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Declining Membership Committee Report
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Larry and I sent out a request to several scientific societies asking them for membership data for the past five years. Societies replied either with 1) five years of data, 2) less than five years of data, or 3) they did not reply at all.

Larry and I were able to make some very general conclusions about the data we did get.

1. Most societies that responded show a drop in regular and subscription membership over the past five years.
2. The societies keeping their heads above water, offer the option of membership without a journal subscription. The members get other benefits that include access to membership expertise database, discount to annual meeting, periodic publication discounts, and the society newsletter.
3. The societies that have shown an increase in membership over the past five years offer their membership something different. For example, the Society for Conservation Biology has shown an increase in membership from 5456 to 9225 from 2002 to 2005. They attribute this increase to their new magazine "Conservation in Practice". This publication speaks to the layperson and is easy to read and interesting.
4. Some society membership has remained static (American Bryological and Lichenological Society). Although they have moved to e-journals, they comment that the revenue from BioOne has offset the loss in numbers.
5. Other changes that societies have made to offset the loss of membership are: _ price on membership for new members (no journal subscription), taking credit cards to pay dues, only members that subscribe to a journal can publish in that journal, brochures and meeting flyers.