

Hacquetia: 20th year ahead

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Ključne besede: obletnica, bibliometrija, geografska razširjenost, jugovzhodna Evropa.

Abstract

Hacquetia is entering 20th year and in editorial we are presenting history of journal in this period, statistics of authors diversity, geographical distribution of published papers and bibliometrics. We highlighted fruitful collaboration with guest editors, the most cited articles and presented future goals.

Izvleček

Hacquetia je vstopila v dvajseti letnik in v uvodniku predstavljamo zgodovino revije v tem obdobju, statistiko raznolikosti avtorjev, geografsko razširjenost objavljenih člankov in bibliometrijo. Izpostavili smo plodno sodelovanje z gostujočimi uredniki, najbolj citirane članke in predstavili cilje za prihodnost.

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Founding – aim and scope

In 2021, we are celebrating twenty years of the scientific journal Hacquetia, founded by the Institute of Biology ZRC SAZU. In the present editorial, we present the history and development of the journal over its first 19 volumes, together with basic statistics of publication. The scope of Hacquetia comprises topics from the fields of taxonomy, floristics, faunistics, vegetation ecology, biocoenology and palynology, but it is also emphasised that more general topics are also addressed. The geographical scope of the journal was originally oriented towards south-eastern Europe.

The journal primarily publishes papers from vegetation science, although contributions from zoology, systematic botany, floristics and palynology have also appeared in the reported period, as can be seen from the key words of published papers (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Tag cloud composed of key words of papers published in Hacquetia.

Slika 1: Oblak oznak, ki ga sestavljajo ključne besede člankov, objavljenih v reviji Hacquetia.

Establishment of Hacquetia

The journal's publication and its appearance reflect the development of research in a specific environment over time. The jubilee 20th issue of Hacquetia is still within the time frame in which the majority of researchers that were involved in its founding are still active. Their activities and development, as well as conditions for their research activities over this period, are reflected in the issues of Hacquetia. Through published articles, we can trace the development of the ideas, efforts and results of scientific work, and some information about the establishment of Hacquetia can also be gained from editorials that were included in the first volumes of Hacquetia (Čarni 2003, Čarni 2005) and their memories of this procedure. We can in this way catch the spirit of those times.

The establishment of the journal was connected with development of the Institute of Biology ZRC SAZU in the last decade of the 20th century. The role of Narcis Mršič must be acknowledged, a prominent Slovene zoologist who was also active in scientific policy-making, and who stimulated the founding of a journal that would publish articles about the natural heritage. He considered that the new generation of researchers that had begun their career at that time needed a medium to publish the results of their research activities. The situation matured a few years later. There were some concerns, but the idea was realised.

Hacquetia was initially designed to publish articles on research results in the field of the natural heritage, primarily from south-eastern Europe although it was also open to the wider area. An initial goal was also to publish articles in the Slovene language in order to promote development of scientific terminology, but this idea was later abandoned since the journal became fully international. It was already stressed at the beginning that a high quality of articles would be the main criterion for publication.

Hacquetia was founded in 2002. We took advantage to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Lojze Marinček, an important Slovene phytosociologist whose scientific life was devoted to research of the forest vegetation of Slovenia. The establishment of the journal also coincided with the 50th anniversary of the Institute of Biology ZRC SAZU.

The name of the journal was not chosen at random. The title Hacquetia was chosen to commemorate the prominent naturalist Balthasar Hacquet (1739-1815), a typical representative of the enlightenment period, who worked in Slovenia as a physician for more than 20 years and contributed to the development of natural sciences (above all in geology and botany) and general knowledge of Slovenia and its inhabitants. A monotypic plant genus *Hacquetia* was named after him, with *Hacquetia epipactis* as a characteristic species of Illyric beech forests. Moreover, Hacquetia is also an extinct genus of prehistoric bony fish that lived from the early to middle Eocene. The name therefore symbolically combines the animal and plant worlds, representing the wider scope of the journal.

There were some concerns at the beginning as to whether a new journal was needed and whether it had the potential to survive among the multitude of different journals. We were delighted that the first volume of the journal was already welcomed by a number of prominent scientists from that period, such as Salvador Rivas-Martínez and Hartmut Dierschke, as well as researchers from the younger generation that are leading in their field today, such as Milan Chytrý and Jean-Paul Theurillat.

