
From its inception, the offices of the AAZN have been at the National Museum of Natural History of the Smithsonian Institution, which houses more than 100 professional zoological systematists, the largest concentration of systematists in the United States. The Museum has provided office space and rooms for meetings as well as support for duplicating and mailing. For the Smithsonian to be an integral part of this new organisation is most fitting, for the Smithsonian also had housed the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, and its first Secretary, C. W. Stiles, from 1895 to 1936; many of the early Opinions of the Commission were published in the Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections.

The activities of the AAZN since 1984 have largely been concerned with organizational matters and the development of rudiments of a support base in the United States from individuals and institutions. This was made possible with a start-up grant of $1500 provided by S. Dillon Ripley, then Secretary of the Smithsonian, who recognized the importance of the work of the AAZN. Organizational activities included incorporation in the District of Columbia, a prerequisite to seeking tax-exempt status from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, and recognition of the AAZN as a tax-exempt organization. Thus, from the beginning, memberships and contributions to the AAZN have been fully tax deductible for American supporters.

The AAZN has two primary purposes, (a) to raise money in the United States to provide direct financial support from American systematists for the work of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature through tax-deductible memberships and donations, and (b) to provide a liaison between the American systematic community and the Commission. Any new organization must develop some recognition, and AAZN activities since 1984 reflected this. Individuals, scientific societies, and other institutions were contacted to publicize the existence and the activities of the AAZN. These activities helped the AAZN to achieve its primary purpose, and the establishment of a newsletter in 1985 contributed towards both objectives.
The present goal of the AAZN is to raise at least $10,000 a year in support of the activities of the Commission. American systematists generate almost 25% of the workload of the Commission, so they should be willing to provide a reasonable amount of the funds required to keep the Commission operating.

In 1984 the AAZN contributed $500 to the International Trust in support of the Commission’s work. This was the first major financial contribution to the Commission from the United States. The 1985 contribution to the Trust from the AAZN was $2000. The contribution for 1986 from the AAZN has not been determined by the AAZN’s Council, but the amount should be substantially higher.

Membership in the AAZN totalled 110 individuals and 10 institutions in December 1985, and rose to 250 individuals and 15 institutions by the end of 1986. The following American organizations have provided support for the AAZN since 1984:

- American Entomological Society
- American Museum of Natural History
- American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists
- American Society of Mammalogists
- American Society of Parasitologists
- American Type Culture Collection
- Biological Society of Washington
- Biosciences Information Service
- The Cleveland Shell Club
- The Crustacean Society
- Field Museum of Natural History
- Helminthological Society of Washington
- Harold W. Manter Laboratory, University of Nebraska
- National Museum of Natural History
- Point Loma Biology Laboratory
- Brayton H. Ransom Memorial Trust Fund
- Smithsonian Institution
- Society of Systematic Zoology
- Southern California Association of Marine Invertebrate Taxonomists

In 1987 the AAZN plans to continue to build a support base from individuals and organizations, working towards its present goal of 500 American members. In addition, its activities will include publicizing, in North America, the redesigned Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature and publicizing and marketing the 1987 edition of the Official Lists and Indexes of Names and Works in Zoology in North America.

Interested persons are invited to write to Dr Raymond B. Manning at the address given above.

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.5962/bhl.part.251
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