

## Returning to normal – Travel Grant Reports



### Ada F. Eslava reports on her attendance at the British Ecological Society Meeting at the end of 2022

Last December I attended the 2022 BES Annual Meeting in Edinburgh. The meeting gathered ecologists from the UK and abroad in a group of more than a 1000 delegates, and the meeting represented a great opportunity to learn about the most recent advances in the field, and to showcase my research.

I presented a talk with title “Temporal change in the trait redundancy of a freshwater fish endemism hotspot”. This study gives insight into how prevalent introductions of non-native and local extirpations of native species impact the trait redundancy of fish assemblages in Central Mexico, an area known to harbour high endemism of freshwater fishes. We show that native fish that have been extirpated from their habitats tend to have more distinct traits

than native remaining taxa, and that non-native fish introduce both distinct and redundant traits depending on their vector of introduction. I had the opportunity to talk about these results with other delegates, and attending other talks gave me many ideas on follow-up studies I could carry out. I was also very happy to see how fish research continues to contribute to moving the field of ecology forward!

This Conference was the perfect way to end last year, catching up with colleagues I hadn't seen in some time and, overall, just having a great time! I am very grateful to the FSBI Travel Grant for funding this trip and supporting my research!



### Nathan Price used an FSBI Travel Grant to attend the International Coral Reef Symposium (ICRS), July 2022 in Bremen, Germany

Nathan's PhD supervisor is Dr Colin Kuo-Chang at Tunghai

University, Taiwan. Nathan's trip was also funded by the National Council of Science and Technology NCST, formerly MOST, Taiwan).

The International Coral Reef Symposium included 9 plenary talks, a science-to-policy dialogue, 2 social tours, 6 science tours, 12 workshops and 791 in-person oral and poster presentations. I presented a poster highlighting some of our preliminary findings focusing on the ecological importance of giant clams for coral reef fishes, both *in-situ* and in lab-based experiments.

To have the chance to participate and present at the ICRS 2022 was incredibly important for me and also came at a pivotal moment in my career as an aspiring scientist. The FSBI travel grant allowed me to travel from Taiwan to Germany to gain this extremely valuable experience, right before I started my Ph.D. in Taiwan on similar research topics. Not only that, attending the conference allowed me to network with scientists from many backgrounds and countries, to the extent I now have some international collaborators for my Ph.D. and different projects in our lab. Finally, as my supervisory team is international, the grant allowed me to meet my supervisors and discuss and develop my proposed Ph.D. project. Overall, this experience has inspired and assisted me, both personally and professionally in ways I did not imagine prior to attending.

# Editorial

As the World Health Organisation recently announced, the Covid pandemic is considered to be over. Its effects have profoundly changed the way in which many organisations do their work. For the Society, moving all activities onto Zoom or Microsoft Teams did not have a serious effect on the basic activities. Committees still met and the journal was published. Activities that are predicated on people travelling were of course stopped so removing the need for the popular Travel Grants. It is now great to see that the Travel Grant scheme is beginning to be re-established and this issue of the Newsletter has the first fruits of this in the form of two reports. The Training Grant scheme is new as Nigel Milner reports and this issue includes two reports from recipients of these grants. One was for an online course but the other required travel. I am hoping that over the next few months the flow of reports will increase and life will have returned to normal.

As many have reported, the end of the pandemic has not meant a return to exactly how we worked before March 2020. I think we all began to realise that making

long journeys to attend a meeting which lasted just three hours, was not good for us as individuals or for the planet. Although the disadvantage of long journeys was apparent to many before Covid, the institutional inertia which attends the establishment of any organisation, inhibits change. It has been said by a distinguished sociologist that an institution is “... an internally justified fixed set of arbitrary rules designed so that a group of people can perform a particular function”. This sounds very simple but the problem with people in institutions is that they cannot stop elaborating on the set of arbitrary rules or the particular function. Institutions evolve and as they do so they can become more and more elaborate and the function for which they were formed to execute can become either changed or distorted.

