

Bhitarkanika mangroves were declared as a National Park in 1988 and a Ramsar site in 2002. A total of 32 true mangrove species and 29 associate species are present with an endemic species, *Heritiera kanikensis* and with large numbers of highly valued timber species, *Heritiera fomes* and *H. littoralis*. The forest cover has gone up 63% from 2.58 km² 1985 to 4.21 km² in 2004 in the Devi mouth mangroves, and by 3 km² in the Mahanadi wetland from 1996 to 2004. This is due to restoration and natural regeneration in newly formed mudflats. Regarding land-use pattern, development of aquaculture farms is a major change around the mangrove wetlands between 1985 and 2004. About 9 km² of mangroves was cleared for prawn farms in the Mahanadi mangroves. A total human population of 3.6 lakhs in 100 villages is dependent on mangroves of the Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary for its livelihood. The local communities use almost all species of mangroves for house construction, fencing and farming implements. They also use mangrove forests as grazing grounds for cattle and mangrove water creeks for fishery resources. Two forest products, honey and grass for basket-weaving and mat-weaving are available in abundance in the Bhitarkanika mangroves. Therefore, grass-roots level institutions have successfully been formed for participatory management of mangroves through a method called 'Thengapalli'. In this, two or three families join together and patrol the mangrove areas by carrying a stick, which is handed over to another batch the next day and thus the entire village protects the area in a true spirit of community participation. Three major management issues have been proposed in this atlas. They are: (i) conversion of mangrove forests, (ii) maintenance of freshwater flow, and (iii) people's participatory approach. Some suggestions made in this regard are: (i) the policy on land use around mangrove wetlands needs to be strengthened and strictly enforced for the long-term conservation of mangroves; (ii) periodical monitoring of the quantity and periodicity of freshwater flowing into the mangrove wetlands is necessary, and (iii) 'Thengapalli' being followed in Orissa can be extended to all other areas to restore and conserve the mangrove wetlands. There are few corrections to be made in the publication: (i) levels of water salinity given as percentage in Map 3.7 are not correct. (ii) Is the density of species in terms of m/ha correct, as given in Table 4?

The booklet entitled *Heritage of Mangrove Wetlands of the East Coast of India* has vividly summarized the major findings reported in the mangrove atlases of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa along with a detailed report of the JMM.

MSSRF and State Forest Departments have successfully demonstrated a pilot project on JMM. This is a breakthrough in restoration and conservation of mangrove wetlands through people's participatory approach in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. The JMM has brought about 120 km² area of mangroves and 5240 families as members from 28 villages in the three states. About 14.75 km² of mangrove area has been restored through planting of 6.8 million mangrove saplings with 75–80% survival. To ensure empowerment of people, 194 self-help groups have been organized through which poverty alleviation programmes have been implemented, such as alternate income-generating activities for firewood, fodder, fencing and house construction. Based on this pilot project, comprehensive guidelines for promoting JMM in India have been proposed. The success story of MSSRF in providing technical inputs in identifying the causes for degradation, developing restoration techniques, and mobilizing and organizing the local community deserves great appreciation. This model developed for JMM has to be replicated in other fishing and farming hamlets.

The mangrove atlas of India for the above-said three states is a wealth of information on mangrove resources based on scientific principles, which would be of immense help for the user agencies to develop management action plans. The lucid presentation of data in the form of GIS maps along with colourful photographic evidences are highly commendable. The books have filled the knowledge gap between the scientific community and the user agencies. They have to be published further in local languages for the benefit of field staff of the Forest Department, village administration and NGOs. Information pertaining to the months of availability of seeds or propagules of mangrove species and more potential areas for undertaking plantation need to be incorporated in the revised publication. I congratulate MSSRF for accomplishing the arduous task for the cause of mangrove conservation and management.

1. Kathiresan, K., *Hydrobiologia*, 2000, **430**, 185.

2. Kathiresan, K. and Bingham, B. L., *Adv. Mar.*, 2002, **40**, 31.

K. KATHIRESAN

*Centre of Advanced Study in Marine Biology,
Annamalai University,
Parangipettai 608 502, India
e-mail: cdl_mangrove@sancharnet.in*

Scientific Writing. Easy When You Know How. J. Peat, *et al.* Byword Viva Publishers Private Ltd, A-217 Smdatt Chambers I, Bhikaiji Cama Place, New Delhi 110 066. Indian edition. First published by BMJ Publishing group 1994. ISBN 81-8193-003-7. First Indian edition 2004. 292 pp. Price: Rs 295.

