

12-1-2023

## Science Foundations and the Bulletin

Bret Collier  
*Wildlife Society Bulletin Editorial Team*

Anna Knipps  
*Wildlife Society Bulletin Editorial Team*

Jeff Levensgood  
*Wildlife Society Bulletin Editorial Team*

Ashley Tunstall  
*Wildlife Society Bulletin Editorial Team*

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### Recommended Citation

Collier, B., Knipps, A., Levensgood, J., & Tunstall, A. (2023). Science Foundations and the Bulletin. *Wildlife Society Bulletin*, 47 (4) <https://doi.org/10.1002/wsb.1503>

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## Science Foundations and the *Bulletin*

I try to teach a graduate seminar on wildlife population dynamics at least once a year. In that class, I ask the students what papers they think had the greatest impact on wildlife ecology and management. I typically get a laundry list of works on whatever the fancy new statistical method is for estimating a demographic, space use, a genetic parameter or what not and as expected; suggestions tend to skew towards the individual students field of study/interest. While I am certain that all of the papers suggested are good papers, I often wonder about what impact those papers really have on conservation and management? Do they represent complete paradigm shifts that cause our field to entirely rethink our past and our future approaches to how we collect conservation data, or do they just represent a refinement to an extra decimal place of a more general approach we already use?

In context, I was looking at papers from the *Wildlife Society Bulletin* while I was at The Wildlife Society's Annual Conference in Louisville. I realized during that review that *Wildlife Society Bulletin* papers have been the archetype of paradigms in wildlife conservation and management. I think about the paper by Johnson et al. (2001) on *Statistics for wildlifers: how much and what kind?* and the influence that had on graduate students (including myself) interested in statistical ecology. What about Hunter (1989), who in 2 pages on *Aardvarks and Arcadia: two principles of wildlife research* detailed for graduate students the importance of hypotheses and the need to consider larger questions at broader scales? And of course, there is Anderson (2001) on *The need to get the basics right in wildlife field studies*, which I would argue in 4 pages represents the generality (sensu Dunham and Beaupre 1998) on which many subsequent papers focused on estimating  $p$  and increasing the accuracy of population parameter estimates, or those that the students always recommend to me as having the greatest impact.

I bring up these papers to point out that the *Wildlife Society Bulletin* is the wildlife conservation and management journal on which our field relies (perhaps unknowingly) heavily on, a fact that hit me full on at the TWS meeting this year. In support of my contention, I wanted to point out a simple number that I think encapsulates the reach of the *Bulletin* over the last several years. In 2018, the *Bulletin* had approximately 60,000 downloads (meaning 60 K downloads of *Bulletin* papers occurred), but, since the transition to Open Access in 2022, as of November 2023 we are at 147,000 downloads. Impact cannot be measured just in a ranking of a journal, but on the use of the content within that journal for conservation and management.

I do want to continue to remind everyone that the *Wildlife Society Bulletin* would not be what it is today if not for the hard work and efforts of the *Wildlife Society Bulletin's* Associate Editors. Being an Associate Editor is a truly rewarding experience, and if any of our readers would like to join our Associate Editor board, please feel free to contact me directly to discuss.

I would, as always, be remiss if I did not thank Dr. Anna Knipps, Dr. Jeff Levensgood, and Ms. Ashley Tunstall from the *Wildlife Society Bulletin* staff, as their support behind the scenes running the *Wildlife Society Bulletin* is one of reasons that the *Bulletin* has been successful. I also wanted to note that Ms. Tunstall recently graduated and has accepted a biologist position with Ducks Unlimited, and we here at the *Bulletin* wish her well! Finally, I continue to echo my previous calls to all readers and authors of the *Wildlife Society Bulletin*. If you are contacted to be a referee,

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please accept, as the expenditure of your time on others' work will support the expenditure of others' time on your work.

Bret Collier  
Anna Knipps  
Jeff Levensgood  
Ashley Tunstall  
*Wildlife Society Bulletin Editorial Team*

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