I have always thought that the FSBI has avoided some of the pitfalls of an evolving institution. It has been an organisation that is quick to take decisions on new initiatives and has maintained its function as a facilitator of fisheries research and the development of new talent. I

think one of its strengths is that the Society has no buildings and no employees. The existence of these creates commitments that promote expansion and creates inertia. Both buildings and employees require commitments to maintenance and to procedures that are a corollary of employing staff. Buildings become too small and have to be expanded, governments introduce new employment regulations that have to be implemented and these in turn often require more people to deal with the expanded workload. Once a system has been designed and implemented, there is resistance to change as this would cost money and upheaval.

So post-pandemic the FSBI is re-establishing some of its previous in person practices, the most significant of which is the summer symposium, but it will perhaps retain the online format for some meetings that do not require people to all sit in the same room.

Paul J B Hart  
Leicester, May 2023  
Next deadline: 1st August 2023

## New Inside the FSBI video – FSBI PhD Student, Ada Eslava

Check out the latest instalment of our ‘Inside the FSBI’ series where we hear from Ada Eslava, an FSBI funded PhD student. Ada tells us about her work in the freshwater streams and shallow rivers of the tropical mountains of Trinidad and Tobago’s northern range. She monitors fish communities utilising a number of different techniques such as seine netting, electrofishing and dip netting to get a representative view of the fish species living in a particular location.

Like and subscribe to our



YouTube channel for more videos delving into the world of fish and fisheries. If you are an FSBI member involved in work that contributes to the aims of the



Society, and you would like to feature in the series, please get in touch: perryw1@cardiff.ac.uk

# Professor Mike Kaiser, Editor in Chief reports on journal activity

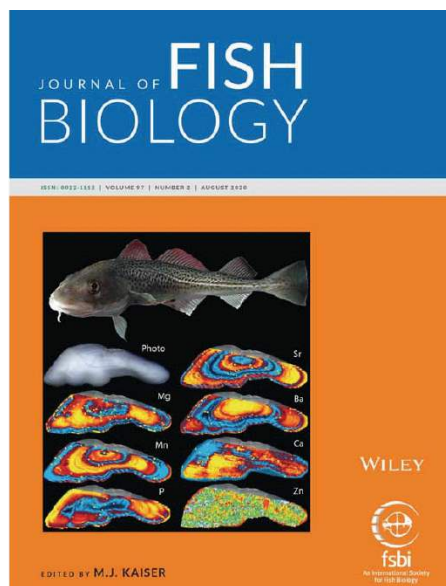


Since taking over the Editor in Chief role in 2019 the *Journal of Fish Biology* has changed a lot. The most important new feature of the Journal is our diversity on the editorial board. Nevertheless, we remain focused on balancing genders and improving our global coverage. Our international appeal is evidenced by the number of papers we publish from different parts of the world. Our publisher is quite clear that the data speak for themselves and we are truly international. As a result, we recently launched a recruitment drive for new editors (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10958649/homepage/recruitmentae> and see below) – specifically targeted at areas of the globe where we are under-represented, i.e. SE Asia, Africa and South and Central America. I'm excited to see who will respond to our call for new talent from across the globe. The new changes to the Journal have (hopefully) made the author experience a much smoother affair, with format free submission coming into effect in 2022. As we have now transitioned to on-line only format, this allows us to embed much more interactive elements in our papers. We now accept video format for figures such that short video clips can be played within a paper to

enhance the communication of the main science findings. Finally, it is always a huge pleasure to celebrate success. This is the second year we have run the competition for the Huntingford Medal to celebrate Early Career Researcher excellence. This year we had 62 submissions and an excellent short-list of six finalists from which a clear winner emerged with two commended papers. No spoilers here, but the medal winner also has been invited (and accepted) to join the Editorial Board, thereby ensuring we continue the flow of talent onto our editorial board.

[Mike has this year been elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh – congratulations. Ed.)