The best part of the book is that it is a reasonable compendium of a whole lot of medical referencing and publication practices, with good internet cross-references. One hopes that it is reasonably current.

Should you read and benefit by this book? Go to Table 1. If your rating exceeds 5, go for the book. Similar scores are available with the reviewer for non-clinicians. I thank the authors of this book for the style of the table, the book being full of them.

Table 1.

Your attributes	Points
A clinician yuppie	1
A clinician without publications, but a new job	2
As in two, but the job requires publications for confirmation	3
There are three others competing for the same job	4
Everybody knows you depend on a statistician to do <i>t</i> test	5
You are an Asian without much knowledge of English	3
You will chuck this anyway and go for that consultancy in Vienna or Gorakhpur(?)	0

Summary of Table 1. If you are a clinician with no formal training in science, and if you are opting for studies and their publication for extrinsic reasons and do not have the energy for acquiring the nitty-

gritty details firsthand, you have two options: first consider quitting. Second, try using this book if you badly need the money.

Stephan Leacock wrote of teaching the American style and the British style. To paraphrase, the latter consists of chilly, damp rooms where an ill-clad tutor smokes an ancient pipe into your eyes and dreamily makes unintelligible remarks and somehow gets an argument going. The former would have crisp courses offered in divinity, business management and horse riding in a single semester among several others with equally well-distributed content for variety. The saving grace was in that neither had a remarkable success over the other, by and large. One is hard put to choose.

At last there is a book of the same American genre on scientific writing by British authors. It is post-WTO (as in management, prozac, psychology, success) rather than post 9/11 (as in, only English people are English-speaking people, the rest being natives). Everything you wanted to know about writing and were afraid to ask! It was said that Sir Walter Scott was paid by the word and he did write copiously and well. Now what are the motivations for writing? Career advancement, of course. Box 1.1 in the book carries some cardinal rules which make a most curious reading. Never mind the medical slant. The authors state: it is unethical to conduct a study and not to report the findings... You have some results, which are worth reporting... and soon... your track record will improve... your promo-

tion... more grants... nine reasons in all. And there are rewards for good writers... again... grants, promotions, more publications... who knows you may become that ultimate pinnacle of the publishing world, the editor himself in flesh! Then you must have managerial skills to organize your life with an eye for personal psychology. You must develop your quadrant II activities (your life activities fall in four quadrants, in the order of importance if you please) that also include, besides writing, research reading, professional development, health and family... way different from quadrant IV activities that include browsing the internet and the idiot box. The only time I heard such a sound advice was when the writer of a well-known Indian cookbook pleaded that you should never design the menu till two hours after a meal, before she proceeded onto the design and development of a new vegetable idli!

Then, of course, is the question of authorship. The first author is always responsible for putting the paper together (sic!)... co-authors give intellectual contributions and help in data analyses (siccer!). Nowhere is it mentioned about the merit in authorship to Third World participants for supplying clinical samples to the West!

Clearly, the authors are oriented to clinical studies rather than laboratory studies. Should a statistician be given an authorship? Amazingly, there are criteria to evaluate if a statistician scores enough points to be included as an author. I would have thought that a simpler procedure would be to check if the authors

could replace the statisticians altogether and do the work themselves. If so (in this day of computers), the best option would be to eliminate the statistician and publish on their own. Of course, quadrant I activities (crises, patient care, deadlines, teaching, meetings and preparation for them) will limit that. But if they depended on an outsider to examine the veracity of their conclusions for reasons they do not comprehend, the real question is whether the clinicians, for merely plugging, probing, cutting, tickling or whatever they do with their patients, should be considered as contributors and examine their worth in being an author. In a medical establishment where a statistician is always a second class citizen (that explains the fate of a lot of studies) even when he/she is more than a mere technician, such an argument would bring the roof down and is therefore carefully avoided.

The book is basically a handy tool for a workshop on writing. It is written in that style. Choice of words, misuse of nouns as adjectives, misuse and correct use of apostrophes, are all there, written far more prosaically than, say, Eric Partridge (*Usage and Abusage*, Penguin) would. *OED* remains a better bet and habit. This could also be secondary reading material for M Sc/Ph D level training.

V. SITARAMAM

*Department of Biotechnology,
University of Pune,
Pune 411 007, India
e-mail: sitaram@unipune.ernet.in*