



PUBLISHING IN SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS Hints for Graduate Students

Personnel

Editor: Oversees entire publishing process; selects Associate Editor to handle reviews; makes the final decision as to whether to accept or reject a manuscript. The Editor also handles format decisions, appoints the Associate Editors, and generally sets the tone and direction of the journal, in consultation with the Board of Trustees and Editorial Board. Editors are selected and approved by the Board of Trustees.

Associate Editor: Sends the manuscript to reviewers; evaluates review comments; oversees revisions if warranted; and makes recommendation to the Editor whether to accept or reject a manuscript.

Managing Editor: Reviews accepted manuscripts for editorial comment and format; readies the manuscript to be sent to the publisher. *Herpetological Monographs* does not have a Managing Editor. Instead, the Editor provides both managing and copy editing review.

Copy Editor: Reviews the manuscript for grammar, clarity, and wordiness. Revises as necessary.

Editorial Board: Provides editorial, administrative, and ethical advice to the Editor and Associate Editors; reviews controversial aspects of manuscripts (for example, animal care, legal, ethical) as requested; examines manuscripts where conflicting reviews have been received, or when a quick turn-around is required.

Advice

Never {note: these are **Ethical and Professional** matters}:

1. Submit manuscripts simultaneously to different journals. Although acceptable in some non-science forms of publication, simultaneous submission is not permissible in science.
2. Submit a manuscript that all the co-authors have not seen.
3. Add coauthors who should not be there {this includes major advisors, lab or unit leaders, etc.}. A good scientist would not put his/her name on work for which a student was responsible. When in doubt, consult your Department Chair or college/university ethics office.
4. Forget coauthors who should be on a manuscript.
5. Fail to give proper institutional credit.
6. Fail to give proper credit to assistants.
7. Steal other people's work.

Do:

- Follow journal formats {note: if questions arise, contact the journal's Editor and ask. If a set of instructions seems inaccurate or unclear, contact the Editor to ensure that they are revised}.
- Double space throughout, including tables - at least for most journals.
- Be sure to add page numbers.
- Text - left justify unless instructions indicate otherwise.
- When giving test results, give the test statistic, degrees of freedom, probability.
- Generally, spell out 1-10, but use numerals for greater values {but check journal styles}.
- Citations - check them for accuracy! {hint: if you have not seen it, don't cite it}
- Figures: make sure that they are legible {needed for reduction} and clear.
- Figures: add sample sizes, regression equations {on figure is best, or at least in the legend}.
- Figures: if abbreviations are used, make sure they are explained in the legend.
- Figures: if figures are in two parts (e.g., A and B), they should be on the same page.

Do Not:

- Create your own styles {if a manuscript is rejected at one journal, be sure to change the format before submitting it to a different journal}.
- Single space {they are hard to read, and reviewers cannot make annotations}.
- Text - do not number lines {it wastes space}. For on-line submissions, check journal formats.
- Give complete literature reviews {i.e., paragraph after paragraph of what has been done in related fields}.
- Citations - do not give all-encompassing lists of citations {"Turtles are reptiles (followed by 15 citations)"}. Limit them to 3 or so, unless there is compelling reason not to.
- Say something is "significant" or "non significant" without giving supporting information.
- Repeat information in the text and tables.
- Add extraneous maps, figures or tables {add lat/longs; put information in text}.
- Figures: use little tiny, skinny, fonts and microscopic figures.
- Figures: most journals do not like anything written on the same page as a figure, including page numbers, legends, figure number, etc. [Hint: write figure number on the back of the figure in blue pencil {because it will not show or bleed through}, not in pen, magic marker, or even lead pencil; the upper right hand corner works for most].

Language:

Do not say "So and so and so and so said....." [e.g., Jenssen (1990) and Dodd (1997) said

lizards and turtles are reptiles]

Say “Lizards and turtles are reptiles (Jenssen, 1990; Dodd, 1997).”

Do not use the pronouns “it” “this” “that” “these” “those” without a clear indication of what you are making reference to.

Lizards and turtles are reptiles not, they are reptiles.

You have finished your paper, now....

Have someone else read the text, preferably either not in biology (this helps eliminate spelling errors, bad grammar, and lack of clarity) and certainly not at your institution. No one likes a sloppily written paper - it turns Editors and reviewers off.

Submit clean copies of the right number.

Check about submission of figures (do they want copies at first, or the originals; electronic copies?).

Include a cover letter, stating that the manuscript represents original work not submitted elsewhere, and that it complies with appropriate regulations concerning Animal Care, collecting, etc. Journals may want you to state that you have complied with animal care and collecting regulations, usually in the Acknowledgments.

Finally, are you sure that you have picked the right journal? One significant cause of rejection is that the paper does not match the journal’s audience. {for example, *Herpetologica* doesn’t publish purely techniques papers}.