

Conservation Biology **Style Guide for Authors**

Manuscript Specifications

Word count

Conservation Biology tries to balance the depth of each article with the number of articles that we can publish. Papers must not exceed the following word counts even if reviewers have asked for additional material. The number of words includes all text from the first word of the Abstract through the last word of Literature Cited; it does not include tables or figure legends or text in the body of tables. The Abstract must not exceed 300 words. Do not include an abstract with Letters, Comments, or Diversity pieces.

Contributed Papers: 6000 words
Research Notes: 3000 words
Reviews: 7500 words
Essays: 6000 words
Conservation Practice and Policy: 5000 words
Comments: 2000 words
Diversity: 2000 words
Letters: 1000 words

More information on these categories and the types of papers published in *Conservation Biology* is available from [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1523-1739/homepage/ForAuthors.html](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1523-1739/homepage/ForAuthors.html).

Number of tables and figures

Include no more than one supporting element (i.e., table or figure) for every four pages of text (from the Abstract through the Literature Cited). If a table or figure has only a few data points, incorporate the data into the text.

Appendices and supporting information

We rarely allow appendices in the print version of the journal. Supplementary data or method details typically should be provided as online Supporting Information (see below for further information).

Manuscript Sections

Sections and Order of Sections

Contributed Papers, Research Notes, and Conservation Practice and Policy papers should contain the following sections in the following order: Abstract, Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, Supporting Information paragraph (if there are online appendices), Literature Cited, tables, figure legends, and figures. Do not combine sections (e.g., Results and Discussion). The Acknowledgements section will be added to the body of the

paper after the manuscript has been accepted. Do not number section headings or subheadings. Do not include a Conclusion section (conclusions are part of the Discussion).

Title

Most people will decide whether to read a paper solely on the basis of its title. Indexing and abstracting services and internet search engines also depend heavily on the information conveyed by the title. And, researchers search for particular topics and then read the titles. If your title does not reflect the contents of your paper well or if the meaning of your title is not immediately clear, your paper will not be read. Titles should be clear and concise. Do not use hanging titles (those with a colon or dash), titles that are complete sentences, interrogative titles, and titles that reference colloquialisms or popular culture. The problem with titles that are complete sentences is that they tend to create dogma (e.g., Wind Energy Development Does Not Affect Nesting Ecology of a Grassland Bird). Scientific knowledge is constantly evolving; thus, what is considered true currently may be questioned and proven inaccurate in the future. Interrogatives make poor titles because the entire manuscript can often be summarized with a single word: yes or no (e.g., Will the Exception to Protected-Area Reclassification Protocols Prove the Rule?). Hanging titles are overused and can almost always be shortened to a title that is more effective and eye-catching without being sensational.

Abstract

At the top of the abstract page provide the title of the paper. The Abstract should summarize the Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion in that order (i.e., it should be a miniversion of the paper). Key points from each of these sections should be identifiable within the Abstract. The Abstract should not include literature citations, much data, or phrases such as “We discuss . . .” or “We summarize . . .”

Keywords

Include on the cover page five to eight words or phrases that will be useful for indexing and literature searches. Avoid general terms such as *conservation*.

Acknowledgments

Place the acknowledgment paragraph on the cover page of your manuscript. (Reviewers are not provided with a cover page.) Do not spell out first (given) names. Provide the first initial of the first name, even if the initial starts a sentence. Do not use titles (e.g., Dr. or Professor). Refer to authors of the manuscript by their initials only (e.g., “S.T.W. was supported by a grant from the Torry Foundation.”).

Footnotes

Do not use footnotes in the body of the manuscript.

In-Text Citations

In the body of the paper order citations from oldest to newest and use name-year format. Do not cite work or data that have not been published or are not available. Include such work or data as

online Supporting Information and cite it as such in the text. If the data is available in a publically accessible database, you may cite that database. Include databases in Literature Cited.

Literature Cited

Provide the full names of all journal titles. Do not italicize titles.