## Call for Assistant Editors to join the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Fish Biology*



The *Journal of Fish Biology* is strongly committed to promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) on the Editorial Board, which accurately represents the international readership of the

journal. We also strive to support the development of early-career and first-generation researchers. In our mission to promote EDI and early-career scientists, the Journal is expanding its editorial board to increase the number and diversity of **Assistant Editors**. In the first instance, the Journal is aiming to appoint 10 new Assistant Editors. All applications will be considered, however, we are strongly encouraging early-career scientists from Central and South America, Africa and Asia to apply. Applicants with expertise in all areas of fish biology, fish ecology, and fisheries are welcome to apply, but we are particularly seeking those with expertise in the fields of:

- Fish physiology
- Fish life histories
- Fish ecology
- Fish genetics and systematics (including eDNA)
- Biodiversity and conservation of fishes
- Invasion biology of fishes

Assistant Editors would be expected to handle 15 manuscripts per year on average and would be appointed for a period of three years. To apply, please find a link to the application form [here](#).

**Closing date 31st May 2023.**

Informal enquires should be directed to [katherine.sloman@uws.ac.uk](mailto:katherine.sloman@uws.ac.uk) in the first instance.

## My experience on the board of the *Journal of Fish Biology* and why you should join

Catherine Longo, Chair of the FSBI Equity Diversity & Inclusion committee; Principal Scientist, Marine Stewardship Council, London, UK



When Michel (Kaiser) asked me to write about my experience on the Editorial board for the *Journal of Fish Biology* I didn't have to think about it. Not just because I can easily recommend it to anyone who would like to expand their expertise, networks and

CV, but because it gives me the opportunity to encourage those of you who have never been on the other side of scientific publishing – on the decision-making side - to step in and become a part of it.

In informal discussions hosted by the FSBI Equity Diversity & Inclusion committee, I've heard FSBI Council members refer to the *Journal of Fish Biology* as one of the most inclusive elements within the Society, for publishing authors from many different countries. The direction of travel for the Journal, as laid out by the Editor in Chief, is to lean into this diversity, further encouraging more women, more early-career researchers, and more people from different backgrounds to join the board.

I personally have found it fascinating to interact with authors and reviewers from so many parts of the world, while also being part of internal discussions with other Editors and seeing the editorial strategy take shape. This type of interaction is, I think, one of the perks of being involved in a Society journal, especially one like JFB that is dynamically evolving.

In many ways these are challenging times for our planet and societies. Helping to improve our colleagues' papers is one small way to contribute positively to our community of peers and beyond, so I hope more of you will want to try it out!

## Environmental impacts of eliminating print copies of JFB for members

### Maggie Donnelly, Publisher, Wiley

As a research and education institution, Wiley is dedicated to interrogating insight and elevating evidence. When it comes to climate change, those facts are indisputable. So, we're acting now to limit our impact on the environment – for today and the long term. That's why Wiley has committed to near- and long-term company-wide emissions targets in line with science-based net-zero with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi).

As an organization, we are committed to being Carbon Net Zero by 2040 in line with the SBTi. This means that by 2040 we will have reduced emissions by over 90% when compared to our baseline of 2020. Wiley's initial target is to reduce emissions by 50% by 2030, compared to our baseline of 2020.

Although Wiley can make considerable changes to our workflows, business practices, and supply chains, we can't do

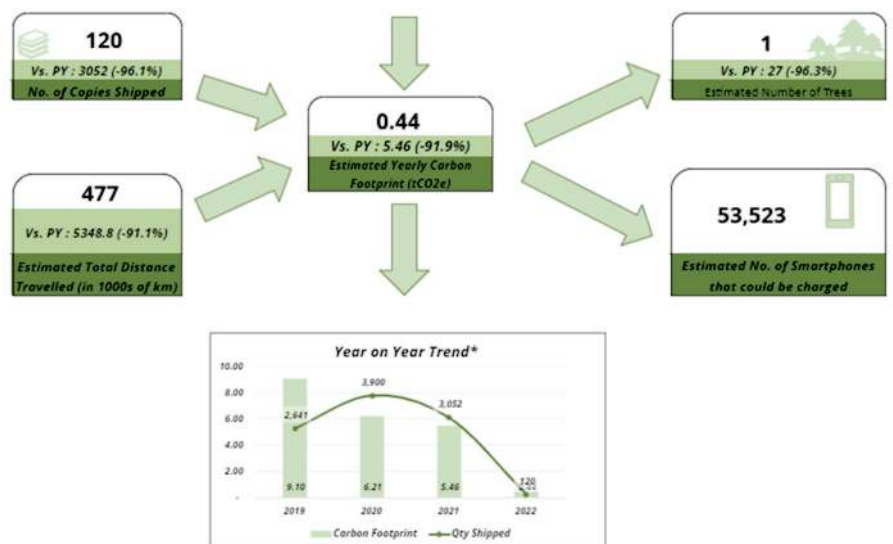
it alone. We're grateful to our society partners for joining us on this mission and to support our partners' own targets.

