

EDITORIAL

Dear reader,

Most people would probably say that one egg is just like another. However, only eggs from industrially farmed, hybrid chickens show that degree of similarity. Nature is characterized by diversity – a wealth of variety that astonishes, fascinates, and sometimes even confuses us. In our standardized world, we are surrounded by millions of identical objects. Understanding diversity, recognizing its value, and looking beyond differences to see what things have in common is anything but trivial.

Diversity has challenged scientists since time immemorial, as the “Focus” section in this issue shows. One classic example is the biological identification of species. If you try to identify plants just from the appearance of their leaves, for example, you can easily make a mistake. Even closely related plants can have very different leaves in some cases. Genetic analysis is now helping to uncover the secret of leaf shapes.

And diversity is not just unique to nature; humans too have developed a variety of cultures that impact our perception and actions in different ways. However, until recently, psychological research has paid very little attention to this phenomenon. Comparative cultural studies are now attempting to document diversity and identify uniquely human traits that transcend all peculiarities.

Science has also created a system that classifies the multiplicity of form beyond our planet. In the 1920s, Edwin Hubble did pioneering work in the field of astronomy by classifying galaxies in space according to specific criteria. Today, researchers are exploring the role played by dark matter in various types of systems in the Milky Way.

We trust you will find plenty of interesting material among the many topics we cover in this issue, and hope you will enjoy reading it!

Your editorial team