If there are more than 10 authors, use et al. (Howard, G., et al.) instead of listing the names of all authors.

Papers in review and personal communications should not be included in the Literature Cited.

Proceedings and abstracts from conferences may be cited only if they have a “publisher” and the location of the publisher (or the organization from which the document may be obtained) can be provided.

Example Citations

Journal articles:

Christensen, N. D., and J. Eu. 2003. Ecology of cranberry bogs: a case study. *Ecology* **59**:1147–1167, 1178–1187.

Author, F. M. 2001. Title of paper. *Journal* **13**(supplement 1):172–180.

If a paper is in press, the “in press” follows the volume number: *Ecology* **112**: in press.

Edited books: Cran, B., C. Boy, and L. Shi. 1911. Native forest birds of Guam. Pages 4–8 in T. Wu and L. Lee, editors. *Flora and fauna of Guam*. 2nd edition. Tell Books, Sydney.

Reports: Barnes, J., and S. Craig. 2003. Conservation status of riparian areas in southeastern Oregon. General technical report N-24. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Portland, Oregon.

Online journals:

No digital object identifier (DOI): Sandringham, J. 2006. Effects of urbanization of agricultural land on an endemic moth, rosemary pink. *Ecology and Society* 3: [http://EcologySociety . . . /art5](http://EcologySociety.../art5).

Has DOI: Hunstanton, V. 2008. Effects of deep-sea injection of carbon dioxide. *PLoS BIOLOGY* DOI: 10.1371/journal.pbio.1001222.

No access dates are needed for citations of online journals.

Internet sources other than journals:

Include the name of the organization hosting the website, their geographical location, and an access date (month year).

Carne, A. 2003. Ranges of endangered Colombian birds. BirdLife International, Cambridge, United Kingdom. Available from <http://www.BLI.org/pub2/birdranges> (accessed March 2014).

In press manuscripts:

Officially accepted manuscripts may be cited as in press in Literature Cited (...on marine ecosystems. Conservation Biology: in press.) In text, you must provide year of publication (e.g., Stevens 2015).

Supporting Elements (Tables, Figures, Online Appendices)

Content

Tables and figures should be self-explanatory and should supplement rather than duplicate the text. Do not present large amounts of data in tables. A reader should be able to interpret tables and figures without referring to the text. Consequently, all abbreviations and terms unique to the paper must be defined in the figure legend or in the table caption or footnotes. Common statistical notations need not be defined (e.g., CI, SD, SE). Use the same terminology in supporting elements and in the text.

Citation in text

Provide a summary or generalization of results and cite supporting elements parenthetically: “Models for species abundance were significant and explained 78% to 92% of variability (Table 2),” rather than “Table 2 shows the outcome of models of species abundance.” Abbreviate (“Fig.,” not “Figure”) unless *figure* is the first word in a sentence.

Tables

Legends should be one sentence long. Use the legend to describe the contents of the table as it relates to the topic of the manuscript. A list of the table’s columns or row headings is not an informative table legend. Use footnotes to provide more-detailed descriptions of row and column headings, for more information about specific data, and to define terms.

Too little information: “Results of extract tests.” and “Analysis of variance *F* values, treatment means, and habitat means.”

Too much information: “Anti-Candida, -leishmania, and -tumor activity of extracts from 11 species of sea cucumber. NA indicates no activity ($IC_{50} \geq 500 \mu\text{g/mL}$ against *Candida* and leishmania, $IC_{50} \geq 80 \mu\text{g/mL}$ against LoVo cell line). The * denotes that these activities are significantly different from those obtained from extracts isolated from the same species taken from the southern region.”

Define abbreviations in a footnote even if they are already defined in the text.

If there is only one footnote, use an asterisk (*). If there is more than one footnote, use letters (^a, ^b, ^c,). Order footnotes alphabetically from left to right and from top to bottom.

Do not use bold type. Do not use grid lines.

Unless an entry is a complete sentence or a proper noun, capitalize only the first word of the first entry in a row and do not use periods.