In April 2022, the FSBI transitioned its member access to the *Journal of Fish Biology* (JFB) to online only (the journal continues to provide print copies to three institutions globally). As a result, the journal saw a 92% reduction in its carbon footprint compared to 2021. The figure below illustrates

the impressive impact that this has had, without reducing FSBI members' access to the latest research published in JFB.

We sincerely thank the FSBI leadership and members for their support and open-mindedness towards this change, and welcome any feedback about the change in member access to JFB in this last year!

Vs. PY = versus prior year.



# Huntingford Medal winner for 2023



## Sofia Graça Aranha (PhD student)

From the CCMAR-Centre of Marine Sciences, Universidade do Algarve, Campus de Gambelas, 8005-139 Faro, Portugal

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jfb.15306?af=R>

Sofia Graça Aranha is a biologist and PhD student from the programme Marine, Earth and Environmental Sciences at the University of Algarve. She has an M.Sc in Marine and Coastal Systems and also, has a postgraduate degree in Marine Environmental Management. Throughout her academic and professional career she has always focused on marine science. During her bachelor degree, she studied the taxonomy of shark in the genera *Squalus* and *Cirrhigaleus*. Sofia has developed a shark conservation project called 'Shark FREE' as part of her postgraduate studies in Brazil. Recently, in the Masters programme of Marine and Coastal Systems at the University of Algarve, she evaluated the trophic ecology and ecophysiology of seven deep-water shark species from the southwest coast of Portugal, using a novel methodology on sharks using RNA/DNA ratios. She also evaluated

the diet and trophic position of these sharks using stable isotope analyses ( $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ :  $^{13}\text{C}/^{12}\text{C}$  and  $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ :  $^{15}\text{N}/^{14}\text{N}$ ). Currently, as a PhD student at CCMAR, she is continuing with the work developed for her master's degree, thus, expanding the focus to deep-water elasmobranchs and their survival rates in the bottom trawler fishery for crustacea, a project entitled DELASMOP.

Sofia is the co-founder of the Rio de Janeiro chapter of the renowned marine protection NGO Sea Shepherd, having dedicated years of volunteer work in coordinating marine conservation projects and activities. As a volunteer, she has also worked on great white shark research projects in South Africa, as well as having assisted in research on tonic immobility in small sharks of the Triakidae and Scyliorhinidae families. Sofia is a dive master and host of a Brazilian diving TV show that depicts endangered marine animals (especially sharks). In addition to her work with sharks, she has also worked as a marine mammal observer on board a seismic vessel along the Rio de Janeiro coast.

## The two commended authors are:



## Edna de la Llata Quiroga (PhD student)

From the Instituto Internacional en Conservación y Manejo de Vida Silvestre, Universidad Nacional, Costa Rica, Heredia, Costa Rica

For her paper "*Trophic ecology of juvenile bull sharks (Carcharhinus leucas) in the Coyote estuary, Costa Rica*"

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/jfb.15313>



## Dr Tiffany Sih (post doc)

Who was at the Marine Biology and Aquaculture, College of Science and Engineering, James Cook University, Townsville, Queensland, Australia, but is now at Monash University.

For her paper: "*High-resolution otolith elemental signatures in eteline snappers from valuable deepwater tropical fisheries*"

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/jfb.15059>

# Training grants and joint studentships

## The FSBI Training Grant

**Scheme** only started in April 2021. Initial take-up was hampered by Covid but is accelerating as people realise the value in having FSBI support to acquire more skills. A wide range of training has been funded, including statistical modelling, taxonomy, molecular methods, fisheries management and sampling techniques. The dates for training grants are 20th January, 1st May and 1st October, so get you applications in and improve your career chances.

Feedback shows the quality of the courses and extracts from the helpful feedback reports from Kirsten Gaffney and Jennifer Pytka are shown here.

