable data on the migration routes, migration patterns through time, relative importance of resting sites, and habitat characteristics of important sites. Our studies have resulted in various conservation activities relevant to these birds and their habitats. Through my involvement with this research, I realized that international cooperation and collaboration are extremely important. My colleagues and I have already published many papers in various academic journals, but this attractive new ornithological journal is appealing to us as a publication venue, and we are looking forward to presenting our work within its pages. I would like to encourage collaborative research groups, e.g. Asian research groups studying geese, swans, egrets and raptors, to publish their results here. Publishing the results of joint work in international journals like *Ornithological Science* should help broaden the scope of our research

activities, and increase the depth of our friendships.

This year, the Ornithological Society of Japan will celebrate its 90th anniversary. We now have about 1,200 members, and this number is increasing. Most members of the Society are Japanese. However, we encourage new members from many countries to join, particularly ornithological scientists working in Asian countries. We would like to broaden our research horizons, while forming as many friendships and collaborative working relationships as possible. With the publication of *Ornithological Science*, the Ornithological Society of Japan will enter into a new generation of its history. Ornithology in Japan, and ornithologists working there, will benefit from their area of interest and expertise becoming more open. This will facilitate an increasing level of connection with other ornithological scientists in Asia and around the world. Japan is a beautiful country with a diverse landscape including forests, mountains and islands, and has a lot of interesting areas for ornithological studies. It is my great pleasure to welcome visitors to our country to study birds, and also to enjoy birds through subscribing to *Ornithological Science*.

I sincerely hope that *Ornithological Science* will help build bridges connecting ornithological scientists from different countries.

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