The journal survived the initial stages and has become a well-established international journal. Its scope is broad but most articles represent studies in plant sciences. This

is probably a reflection of a specific niche, a lack of such journals in this part of Europe and the scientific network of the journal's founders. As with any new journal, this is also a result of the submitted manuscripts, since a journal is a place that unites authors, reviewers, the editorial board and the financing body. The content of journal is influenced by all these stakeholders; it is like plants, which may possess a broad niche but grow in the areas in which they find good conditions, where all site factors are adequate. At the same time, the group of people that are involved in the publishing process are also affected by external influences, such as the evaluation of scientific success, general trends in a particular scientific field, project financing etc. The development of Hacquetia is thus also a reflection of developments in scientific policies.

From a distance of 20 years, the contribution that Hacquetia has made to the development of science can also already be assessed. At the beginning of this century, major efforts occurred in Europe to describe the characteristics of vegetation on regional or national scales, and Hacquetia offered a place for publication of original plot data that allowed the preparation of such overviews. A number of them have been published (Chytrý et al. 2016), including the *Conspectus of Vegetation Syntaxa in Slovenia* (Šilc & Čarni 2012) published in Hacquetia. The next step was collating the vegetation of Europe (Mucina et al. 2016), in which Hacquetia was one of the media for publishing new findings in order to fill the gaps and provide new nomenclatural solutions. The majority of vegetation plot data published in Hacquetia are digitalized and stored in the European Vegetation Archive, the database of European vegetation plots. The most recent result of the use of this data depository is the formalized characterization of European habitats, achieved with an automatic expert-system based procedure (Chytrý et al. 2020). It represents one of the fundamentals for European nature conservation. Moreover, these vegetation plot data are now also integrated in sPlot, the largest repository of plant community data in the world (Bruehlheide et al. 2019), which allows elaboration of data on a global scale.

However, this is only part of Hacquetia's contribution to the development of science. Mention should also be made of a series of issues resulting from the activities of the Eurasian Dry Grassland Group. Their approach is not exclusively oriented to plant life, but treats grasslands all over Eurasia in a holistic way. They integrate all parts of biodiversity with abiotic factors and connect them to human activities, which are crucial for maintaining dry grasslands, at least in areas in which the primary vegetation is forest.

Hacquetia also publishes studies on individual plant taxa, from endangered endemic species to invasive neophytes. These papers/articles present findings on their mo-

lecular and morphological diversity and their distribution.

All the enumerated topics in the fields of botany and vegetation in the widest sense show the important contribution of Hacquetia. In addition to these subjects, several papers have been published dealing with topics in zoology. For example, butterflies, spiders and large carnivores. This field of Hacquetia has been neglected in the past, and we must stimulate submission of such manuscripts in order to integrate also zoologists in the Hacquetia community.

Since the editors and editorial board are a crucial part of Hacquetia, we would like to acknowledge their contribution. In 2001, the founding Editor-in-Chief (EiCs) of the journal was Andraž Čarni. and the two founding co-editors were Boštjan Surina and Urban Šilc. After Andraž Čarni stepped down in 2005, the journal was edited by Tatjana Čelik for a year, after which Urban Šilc took over the responsibilities of Editor-in-Chief and remains so today. The first members of the editorial board were Igor Dakskobler (Slovenia), Vlado Matevski (Republic of Northern Macedonia) and Livio Poldini (Italy). The editorial board was later expanded to include Ingi Agnarsson (USA), Andraž Čarni (Slovenia), Igor Dakskobler (Slovenia), Ivan Kos (Slovenia), Petra Košir (Slovenia), Simona Kralj-Fišer (Slovenia), Matjaž Kuntner (Slovenia), Vlado Matevski (Republic of Northern Macedonia), Ladislav Mucina (Australia), Boštjan Surina (Croatia) and Ellen E. Strong (USA), with an additional 10 members of the advisory board. The first members were mostly from the founding institute, but the board was later internationalized and various eminent members were invited to join it. In the near future, the board will be additionally strengthened by new members and a managing editor. The editorial board and peer reviewers will continue to guarantee the quality of published papers.

Hacquetia is published by Založba ZRC, the scientific publishing house of ZRC SAZU, which publishes scientific journals and books mainly produced by institutes of the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts. In 2007, Hacquetia also signed a contract with the academic publisher Versita, from Poland (today Sciendo, part of De Gruyter), which enabled the journal wider visibility and inclusion in several new databases. In 2016, we modernized the design and started to publish in full colour. The same year, we moved to the Open Journal System (<https://ojs.zrc-sazu.si/hacquetia/index>) with on-line submission of manuscripts and on-line early publication (immediately after acceptance). At the same time, we also made freely available on-line all published issues since 2002. This enabled even better visibility of journal, although the journal was always present on-line and is exchanged with all important scientific institutions and libraries. Transition to XML format is being planned for 2022.

