



Finally, the new international *Journal of Threatened Taxa* is launched. We are extremely happy to have made this beginning with an international journal based on our experience with *Zoos' Print Journal* published for eight consecutive years from April 1999 to December 2007. While the scope of *Zoos' Print Journal* was South Asia, this new initiative is for the world with the intention of specifically promoting speedy peer-reviewed publication of articles on conservation and taxonomy. Key features of the *Journal of Threatened Taxa* include: (i) complete open access – no publication or subscription costs; (ii) free downloads; (iii) all articles published are registered under Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License unless otherwise mentioned, which allows for unrestricted use in any medium for non-profit purposes, reproduction and distribution provided adequate and due credit to the authors and the source of publication is accorded; (iv) publication lag time of less than two months after final acceptance; (v) a truly international editorial committee (steadily expanding) with empathy towards publication needs for conservation and taxonomy, and the need for speedy publication for effective conservation.

Why the name *Journal of Threatened Taxa*? We were expecting this question to pop up in several peoples' minds, but in the build up to the launch, we were surprised to hear from less than five people. In deciding on the name, the think tank at WILD/ZOO had thought about the different concerns and had spoken to several conservationists, scientists, taxonomists and academics from around the world who understood the concept and encouraged us to proceed with the name. Some concerns voiced include accepting articles only on the IUCN Red List defined threatened species and not on species that are not threatened. However, 'threatened' is an overarching term that not only includes all threatened species in the IUCN Red List, but also includes a whole suite of scenarios that have led or could lead to taxa or ecosystems becoming threatened.

The term "threatened" in the *Journal of Threatened Taxa* is defined broadly to include all forms of taxa and their

ecosystems, with the premise that the natural world today is threatened and therefore its taxa. Taxa could be threatened in several different ways, not only in their status in the wild. Lack of knowledge about a species or subspecies or a population is a threat as priorities could be compromised due to deficiency in data. Taxa scientifically described for the first time are under threat from data deficiency in their distribution, status, ecological needs, etc. Any taxon could be under threat in a location due to the changes in habitat or quality. Ecological changes, changes in land use, socio-economic changes, human influenced changes, alien introduced species, wrong reintroduction practices, new emerging diseases, social and political unrest, improperly planned national and international wildlife and conservation legislations, constant changes in taxonomy, global climate change, and other factors that keep our environment and ecosystems in a constant flux can have widespread or localized impacts on taxa. In some instances even the so-called Least Concern species could be impacted locally or widely due to the above factors.

*JoTT's* logo is a talking piece of art in itself. It has been designed by the famous international wildlife artist, Stephen Nash, who has combined the near ubiquitous cultural and religious depiction of the Green Man with that of the symbolism it has for the present day need for humans to work in tandem and in deference to nature and her principles. Stephen has illustrated a representation of biodiversity in the Green Man for the journal and has kept it fairly printable.

I take this opportunity to invite you all to contribute to making this effort a success and spread the word around to encourage others to contribute too. Our aim is to make publishing fun and fill the need of the hour for biodiversity-rich countries around the world by responsible and speedy publication for effecting action and positive change.

Sanjay Molur and Sally Walker  
 Founding Editor and Editorial Advisor  
 26 January 2009