

Synopsis

New journal for ecological research that will help us avoid repetition, accelerate, and document supported hypotheses. Free for undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoc. Think of this as a home for your riskiest research, undergraduate theses, and unpublished thesis chapters - for now. Rapid, editor-only review for technical correctness.

Here is the front end site I built for discussion using wordpress:

<http://www.immediatescience.org>

and here is the back-end OJS site for the tools:

<http://library.queensu.ca/ojs/index.php/ISE/index>

Rationale

Why bother with journals or big publishers (and their profits)? Self publish. If you did this yourself on your own website or blog, that would be great. However, if we all did that, google might find it all, but it would be in different formats and would be messy. So, if you have cool stuff you want to get out now, immediately, use this journal. We have been thinking about this for a long time. I have several PhD experiments that I never published (but did the stats on and wrote up), have several trial projects never published, and have had about 10 honor's thesis students write up that I just don't have time to turn into a paper and then fight with peer-review for months on end. I was also thinking that an analogy for this idea (standardized self-publishing) would be datasets that are sitting around in paper notebooks or in file cabinets. This is not useful to anyone except those that collected the data. However, if I take the time to sit and enter it, at least it has utility to me and my students. So, let's do the same for all our work. Then, it can become be an inspiration for others and a nice way for all of us to share our results - immediately.

The format of current standard academic papers works – with an easy format to see and use. It is a pdf with introduction, methods, results, and a discussion. It has a journal name, volume, and page numbers with neighboring work by others that is similar. So, Queen's University has sponsored a new journal model using the Open Journal System.

This is a journal because we the community say it is and put our work there. The papers look great and are valid because others can use the material. If some are great, they will rise to the top of the web. If not, well, what happens to most papers anyway? My colleagues and I will check them all for technical correctness. Each will also get a DOI.

PlosOne is awesome but expensive and still peer-reviewed. The f1000 model of publish anything online is another option (but you have to pay, and it is a money making endeavor), and it is not a paper anyway - just an online post. So, let's provide our discipline with very limited, 'editor-reviewed' publications - only for technical correctness.

I have made up a checklist for editors (that will be transparent to the authors), but basically this is a journal where authors can publish honor's thesis papers, those middle chapters of graduate theses, or papers you want out right now - or papers that don't support the dominant hypothesis or are confirmatory in nature (good luck publishing those any where now even if it is tested in a unique system). Put them here. Every paper has an issue, page number, and DOI attached to it. It is free to undergraduate honor's students, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows and only \$50 per paper for everyone else. Always open access.

The main goal is to accelerate discovery in ecology and evolutionary biology (EEB), and we see at least two ways to do this - (1) avoid repetition of experiments that others have probably already done but never published and (2) publish findings more quickly and let download rates and post-publication open online review sort out the best or most useful ones.

It is called Immediate Science Ecology (ISE). There are two kinds of paper, experimental and review articles. The author must also identify when submitting whether the paper in each of these two categories is Discovery (preliminary or exploratory study), Documentation (confirmatory study or refutation of previous studies), or Development (a standard study similar to mainstream journals but novel and communicated immediately here). The job of the editor is to use the checklist to ensure the paper is appropriate (adequate data, methods clear, well written, etc.), and if not, it is returned immediately indicating which category is not satisfied. This is very, very limited review as we want stuff out online within 10 days. Queen's U is paying for a part-time copyeditor to edit the minor details and format as a standard paper just like IEE (<http://library.queensu.ca/ojs/index.php/IEE/index>). I am paying for the DOI registration fees.

So, let's try it. We are calling it Immediate Science Ecology (Ecology and Evol Biol for now) or ISE pronounced 'eyes'. Submit your work, and let's accelerate discover, discussion, and inquiry in EEB. We hope that by offering and using a model that is between 'no review' and 'full review' we can push the publishing industry to catch up and adapt to the open, online world. Folks can still use regular peer-reviewed journals for their bread and butter papers necessary for merit-based evaluations, however.... having a paper downloaded a few hundred times is also a good statistic (or having a few experts post reviews alongside it).

Other disciplines have a variety of review models accepted as standard, yet in EEB, we generally only recognize peer-reviewed articles as valid science. Time for a change and another venue for discovery - including this process.