

Dear readers of and contributors to Biodiversity and Natural History

Estimados lectores y colaboradores de Biodiversity and Natural History

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Welcome to the first issue of *Biodiversity and Natural History*, a peer-reviewed, open-access and electronic journal published by the Centro de Estudios en Biodiversidad de Chile (Center for Studies in Biodiversity). The journal was created in 2009 under the name of Boletín de Biodiversidad de Chile with the aim of being a contribution to the dissemination of the Chilean biodiversity and natural history. True to its original purpose, the journal only published Chilean manuscripts in the early years. However, as time went by, the journal also started to receive and publish manuscripts coming from elsewhere in the planet. Accordingly, the journal gradually became an international channel for the scientific promotion and dissemination of biodiversity and natural history and thus, the name of the journal, as well as its original scope and goals were no longer representative.

Because of this, in late 2014 the Editorial Board decided to change the original name of the journal to *Biodiversity and Natural History* and extend its scope and goals. Currently, the journal aims to be a contribution to the dissemination of biodiversity and natural history on all kinds of taxa, environments and spatio-temporal scales. The addition of an explicit spatio-temporal component in the scope was important as it clarifies that the journal publishes research from anywhere in the world (either conducted at local, regional or global level), as well as research on any geological era. An important process that also came along with the change of name of the journal was the inclusion of new international editors, a task that will continue over time. Indeed, at present, one third of the researchers who make up the Editorial Board of *Biodiversity and Natural History* are affiliated with research institutions located in countries other than Chile, such as USA, Mexico, UK, Switzerland and Ukraine.

As in the preceding title, *Biodiversity and Natural History* supports the concept that access to knowledge is a basic human right and not a good that must be commercialized. For this reason, the journal allows free access, download

and distribution of its contents, in addition to offering totally free publishing. Likewise, the journal welcomes manuscripts conducted either by researchers affiliated to academic or research institutions as well as independent researchers. We also encourage undergraduate students to submit their manuscripts. An innovation that is being implemented in the journal is the immediate publication of the manuscripts after acceptance, maximizing the visibility of manuscripts. This way of publishing will be implemented from the second issue and will be definitely adopted from the third issue.

The front cover of the current issue of the journal depicts a *Lycalopex culpaeus* (Molina, 1782), a canid commonly known as “Andean fox” or “zorro culpeo”, with a *Nothofagus-dominated forest* in the background. The Andean fox is a beautiful and charismatic animal that can be found almost throughout the South American continent. For some cultures the fox represents renewal and protection. In this sense, the image of the fox is consistent with the current stage of the journal: we are living a transition from the old to the new title. In addition, the image of the fox could be interpreted as a guardian that protects the ideals as well as the short- and long-term goals of the journal.

We encourage you to visit our new website (www.biodiversnathist.com) and submit your research to *Biodiversity and Natural History* and from already thank you very much to the authors who have contributed to the growth of this journal. Finally, we hope that these changes will stimulate more authors to consider the publication in this journal.