

Running Commentaries: Defining Eusociality

Annales Zoologici Fennici has instituted several changes in recent years. While all are designed to provide the reader a better view of the field of zoology and its research innovations, several changes stand out amongst the others. We have expanded the number of issues each volume from four to six, have edited thematic special issues (e.g., *Extinction Thresholds* vol. 40(2) and *Recognition Systems* vol. 41(6)), and have published featured articles covering issues of importance to the field (e.g., Pigliucci 2002, Roff 2003, Frankham & Brook 2004). This issue contains another first for us — a running commentary.

Running commentaries are designed to share discussions on points of disagreement. In many ways these can serve as excellent springboards to a larger discussion on topics of interest. Certainly they share the philosophy behind disagreements in a way that is often unclear when stated within the confines of a single article. This issue contains a running commentary on the definition of eusociality (Costa & Fitzgerald 2005, Wisclo 2005, Crespi 2005, Lacey & Sherman 2005).

This is a particularly apt discussion for our first running commentary as it addresses two issues of great significance: the general value of a uniform language and, specifically, a disagreement over how to define a social system that Darwin himself felt provided challenges to his theory of natural selection (Darwin 1859). With respect to the former, this journal has recently stressed the importance of a unified language (e.g., see Starks 2004). Simply stated, uniformity of terms facilitates comparisons across systems. These comparisons may be used scientifically, for example, to uncover examples of convergent evolution, or used practically, for example, to introduce research techniques from one system to another. With respect to eusociality, any discussion on a topic considered of special importance for biology's primary unified theory is of great relevance within the field of zoology.

Future commentaries will be considered, and the editors will welcome proposals. We at *Annales Zoologici Fennici* hope you enjoy the following running commentary and find it informative.

Philip T. Starks, Editor & Juha Merilä, Editor-in-Chief

References

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