

## PREFACE

This papers in issue of the Journal of the Royal Society of Western Australia take a number of different approaches to the biodiversity of the State, and in particular the manner in which humanity has affected the communities of animals.

The first paper examines in which Ant (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) diversity is influenced by tree thinning in the Western Australian jarrah (*Eucalyptus marginata*) forest.

For several decades it has been assumed that there is a close correlation between the size of an island and its biodiversity. A number of studies had shown that this holds true both for 'real' islands - scraps of land surrounded by ocean – and 'habitat' islands. The second study in this issue examines the invertebrate communities of bushland fragments in the Albany area, in the south of the State of Western Australia. The conclusion reached is that it appears to be the extent of vegetation cover and not the size of vegetation remnants that determines composition and diversity of ground-dwelling arthropods.

The third paper is autecological rather than synecological. It documents the habitat usage, distribution and potential impacts for a little known species of skink, known only from a small area of the Cape Lambert region on the north-west coast of Western Australia. As the species is classified as vulnerable, the study is of special interest.

For some years an annual post-graduate student symposium has been run by the Society, to give an opportunity for graduate students at WA's universities to put forward their researches. Two extended abstracts from the October 2014 symposium are included here – both are on strongly 'applied' topics. One is on the oral delivery of double-stranded RNA and the effects of RNA interference on the green peach aphid, (*Myzus persicae*); the other on biogas for Sub-Saharan Africa: the current situation and opportunities for improving dissemination.

An abstract from the 2015 Symposium considers the stratigraphic architecture and the evolution of a barrier seagrass bank in the mid-late Holocene at Shark Bay. Another from the same symposium describes stabilized frequency transfer for the Square Kilometre Array, a radio-telescope now being planned for Western Australia.

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