Guest editors

Over these 20 years, we have twice had successful cooperation with external editors. The first was already in the second year, with 14 invited papers about Balthasar Hacquet (Šumrada 2003), his work and importance for science in Slovenia and Europe. This issue was edited by Janez Šumrada.

The collaboration with EDGG (Eurasian Dry Grassland Group) that started in year 2014 is even more fruitful and has resulted in six special issues or features (Dengler et al. 2014, Carboni et al. 2015). EDGG is a network of researchers and conservationists interested in Palaearctic natural and semi-natural grasslands. It has well developed publishing activity and has used Hacquetia as one of its publication venues. Several prominent researchers have served as guest editors (Orsolya Valkó, Jürgen Dengler, Stephen Venn, Idoia Biurrun, just to mention few) in collective guest editorial boards appointed by EDGG. The most recent papers invited by EDGG are also part of the current jubilee issue (Valkó et al. 2021).

Indices and citations

Hacquetia is included in 42 citation and abstract databases, in Scopus since 2007 and in Biological Abstracts and Biosis Previews (both Clarivate) since 2011, just to mention the most prominent. All citation metrics show an increase in recent years, as a result of publishing high-quality papers and an increasing reputation (Figure 2).

Since the journal's first issue, we have published 285 papers, with a fairly constant number of published papers per year. We are currently aiming at increasing the number of papers but not at the expense of inferior quality. The papers have been authored by 389 different authors affiliated with institutions in 39 different countries. The most cited papers are listed in Table 1.

Geographically, in line with the original geographical scope, most published studies were conducted in south-eastern Europe, which was also the original scope of journal (Figure 3). Nevertheless, many papers have recently been submitted and published with studies from Eastern Europe, Asia and North Africa. Most recently,

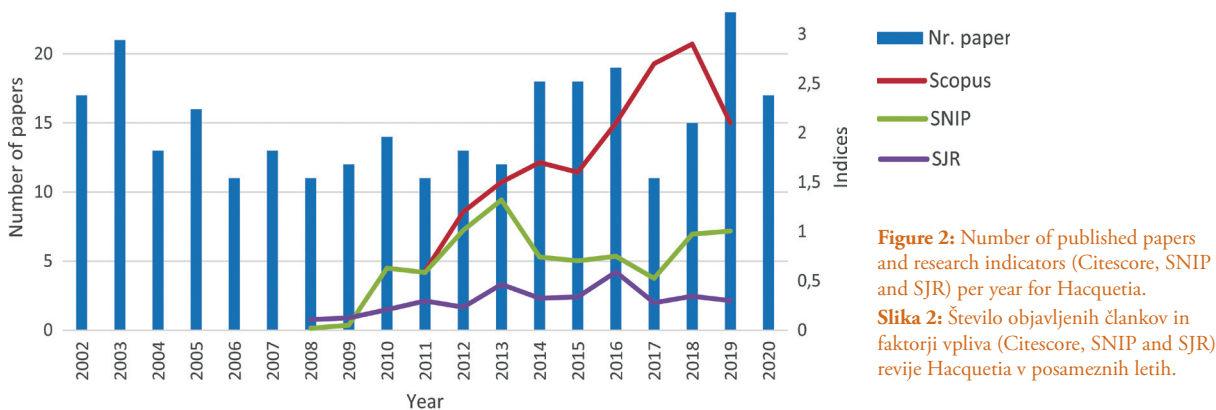


Figure 2: Number of published papers and research indicators (Citescore, SNIP and SJR) per year for Hacquetia.

Slika 2: Število objavljenih člankov in faktorji vpliva (Citescore, SNIP and SJR) revije Hacquetia v posameznih letih.

Table 1: Top 10 cited papers published in Hacquetia over the period 2002–2020 based on citations in Scopus (as of late 2020).