## Joint Studentships with Institute of Fisheries Management.

FSBI student members will soon be contacted by the FSBI memberships team, offering them the opportunity to opt into the joint student membership with the IFM and gain reciprocal discounted rates. The IFM has an impressive programme of events and training schemes set out in their website <https://ifm.org.uk> and this move furthers the partnership between FSBI and IFM.

## Kirstin Gaffney, now a PhD student at the University of Newcastle, reports on a course run by Physalia.



The purpose of this grant was to attend a one-week online course run by Physalia and instructed by Greg Albery in ‘Network analysis in R’. In the hope of pursuing PhD study exploring fish social behaviour and given that social network analysis is becoming increasingly influential in this field, I believed it would be an invaluable skill to learn.

I attended this course from 24th-28th October 2022 via the platforms Zoom and Slack. It consisted of lectures, group discussions, coding demonstrations in R, quizzes and tasks working with datasets in R.

I really enjoyed how interactive this course was and it was easy to ask questions due to the small class size. There was a strong focus on practical analytical approaches and less on the maths and theory which I thought was great because it has provided me with skills to utilise network analysis in practice. I particularly appreciated the opportunity to apply the methods learned to my own data whilst receiving guidance from the instructor, Greg Albery, who helped me to develop plans for carrying out my own analysis. Greg was an excellent instructor; he is clearly an expert on the topic and was extremely helpful throughout, always very quick to answer questions. I did sometimes find it difficult to follow and understand the coding demonstrations in R, particularly as I was previously not very familiar with the ‘tidyverse’ package. I would suggest to anyone taking this course to first read ‘*R for Data Science*’ by H. Wickham and G. Grolemund (recommended by Physalia).

Since completing this course, I have been able to secure NERC funding to carry out a PhD utilising network analysis to explore anemonefish species differences

in social behaviour and how this might relate to individual recognition abilities and colour pattern variation. The knowledge and skills acquired from this course will therefore be highly beneficial to my future research and I am very grateful to the FSBI for rewarding me this training grant.

## Jennifer Pytkar, currently a PhD student at the University of Padova, Italy, reports on an ICES Course



This ICES course, “Statistical foundation for stock assessment”, was a weeklong workshop, exploring different tools and how to draw inferences from models, going beyond standard/typical linear models. My research deals directly with fisheries, fishers, and policy stakeholders, to develop effective management solutions. As such, a lot of my time is spent reviewing literature and critically analysing assessments. The description of the course sounded novel, and beneficial towards gaining a deeper understanding of statistical considerations during literature reviews and my own methods.

From the beginning, the course was very well organized and well communicated. Materials were sent out in advance and the instructions for the first day were clear. Any time I communicated

with ICES over email, the communication was prompt and clear.

The instructors were extremely professional, but approachable, and I appreciated that the lesson structure was laid out from the beginning. This was the first time ICES had offered the course and their enthusiasm was easy to see. We all discussed as a group our expectations and the instructors welcomed discussion, questions, and requests throughout the week.

The actual course content was quite different than I expected, and this was the feeling of many other participants as well. At times some exercises were out of my comfort zone, but because of the quality of instruction and an atmosphere that encouraged questions, I gained a lot from the

course. Overall, I was extremely impressed with the high standard of instruction provided.

Because the instructors are actively involved in producing stock assessments, I was very interested to understand their approaches. Expanding on my comment regarding an applied approach, the instructors were coming at it from more of a hard statistician approach, obviously given the course and their background. This with the introduction of their newly released package in R made the learning curve a bit steeper than I anticipated, but in the end, the training enhanced my experience, and I was forced to refresh long repressed statistical fisheries formulas. The course material is still available online for participants to revisit and we were

given additional materials to look to post-course.

I am looking forward to applying the course material and takeaways to my own research. The opportunity to connect with other fisheries scientists from many different regions, discussing one another's research, enriched my experience. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to attend this course, and really thank the FSBI for providing the opportunity for me to do so. Without your support, the total expenses (course, travel, and accommodations in Copenhagen -a beautiful but expensive city) would have put this experience out of reach. I look forward to more opportunities to engage with ICES, through trainings and working groups.