Do not split tables into separate sections (e.g., Table 1a and Table 1b). Make separate tables (Table 1, Table 2) or combine data under the same columns or rows.

Use indentation to set off secondary (or tertiary) entries within a column (see example below).

Table 1. Logistic-regression models built with . . . ^a

Variable	Symbol	<i>p</i>	df
General model ^b	<i>f_g</i>	0.0015	3
landscape ruggedness	rug	0.0113	
forest cover (%)	bosque	0.0085	
Human model			
human population	pob1		
...			

^aSignificance level of coefficients . . .

^bNext-most parsimonious models at . . .

Figures

Figures must be of sufficient quality and resolution to remain clear at 60% reduction. Before publication, you will be required to supply figures in tif, eps, or pdf format. Resolution should be at least 300 dots per inch (dpi); 600 dpi is preferable for figures with lettering.

Conservation Biology cannot waive charges for printing of color figures (\$700/page). We discourage the use of color because in some countries download speeds are very slow and gray-scale photocopies of articles are common. You may have color figures in the online version and gray-scale figures in print. However, reference to color cannot be made in the figure legend or in the text and elements in the gray-scale version must be distinguishable. Supply separate files for color and gray-scale figures.

The legends for all figures should be grouped on a page that precedes the figures. Do not place a figure and its legend on the same page.

Scale bars and compass direction must be provided for maps.

Graphs

Label all axes and include units of measure in the label, for example, Number of species/km², Basal area (m²/ha).

Capitalize the first letter of the axis labels: Years since burn, Burned area (%), Burned area (ha), Seed production (seeds/plot).

Include a key in the figure itself rather than describing shading or shapes in the figure legend.

Match typeface and type size among figures. On a graph, the type size of axis labels and units of measure should be similar.

If a figure has more than one panel, use lowercase letters to designate the parts: (a), (b), (c). Each panel must be referenced clearly in the figure legend by its letter.

If there are many digits in numbers or relatively long descriptions along the x-axis, orient entries at 45 or fewer degrees.

All numbers along an axis must have the same number of significant figures: 1.0, 2.5, 2.0 (not 1, 2.5, 2).

The label for the y-axis should be oriented vertically to the left of the units (reading from bottom to top), and numerals should be horizontally oriented.

Center the labels along both axes.

Do not enclose graphs in a rectangle.

Do not use color on a figure that will be published in gray scale.

Supporting information (online appendices)

Supporting Information (i.e., online appendices) should be cited parenthetically in the text of the paper. Every piece is cited as Supporting Information, not by specific number. Before Literature Cited, insert a paragraph in the exact format shown below that provides a brief description of supporting information.

Supporting Information

XXX (Appendix S1), XXX (Appendix S2), and a XXX translation of the article (Appendix S3) are available online. The authors are solely responsible for the content and functionality of these materials. Queries (other than absence of the material) should be directed to the corresponding author.

Language and Grammar

Clear language

Our audience is broad and international. Clarity in language and syntax is important, especially for readers whose first language is not English. Avoid jargon and colloquialisms. If English is not your first language, we strongly recommend that you ask a native English speaker with experience in publishing scientific papers to proofread your manuscript.

Terminology

Some common terms in conservation science have multiple meanings (e.g., *biological diversity*, *wildlife*, *connectivity*). Clarify how you use such terms, and define specialized terms at first use in the Abstract and in the body of the paper.

Abbreviations and acronyms

Do not begin a sentence with an abbreviation. Use abbreviations sparingly. Define all abbreviations, initializations, and acronyms at first use. For example: analysis of variance (ANOVA), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Capitalization

Geographic designations: Do not capitalize a term that indicates region unless it is being used as a proper noun (e.g., western states, Southeast Asia). Capitalization of terms used commonly in *Conservation Biology*: the Tropic of Cancer, the tropics; North Temperate Zone, temperate zone; East Africa, North Africa, central Africa; central Asia; tropics, Neotropics; Amazon Basin; Central Honshu Lowland Forest (an endemic bird area); Cape Floristic Region (a hotspot of biological diversity); taiga.

