

EDITOR'S NOTE

## Research and Research Communication



Research rarely discovers ultimate truths, but ongoing efforts help us develop our understanding layer by layer to gain the best insight compatible with our capacities. Research communication is important to share our understanding and help us move to the next level. While advancement of knowledge can be delivered by individual efforts to synthesize a coherent picture, it is often aided by the feedback of others.

Authors have a staggering array of options to publish their findings in the modern world. While shouting from the Internet rooftops could generate wide interest in some cases, there remains a great comfort in filtering the thoughts of an individual or group through peer review prior to public release. Peer review is not necessary to achieve good work, or even great work, but when it is conducted effectively it can help almost any work be better. Authors have many questions to consider in selecting a target journal: the impact factor of the publication, the expected quality and propriety of reviews, the readership most readily reached, the anticipated time required to complete the review process, and, increasingly, the cost of publishing. The shift towards online publication has fostered the creation of many new journals; some maintaining high peer review standards, and some prioritizing the fast release of results. It is important for authors to remember that the scientific literature will stand as the historical record of our efforts. It is worth ensuring that the most appropriate critical evaluation of any work is completed prior to publication. The cautionary note is that the process of critical evaluation does not end with publication. The published work is, instead, simply a stationary target. The current technology that facilitates publication also makes it easier to link critical evaluations to any published work. These can take the form of critical letters or even retractions, the latter being a reality that we all want to avoid needing to pursue.

I am proud of the reviewers and publication team working with *Wilderness & Environmental Medicine*, many on a volunteer basis, to ensure a high level of critical evaluation of all potential content. Our goal is the

thoughtful and appropriate disposition of every piece submitted for consideration. We help to bring out the best in every manuscript when we can, even in those not accepted for publication. This serves our community of authors, the readership, and the world of scientific literature. It is incumbent on the community, though, to remain engaged to ensure the appropriate record for every published piece. If articles require correction or merit discussion—positive or negative—we want the community to engage through letters to the editor as well as by developing new research plans. When flags are raised, we advance the discussion by inviting the original authors to participate in a productive exchange.

Ultimately, we need to promote critical evaluation and effective communication of science to ensure wider understanding across society. We want to be part of an engaged community for the benefit of current and future scientists and citizens.

Our current issue delivers a wide range of material to the readership. We have original research reports on: the prophylactic use of acetaminophen and ibuprofen related to acute mountain sickness; poison control center cases involving the Texas bull nettle; a manikin model to evaluate tourniquet effectiveness; the impact of an upper body compression garment during cycling in a hot environment; and the implications of interfang distances in rattlesnakes. Case reports discuss the use of unmanned drone aircraft in search and research operations, and a traumatic pneumothorax resulting from a stingray injury. A brief report addresses residence altitude as a factor in maintaining oxygen saturation and reducing acute mountain sickness during fast altitude ascents. Review articles consider skin pathologies in the mountain wilderness, and prevention of friction blisters. We also have a robust showing of clinical images, and, as a credit to the authors submitting it, a single small correction to a previous report.

Neal W. Pollock, PhD  
*Editor-in-Chief*