President's Corner

Dear Members,

Looking at our website I can see it might have been a while since our last newsletter. Unsurprisingly, some things have changed in that time. Perhaps most importantly is the fact that, following our AGM last November, our beloved President, Vanessa Cave, has stepped down (as per the usual cycle) and I have stepped into her rather (metaphorically) large shoes as President. So you are stuck with me for a couple of years. I shall, in due course, be looking for my successor, and I hope that we will have someone to take that place when we get to our AGM this year. The council otherwise has remained the same (details here). This is something that I, as incoming President, am extremely grateful for as it provides stability to the Society.

Speaking of AGMs. This year our AGM will be held on Thursday November 30th at NZDT 1240, AEDT 1040. The AGM will be held in person (details in a moment), and via Zoom. Why did I delay the details? Well I am delighted to be able to say that the AGM will be held in conjunction with our conference which will be held in the beautiful Waitangi which is located in the Bay of Islands, New Zealand. The conference preparations are underway---I should know since I am the Local Organising Chair---and we have a website up and running. Please check it out. The success of our conferences depends on our members and we need you to attend. We have approximately 25 registrations already, but it would be really great to see some more, especially from our Australian membership. The conference is due to run from the evening of Monday November 27th (Welcome reception barbecue) through to midday Friday December 1. I hope to see you there.

Yours,

James Curran

IBS-AR President

Conference Updates

Joint IBS-AR/SEEM Regional Conference 2023

The 2023 International Biometric Society Australasian Region conference will be held from 27 November to 1 December 2023. Titled "Biometrics in the Bay of Islands", it will be held at the Copthorne Hotel and Resort Bay of Islands, Waitangi, New Zealand. As was intended for 2021, the 2023 conference aims to be a joint event with the Statistical Ecology and Environmental Monitoring (SEEM) conference.

Conference themes

- Statistical Genetics/'Omics
- Spatial/Temporal Modelling
- Design/Surveys
- Biostatistics
- Agricultural Statistics
- Demographic/Population Modelling
- Multivariate Statistics
- Statistical Consulting—Best Practice & Collaboration
- Data Governance/Sovereignty
- Machine Learning for Environmental and Ecological Applications

See the website for more information and to register.

International Biometric Conference 2024

IBC2024 is scheduled to be held as an in-person event 1-6 December 2024 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. See the video here.

Ken Dodds Awarded the Jones Medal

Congratulations to Ken Dodds, AgResearch and IBS-AR member, on having been awarded the Jones Medal, for a lifetime achievement in pure or applied mathematics or statistics, by the Royal Society Te Apārangi (Royal Society of New Zealand) for his work developing and applying statistical methods for genetic data analysis that enable the use of low-cost genotyping in primary industries and ecology.

Honours and Masters Scholarships

To help attract enthusiastic and talented students to career paths in biometrics, the Australasian Region offers scholarships for suitably qualified students who intend to undertake a fourth or honours year of study, or a coursework Masters, in statistics, mathematical statistics, biostatistics, bioinformatics or biometrics. This year we had several excellent applications and we are delighted to announce the winners: Jo Woollams (Masters student at the University of Auckland, New Zealand) and Alistair Martin (Research Masters with Training (RMT) student at Murdoch university, Australia). Congratulations!

Jo Wollams

Jo Woollams is pursuing a Master's degree in Statistics at the University of Auckland. Her research focuses on optimising decisions regarding Marine Protected Areas in New Zealand, taking into account conflicting priorities related to aesthetics, economics, and ecology. Using multicriteria analysis, statistical modelling, and simulations, she aims to produce a decision making tool for designating and implementing Marine Protected Areas.

Jo enjoys scuba diving, snorkelling, and cycling. She spent her formative years sailing and camping in New Zealand's stunning natural environments, and her love for nature has only grown stronger with time. With over a decade of experience in education, Jo has dedicated her career to helping others. In Biostatistics, she plans to utilise her skills in data analysis, statistical modelling, and communication to contribute to the preservation of New Zealand's unique ecology.

Alistair Martin

I am a Research Masters with Training (RMT) student at Murdoch university, where I have continued from my BSc majoring in Mathematics & Statistics and Computer Science. The training component of my RMT has focused on linear models, robustness theory, and optimisation for deep learning. This has led to work on redescending M-Estimates for location and scale, with applications to a robust adaptive lasso procedure.

My path to this point has been a little unorthodox. I'm the first in my family to have attended university. I did so as a mature age student, studying remotely full time while also working full time. In the preceding years I had taken the autodidact approach, (re)learning algebra through to calculus, and computer science. It has been a busy several years, during which time I have fallen in love with mathematics.

For me, part of the appeal of statistics is how challenging it has been. I'm fascinated by the multitude of models and methods, and the intuition and understanding required to correctly interpret results. I hope to one day attain the ability to extract meaningful new knowledge of an underlying phenomenon through data, in whatever shape that data may take. Moreover, I'm excited about the potential to wield these skills for the greater good.

