

The 90 years of the Bulletin of Insectology



With this closing number of volume 71, the Bulletin of Insectology celebrates its 90th anniversary. A grand birthday! Together with the executive editors, I am truly pleased to announce that all the contents of the volumes from 1928 until today are now online and can be downloaded free-of-charge. This complete scan was made with the valuable contribution of the “Gabriele Goidanich” Library (I thank the direction and all librarians that helped to complete the task). Still today an exchange is ongoing between the Bulletin of Insectology and many journals of entomology and zoology. This exchange remains an important factor in allowing “G. Goidanich” Library itself to grow. Some past volumes of the Bulletin of Insectology are really particular and I would especially like to point out volume 25 which represents a work of historical and scientific value by Guido Grandi the founder of the *Bollettino*. At the end of that volume, in some ways still of current interest, there is a long epilogue in English. Starting from volume 22 the *Bollettino* presents papers with a summary in English. From volume 55 onwards, and with the change of name, all papers of the new series were published in English. Despite the limited means available but in a spirit directed

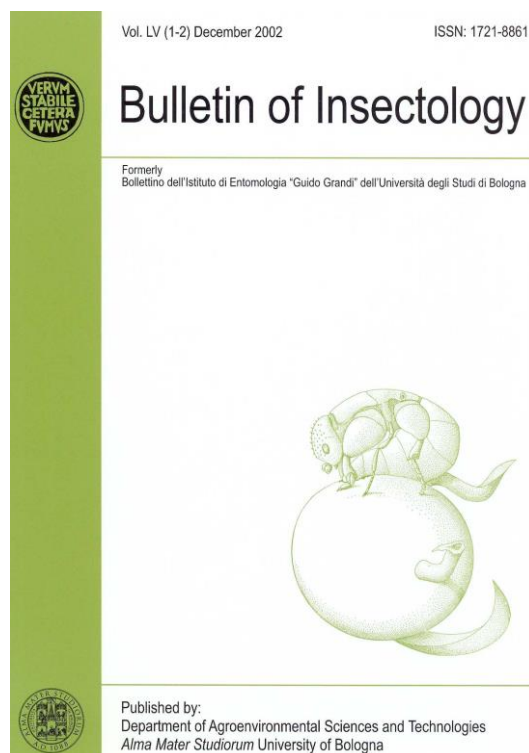
towards internationalization, the Bulletin of Insectology has obtained significant results. We have always been aware that our main intention was to publish articles on entomology with original and interesting contents without being too strict about the English language. We apologize to readers about this, but we are nevertheless satisfied by the fact that (after some years of waiting) the Bulletin of Insectology has reached and maintained a good ranking in the entomology section.

In effect, 18 years ago the results obtained in the rankings were not among our main objectives but we are obviously happy to have obtained them since the year 2007. In one of my editorials I had been critical and I wrote: everyone knows that when financial support is divided up, it counts to have published in a journal with impact factor ‘as appropriate’ that is also considered in competitions for university positions. Today I am not the only one to criticize this system. The topic has given rise to a great deal of discussion! San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) is just one example. So, people are beginning to realize that something doesn’t work and it is not always rational to assess, in particular, single authors only with indexes.

The indexes used for scientific journals also have some small defects in that they give little weight to the specific subjects. For entomological science I am in agreement with Chouvenec and Su (2015, doi: 10.1093/ae/tmv067). It is very important to consider results that will remain interesting for many years and it would make more sense to calculate certain indexes not only over a two year period an index covering 5 years seems more than adequate for our particular subject. Further polemics are raised in the article published this year in Nature by Ioannidis *et al.* (doi: 10.1038/d41586-018-06185-8) on hyperprolificity, that is to say, the famous catch-phrase ‘publish or perish’ which should no longer be a key factor or of relevance for researchers. In the case of the Bulletin of Insectology the phrase “One unexpected result was that some hyperprolific authors placed many publications in a single journal” used by the above-mentioned authors is not considered a defect. Once, in fact, the scope of the *Bollettino* in the first years after its foundation until the ’80s was to publish works from the school of entomology in Bologna or by entomologists linked to it. Papers were accepted through a limited and strict review by a small group of editorial managers. Only with the passing of the new millennium did we update the system and open the Bulletin of Insectology to a wider international platform. By adopting the term ‘Insectology’, a synonym rarely used compared to ‘Entomology’, it is surely much easier to find our journal while surfing on the Internet. Sixteen years ago, in fact, in the editorial ‘The first issue of the Bulletin of Insectology’, I mentioned that, in agreement with Piero Baronio, it was decided to choose a particular title that referred back to the first entomological chair dedicated to this subject in Italy, namely ‘*Insettologia*’, and I added: “We also chose it because we felt that it was a word which would be easily remembered!”.

In 1961 the managing director Grandi wrote: “with the present release the *Bollettino* of the Institute of Entomology of Bologna University that I founded in 1928 celebrates its 25th volume, after collecting during its not so brief and often troubled existence, a considerable part of the results of the research carried out by me, by my pupils and by my collaborators. On this important occasion I express my hope that it will not cease in the near future, but will live for a long time, like a flag of an institute that has always worked, and still works, with the sole purpose of serving science with a humility of spirit and purity of intent”. But the papers published - returning to the previous discussion of Ioannidis *et al.* - were certainly not one every five days!

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the peer reviewers. From the start of the new series we have requested the collaboration not only of my colleagues of the editorial board but also of at least 3000 anonymous peer reviewers (data kept in our records), without whose suggestions and recommendations we would not be able to assess and make modifications, comments and suggestions to all those who have submitted and continue to submit their papers.



The rejection rate has, inevitably, increased year by year and, it would not be possible from an economic and managerial point of view to accept more than about 40 papers for each volume. Some submissions are rejected only because they are not original or do not respect the authors guidelines. The realization and success of the Bulletin of Insectology (the only journal with impact factor edited directly by Bologna University until now) would not have been able to materialize without the close collaboration of Davide Montanari. The financial support was provided many years ago by CNR, Bank Foundations, Ministry of Agriculture, then by the Bologna University. In addition, we have begun to self-finance thanks to some subscriptions and to the sale of open access PDFs to authors. From the next issue, and if we find other supporters, we will no longer ask authors to pay for the PDF and we hope to continue along this path.

I conclude with a final phrase written by my illustrious predecessors in the direction of the Bulletin of Insectology: Maria Matilde Principi and Egidio Mellini, who, in May 1973, pointed out the strong wish of the first director and founder Guido Grandi that this source of information in the sector of entomological disciplines could and - I add - must ‘happily’ continue.

The Bulletin of Insectology has reached 90 years, let’s hope it can continue for another 90!

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