Tabela 1: Deset največkrat citiranih člankov v reviji Hacquetia v obdobju 2002–2020 na podlagi baze Scopus (do konca leta 2020)

Authors and year	Title
Šilc & Čarni (2012)	Conspectus of vegetation syntaxa in Slovenia
Di Pietro et al. (2015)	The forest vegetation of the Tolfa-Ceriti mountains (northern Latium – Central Italy)
Di Pietro (2015)	New dry grassland associations from the Ausoni-Aurunci mountains (Central Italy) – Syntaxonomical updating and discussion on the higher rank syntaxa
Valkó et al. (2018)	The challenge of abandonment for the sustainable management of Palaearctic natural and semi-natural grasslands
Carboni et al. (2015)	Conservation Value, Management and Restoration of Europe's Semi-Natural Open Landscapes
Valkó et al. (2016)	Ecology and Conservation of Steppes and Semi-Natural Grasslands
Fanelli et al. (2015)	The Vegetation of the Buna River Protected Landscape (Albania)
Dengler et al. (2014)	Dry grasslands of Southern Europe: Syntaxonomy, management and conservation
Kavgacı et al. (2015)	Diversity of floodplain forests in the Igneada region (NW Thrace – Turkey)
Čelik et al. (2015)	Determinants of within-patch microdistribution and movements of endangered butterfly <i>Coenonympha oedippus</i> (Fabricius, 1787) (Nymphalidae: Satyrinae)

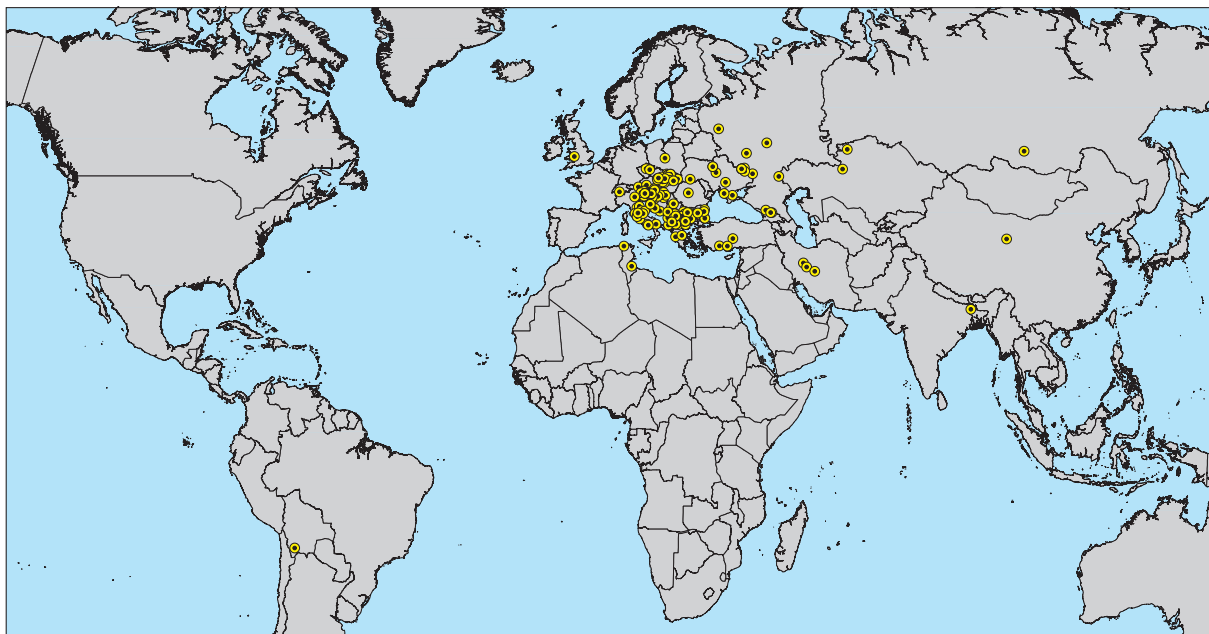


Figure 3: Geographical distribution of study sites from published papers (not the authors' affiliations).

Slika 3: Geografska razširjenost raziskovanih območij v objavljenih člankih (inštitucije avtorjev niso upoštewane).

in the last year, the first paper from South America was published (Pinos 2020).

Goals for the future

We would like to continue to contribute to the development of the scientific fields of the journal's scope. We wish to continue disseminating new findings among the scientific public by publishing top and high-profile papers in the future.

Our main tasks for the future are publishing quality papers with high impact in the scientific fields, by attracting both eminent and also young promising authors, to obtain impact factor (JIF) and increase the number of citations. We want Hacquetia to serve authors with an objective and fast review process, offer visible publication and, consequently, have an impact on the advancement of associated fields. We would like to achieve this by remaining a free, open journal (Diamond Open Access model) that enables publication for all scientists, irrespective of their ability to pay article processing charges (APC).

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