Threat categories: Do not capitalize threat categories used by institutions or authoritative bodies: threatened, endangered, critically endangered, conservation concern, etc.

Active voice

In general, use *we* or *I* (i.e., active voice). For example: “We converted all GIS data to raster format.” rather than “All GIS data were converted to raster format.” Or, “Trained technicians surveyed the plots.” rather than “The plots were surveyed by trained technicians.” In particular, Methods should not be written entirely in passive voice.

Tense

Use past tense in the Methods (describing what you did), Results (describing what your results were), and in the Discussion (referring to your results). Use present tense when you refer to published results. The principal exception to this rule is in the area of attribution and presentation. It is correct to say, for example, “Toffel (2008) found [past] that extracts from iron weed inhibit [present] fungal growth.”

Word usage

Using: In scientific writing, the word *using* is often the cause of dangling participles and misplaced modifiers.

Dangling participle: “Using tissue isolation protocol, mtDNA was isolated from the dried skins.” This sentence implies that mtDNA used the tissue-isolation protocol. Better: “We used tissue-isolation protocol to isolate mtDNA from the dried skins.”

Misplaced modifier: “Ivory samples were taken from tusks using a 16-mm drill bit on a 40-cm drill.” This implies that the tusks used the drill. Better: “We used a 16-mm drill bit on a 40-cm drill to take ivory samples from the tusks.”

Impact: Use affected, not impacted.

Multiple modifiers

Do not use multiple adjectival nouns to modify a noun that is the subject or the object of the sentence: “We studied illegal African elephant ivory trade.” or “infected bird populations’ responses.” Better: “We studied illegal trade in African elephant ivory.” or “responses of infected bird populations.”

Split infinitives

A sentence should not sound awkward because it has been rearranged to avoid a split infinitive. When an adverb qualifies a verb phrase, the adverb usually should be placed between the auxiliary verb and the principal verb (e.g., this research will soon attract attention). Splitting an infinitive verb with an adverb can be useful for adding emphasis or making a sentence sound less stilted. Phrases such as the following are acceptable: the traps had been seriously damaged in a storm; differences in abundance were highly significant; to strongly favor.

Pronouns

Be careful with the pronouns *this*, *these*, and *it*. If you do not provide a qualifier, it is sometimes difficult to tell what these words refer to: “This program offers solutions to that problem.” Better: “This computer program offers solutions to the problem of incorrect sequencing of numbers.”

In-Text Citations

In most cases, enclose citations in text in parentheses. “Populations in sagebrush have higher reproductive success than populations in cheatgrass (Bird & Tree 2000).” is better than “According to Sullivan and Tweeds (2012), populations in sagebrush”

Use an ampersand (&) between author surnames when the citation is parenthetical: (Bird & Sanchez 2010).

When a citation is not parenthetical, use *and*: “Our results are consistent with the predictions of Wolf and Rhymer (2011).”

For citations with more than two authors, use *et al.*: (Hatchwell et al. 1996). Do not italicize *et al.*

List parenthetical citations chronologically (from oldest to most recent) and separate entries with a semicolon: (Zorenstein et al. 1991; Waddell & Fretwell 2001).

Separate the years with commas when citing multiple papers by the same author: (Cox et al. 1991, 1992, 1998; Chapman 2001, 2002).

“In press” means the cited paper has been accepted unconditionally for publication. Provide the year of publication in the text (Bird 2015) and in Literature Cited provide the volume number and substitute “in press” for page numbers (Bird, I.M. 2015. Nesting success in arid lands. *Conservation Biology* **24**: in press.).

Use initials when referencing unpublished data held by the authors of the paper: (C.S.C. & L.K., unpublished data). Use an initial for the first (given) name and spell out the last name (surname) for other sources of unpublished data or information: (R. Fowler, unpublished data; M.E. Cortez, personal communication).

