

Editorial

I am delighted to join the Nepalese Journal of Zoology (NJZ) as its Chief Editor. NJZ has taken the shape that it is in today due to the significant efforts and dedication from former heads, faculty and students of the Central Department of Zoology (CDZ). I am thus very proud to be taking on this baton while working alongside an outstanding team of editorial board members— Prof. Dr. Mahendra Maharjan, Associate Prof. Dr. Hari Prasad Sharma, Associate Prof. Dr. Prem Bahadur Budha, Assistant Prof. Dr. Laxman Khanal, and Assistant Prof. Dr. Bishnu Prasad Bhattarai. This team has worked incredibly hard in assessing and processing the submitted articles, and I owe them my deepest appreciation. Thanks are due to Prof. Dr. Tej Bahadur Thapa, the current head of the CDZ, for his generosity and support in bringing out this journal. On behalf of the current editorial team, I am excited to welcome you to this new volume of NJZ!

Zoology, one of the oldest natural sciences with a history of more than 2000 years, is now re-emerging as an integrative discipline comprising all aspects of animal life— from gene to the ecosystem level. As an open access, peer-reviewed, and multidisciplinary journal of the CDZ, NJZ should also strive to reflect this re-emergence. So, we invite researchers to submit original and high-quality research and review papers from the different fields of biological sciences. Our goal is to provide a common platform for the researchers across the globe to share their valuable research in biology in an accessible form.

With this volume, NJZ begins its new journey. It has undergone many changes— the online manuscript submission system, editorial policies, peer review process, and the layout. NJZ is now also using the open journal systems platform, a widely-used open-source journal management system available from the public knowledge project under the GNU General Public License for electronic submission and quality in the peer-review process. For we understand that while the quality of the journal depends on the quality of the articles, attracting impactful submissions also depends on the processing speed and quality of the review system. Authors will now be able to submit and track the progress of their manuscripts at any time, and editors can manage the whole editorial process through this online system.

Our editorial team is committed to helping and assisting authors in a prompt manner. And peer review is a key part of maintaining the quality of submitted articles. At NJZ, we operate a rigorous peer-review process. Our reviewers play a vital role in maintaining the standards of submitted articles, whose fair and balanced reviews will make sure that we only publish the quality papers. We, nonetheless, acknowledge the criticisms we have received in the past for having delays in the publication process and having had biases and unreliability in the review system. Our editorial team is fully aware of these critiques and is committed to addressing these issues to see actionable outcomes. NJZ always welcomes suggestions, comments, and feedback from authors and readers to improve its quality.

On a final note— I see NJZ's role extend beyond academia, more so than ever now, in this world affected by climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. We are indeed living in extraordinary times where at the cost of the human tragedy from the COVID-19 pandemic, we have witnessed how nature has eventually gotten a powerful capacity to repair itself. The theme for the World Environment Day this year, '*Time for Nature*', is timely in that regard— zoo pandas have finally had a chance to mate at Ocean Park, Hong Kong; daily global carbon emissions have reduced, albeit temporarily; rare animals have been sighted; and animal markets are being rethought of. But this theme is also a reminder that pandemics will be more likely if we continue to assault the environment. It is in our hands to restore the environment and ensure a better future. And an even more important role as researchers, for our works have the potential to inform the policies that will impact the environment.

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