## Notices



The image is a promotional graphic for the World Fisheries Congress 2024 in Seattle. It features a stylized logo on the left consisting of blue and green circular elements. To the right of the logo, the text reads "WORLD FISHERIES CONGRESS" in large, bold, black letters, followed by "3-9 MARCH 2024" and "Seattle" in blue. Below this, the theme "Fish and Fisheries at the Food-Water-Energy Nexus" is written in green. At the bottom, there is a photograph of the Seattle skyline at dusk, with the Space Needle prominently featured. The website "wfc2024.fisheries.org" is displayed in white text over the skyline, and "Seattle, Washington, USA" is written in small white text at the bottom right of the image.

The WORLD FISHERIES CONGRESS is organized through the World Council of Fisheries Societies every four years. Delegates from around the world meet to exchange ideas and perspectives about new research, emerging issues, scientific breakthroughs, and governance related to fisheries science, industry, conservation, and management.

The Congress will be held on **3-9 March 2024** in Seattle, Washington, USA and the Congress theme will be *Fish and Fisheries at the Food-*

*Water-Energy Nexus* and will explore the many facets of our connections to fish and the habitats that support them. The congress will include plenary sessions featuring renowned speakers, topical general sessions, poster sessions, special symposia, panel discussions, networking events, workshops, International Fisheries Science Prize award, and a trade show all related to the various aspects of fisheries and our global societies. A list of special symposia and sessions can be found at:

<https://wfc2024.fisheries.org/list-of-sessions/>

As host city, Seattle is an ideal location for an international fish and fisheries conference, with an international airport, a light rail system, and public transportation. Seattle is also home to several academic, governmental and industry leaders in fish and fisheries sciences.

Call for Abstracts is now open and abstracts can be submitted online at: <https://wfc2024.fisheries.org/call-for-abstracts/>. All abstracts are due by 30 June 2023.

Speakers are expected to provide their own funding to attend the Congress, although all opportunities to apply for travel funding will be made available on the Congress website.

*Note: For individuals that require a visa to enter the United States, an expedited review of their abstracts can be requested to give enough time for a visa application process. Please contact WFC Visa Coordinator **Jon Aguilera** ([jaguilera@fisheries.org](mailto:jaguilera@fisheries.org)) for more information.*

# Call for Papers

## **Special Issue: Fisheries Society of the British Isles, Annual Symposium 2023: Fish habitat ecology in a changing climate. Submission deadline: 31 August 2023**

Understanding the factors driving fish behaviour, physiology, and survival is increasingly important during this period of unprecedented global change, given their implications for fisheries stability and ecosystem health. Habitat availability shapes fish population dynamics and eco-evolutionary trajectories. However, quantifying the habitat needs of fish across all life stages (and of their predators and prey) is challenging, relying on diverse approaches such as

field observations, laboratory experiments, genomics, chemical tracers, telemetry, and ecosystem modelling approaches. Successful integration of these data into management and policy requires open and constructive knowledge exchange between natural and social science researchers, stakeholders, managers and policymakers, and new tools to analyze and visualize these complex datasets. Building this social-ecological connectivity is particularly important in dynamic boundary systems (e.g. estuaries) and for protecting species characterised by trans-boundary movements (e.g. between rivers and sea; across jurisdictional borders).

We welcome submissions to this special issue that cover our broad and inclusive themes, including fish biogeography, habitat management/restoration, social-ecological connectivity, food

web dynamics, and One Health. The topics all have clear links to UN Sustainable Development Goals (e.g. Climate Action, Life Below Water), and the critical roles and services that fish provide, and are for a diverse, interdisciplinary, and international audience. Perspectives, reviews, and meta-analyses are strongly encouraged, especially with respect to future developments in the field. Consideration will also be given to other important or timely subjects that are related to, but not explicitly stated, in the themes above.

### **Guest Editors:**

**Dr Eoin O’Gorman**, University of Essex

**Dr Anna Sturrock**, University of Essex

**Dr Rui Vieira**, CEFAS

**Dr David Murrah**, CEFAS

**Martin Wilkes**, University of Essex

## Information Desk

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Secretary: Dr Ian Winfield

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