It's humbling to have been awarded an IBS-AR scholarship. The more I learn, the more I realise how much more there is to learn, so I don't see myself stopping any time soon. With a bit of luck, I may one day know what I'm talking about!

In Case You Missed It

News and updates from around the International Biometrics Society community.

The [IBS Mentoring Program](#) initiative reflects the society's commitment to you and your professional development. This unique online networking and career development opportunity helps you to find, connect with and share experiences with others. Your mentor or mentee can be in the same city or on the other side of the world!

Catch up on recent issues of the [Biometric Bulletin](#).

See the [IBS Meetings Calendar](#) for details of upcoming events.

If you have any updates to share through the IBS-AR Newsletter or in the Biometric Bulletin please get in touch (correspondence@biometricsociety.org.au).

Recent Papers

The International Biometrics Society publishes two journals, Biometrics and, jointly with the American Statistical Association, the Journal of Agricultural, Biological, and Environmental Statistics. There are also two regional journals Biometrical Journal (Austro-Swiss and German regions) and Biostatistics & Epidemiology (China region)

Recent papers in IBS journals by our members include:

- Ozturk, O., Kravchuk, O. & Correll, R. (2022). Row–Column Sampling Design Using Auxiliary Ranking Variables. *JABES*, 27, 652–673. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13253-022-00504-3

- Robertson, B.L., Ozturk, O., Kravchuk, O., and Brown J.A. (2022). Spatially Balanced Sampling with Local Ranking. *JABES*, 27, 622–639. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13253-022-00501-6

- Borchers, D.L., Nightingale, P., Stevenson, B.C., Fewster, RM. (2022). A latent capture history model for digital aerial surveys. *Biometrics*, 78, 274–285. https://doi.org/10.1111/biom.13403

- Hui F.K.C., Hill, N.A, Welsh, A.H. (2022). Assuming independence in spatial latent variable models: Consequences and implications of misspecification. *Biometrics*, 78, 85–99. https://doi.org/10.1111/biom.13416

- Stevenson, B.C., Fewster, R.M., Sharma, K. (2022). Spatial correlation structures for detections of individuals in spatial capture–recapture models. *Biometrics,* 78, 963–973. https://doi.org/10.1111/biom.13502

- Wijesuriya, R., Moreno-Betancur, M., Carlin, J.B., De Silva, A.P., & Lee, K.J. (2022). Evaluation of approaches for accommodating interactions and non-linear terms in multiple imputation of incomplete three-level data. *Biometrical Journal*, 64 1404–1425. https://doi.org/10.1002/bimj.202000343

- Piepho, H.-.P., Boer, M.P., & Williams, E.R. (2022). Two-dimensional P-spline smoothing for spatial analysis of plant breeding trials. *Biometrical Journal*, 64, 835–857. https://doi.org/10.1002/bimj.202100212

If your paper has been inadvertently omitted from this list or you have a paper to be included in future newsletters, please email the bulletin correspondent (correspondence@biometricsociety.org.au) so that it can be included in the next edition.

Membership Update

Welcome to our new members:

- Damian Collins
- Daniel Gyaase
- Beatrix Jones
- Monique Jordan
- Chaitanya Joshi
- Lewis Lee
- Alistair Martin
- Margarita Moreno-Betancur
- Kia Nikoumanesh
- Jonathan Patrick
- Mario Prado Lara
- Sarah Rosanowski
- Chanatda Somchit
- Joanna Woollams
- Jiaxin Zhang
- Yunwei Zhang

Membership as of 17 June 2023:

- **Life member:** 3
- **Regular member:** 122
- **Senior retiree:** 21
- **Supporting member:** 16
- **Student member:** 4
- **Grand total:** 166

Australasian Regional Council

The current Australasian Regional Council

- **President** James Curran (The University of Auckland)
- **Vice president (past)** Vanessa Cave (VSNi)
- **Secretary** David Baird (VSN, Christchurch)
- **Treasurer** Ian Renner (University of Newcastle)
- **Membership secretary** Sam Rogers (University of Adelaide)
- **Social media officer** Emi Tanaka (Australian National University)
- **Public officer** Warren Müller (CSIRO)
- **Bulletin correspondent** Garth Tarr (The University of Sydney)
- **Website manager** Hans Hockey (Biometrics Matters Ltd, Hamilton)
- **IBS executive board** Chris Triggs (University of Auckland)

IBS Representative Council members

- Ross Darnell (CSIRO, Brisbane)
- Samuel Muller (Macquarie University)
- Kevin Murray (University of Western Australia)

Membership portal

The [membership portal](#) is where you can update your personal details and manage membership renewal payments. You can even arrange to direct debit membership payments which require no reminders or manual input. To activate direct debit membership, simply log in to your member page and change your membership type to "Regular/Senior Retiree (Automatic Renewal)".

You can also now pay for membership up to three membership years in advance. For extended membership payments or any other membership queries, please contact the membership officer via membership@biometricsociety.org.au

Your membership renewal date is {Member_Upcoming_Renewal_Date}.

[IBS-AR Homepage](#)

[IBS-AR Member Code of Conduct](#)