EDITORIAL

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It is a great pleasure to write this editorial, having taken over from Roger Butlin, who has done such an outstanding job for *Heredit* over the last 4 years. As a conservation geneticist first based at the Institute of Zoology (London) and latterly at the Cardiff University, my research, along with many in the field, has evolved over the last 20 years with the rapid developments both in molecular technologies of ever-increasing precision and with changes in theoretical and statistical population genetics that have been just as profound. It is no great insight to observe that genetics as a science is currently undergoing a step change due to the virtual elimination of limits on sequencing capacity and developments in bioinformatics that allow us to handle and analyse enormous data sets. The pages of *Heredit* over the last few years certainly reflect these changes and I expect this transformation to accelerate in the near future.

I feel privileged to follow Roger and the many outstanding geneticists who went before him in taking the helm of this important journal, which has been publishing innovative research in the field of genetics since the late 1940s. As a Genetics Society journal, *Heredit* provides a forum for a wide variety of research in the field, marking it out from many others, especially in these times when the global proliferation of publications has driven increasing niche specialism in new titles. *Heredit*, therefore, fulfills a special role by giving opportunities to potentially important studies that may nevertheless not fit easily into the remit of other top 50 journals in the field. This plurality reflects the scope of the Genetics Society and could be regarded as one of *Heredit*'s 'unique selling points' compared with other journals. This diversity is therefore, in my opinion, to be celebrated, and has already led me, during the short time I have been in my role, to read and enjoy a wide diversity of papers in areas of genetic that are unfamiliar to me: a real perk of the job!

The aim of all at *Heredit* is to build on the excellent last 4 years under Roger's guidance—a period that has seen the journal's impact factor steadily increase to its 2011 value of 4.597, ranking of 27th in the Genetics and *Heredit* Journal Citation Reports list. The quality of papers routinely received by the journal is now extremely high and initiatives such as mandatory data archiving in DRYAD, the popular *Heredit* podcast, which will now increase in frequency to monthly,

clearly mark the journal's progress into the front rank of general genetics journals. Special issues will continue to be a major feature of the journal, with upcoming issues in 'Polyploidy, hybridisation and speciation' and in 'Quantitative genetics' coming soon. Oscar Gaggiotti, our Reviews editor, welcomes suggestions for review topics, and our intention is to be as flexible as possible in terms of the types of review we select—including perspectives for nascent areas of research where there may not yet be a large body of literature. Our goal is to progress the journal even further in the coming 3 years, and I would welcome any comments and suggestions on how to improve the journal and better serve the global community of geneticists who have a wide and general interest in the field.

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