Software: capitalize the first letter only if the name of the program is a word (e.g., Partition, ArcInfo). If the name of the program is not a word, use all capital letters (e.g., SAS).

Do not use trademark symbols.

Ensure that all references cited in text are listed in the Literature Cited and vice versa.

Avoid “in. lit.” citations. Provide the original citations.

Numbers, Variables, and Statistical Elements

Numeral versus word: We follow *Scientific Style and Format*, 7th edition. Most numbers in most circumstances, even those under 10, appear as numerals (i.e., they are not spelled out). The numbers zero and one present exceptions; copyeditors will address these.

Longitude and latitude: 148°N, 78°W (no periods).

Percentages and degrees: use symbols (15% and 15°).

Fractions: may be spelled out (one-half, one-third) unless used with units of measure (0.5 mm or 0.5 years).

Decimal point: insert 0 before a decimal point (0.4, not .4).

Significant figures: Express calculated values (e.g., means, standard deviation) to not more than one significant digit beyond the accuracy of the original measurement. Report test statistics (e.g., *p* values, correlation coefficients) to not more than 3 significant digits.

SD and SE: mean (SD)=44% (3) or mean of 44% (SD 3)

Dates: day, month, year (e.g., 6 October 1987). Do not use abbreviations such as 5/3/14 or 5-3-14.

Numbered lists: for the most part, avoid the use of numbered lists in the text. “We used x, y, and z to take soil samples” rather than “We used three techniques to take soil samples: (1) . . . , (2) . . . , and (3)

Insert a space between numbers and the unit of measure (6 m, 14 mL).

Delimiters: in mathematical expressions the order of delimiters is braces { }, brackets [], and parentheses (): {[()]}. In narrative text, order is the opposite, ([]); avoid use of braces. In functional notation, nested pairs of parentheses are used.

Define all variables used in an equation.

Italicize all single-letter variables in equations. Do not italicize variables with more than one letter (e.g., “RU” meaning reproductive units as opposed to *RU*, in which *R* and *U* are separate interacting variables) or words used in association with variables (e.g., x_{forest}).

Complete words used as a variable should be lowercase (e.g., species). Each letter in multiple-letter abbreviations that are not complete words should be capitalized (e.g., AMF is acceptable for area of managed forest; PATCH for patch area is unacceptable).

Use the following abbreviations:

p, probability

df, degrees of freedom

χ^2 , chi-square

F (*F* test, variance ratio)

F_{ST} (genetic variance contained in a subpopulation relative to the total genetic variance)

CI, confidence interval or credible interval

SE, standard error (do not use \pm)

SD, standard deviation (do not use \pm).

Scientific Names

English and scientific names of birds should follow the checklist of the International Ornithological Congress (<http://worldbirdnames.org/names.html>). Deviations from spellings in this checklist must be supported by an explicit citation of the nomenclatural source (i.e., a published regional checklist or book on the birds of a specific area).

Common names of taxonomic groups other than birds should be in lower case (creeping thistle, common bushtail possum, gopher tortoise).

In the abstract and at first mention in the text, use common name followed by scientific name (genus and species) in parentheses: cane toad (*Bufo marinus*), Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), Florida Scrub Jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*). With a few exceptions, after scientific name has been provided use common name.

Organisms: *Clarkia springvillensis* (first use); *C. springvillensis* (thereafter, even starting a sentence); spp. or sp. or var. (no italics).

Conservation Biology Style Sources

- Day, R. A., and B. Gastel. 2011. How to write and publish a scientific paper. 7th edition. Greenwood, Santa Barbara, California.
- Council of Science Editors. 2006. Scientific style and format. 7th edition. Council of Science Editors, Reston, Virginia.
- Merriam-Webster. 2003. Third new international dictionary, unabridged. Merriam-Webster, Springfield, Massachusetts.
- University of Chicago Press. 2010. The Chicago manual of style. 16th edition. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

September 2014