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Guidelines for manuscripts submitted to the *Great Basin Naturalist*

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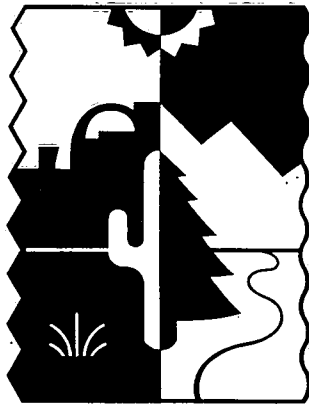
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GUIDELINES
FOR MANUSCRIPTS
SUBMITTED TO

T H E

**GREAT BASIN
NATURALIST**



JUNE 1991

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GUIDELINES FOR MANUSCRIPTS SUBMITTED TO THE GREAT BASIN NATURALIST

June 1991

The following information is presented to provide authors with guidelines and examples to use in preparing manuscripts submitted to the *Great Basin Naturalist*. Although this is not a comprehensive treatise, we believe the guidelines address some of the most common problems encountered by our authors. We recommend the *CBE Style Manual*, 5th edition (Council of Biology Editors, Suite 1200, 230 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60601-5961 USA; \$24), for more in-depth discussions.

Manuscript Preparation

Type manuscripts on standard bond (22 × 28 cm), leaving 2.5-cm margins on all sides, and submit three copies to the *Great Basin Naturalist*. Please do not send diskettes. Manuscripts printed on a dot-matrix printer should be near-letter or letter quality. To allow reviewers and editors sufficient space for notations, we require double-spacing throughout the manuscript—title page, abstract, text, literature cited, appendices, tables, and figure legends. Either 12-pitch (elite) or 10-pitch (pica) type is acceptable (10-pitch is preferred); right-margin justification is also acceptable. However, if right justification is used, avoid hyphenating words at the ends of lines. This includes both hyphenated words and words divided between syllables. (Hyphenation should be turned off on word-processing equipment.) Number all pages consecutively but omit the number on the title page.

Manuscripts may be submitted as either scientific papers or notes, the major difference being the lack of an abstract in notes (see section under Abstract). In addition, notes are generally shorter communications.

Title page. Included on the title page are the title, names and addresses of authors, a running head, and footnotes to indicate change of address. Also, indicate the author to

whom correspondence should be addressed if other than the first author.

- The *title* should be specific and concise (no longer than 15 words). It identifies the article's content or main topic rather than its conclusions. If appropriate, it should include the name of the organism(s) involved. The use of order and family names for species that may be unfamiliar to many readers is appropriate.
- To avoid confusion, we recommend using *full names of authors* rather than initials. Omit academic degrees and professional positions, but cite the department and institution in which the research was done, also the *mailing address* and postal code. If the present address differs from the research institution, include the updated address for correspondence and reprint requests.
- Please provide a *running head* of fewer than 40 letters and spaces. This is a shorter, but nevertheless descriptive, version of the title; it will appear at the top of each right-hand page of the published article.

Abstract. The abstract aids the reader in comprehending the essence of the author's research. It should state the objectives and purpose of the study, methods and/or materials used, results, and conclusions of the research. If appropriate, scientific and common names of organisms should be included, with special emphasis on new taxa or distribution

records. Limit the abstract to approximately 250 words.

- Following the abstract are 6–12 *key words*, listed in order of decreasing importance, to be used for indexing. These words should reflect the central topics of the article and may be from the title, abstract, or text. Please list key words for both notes and articles.

Text. The significance of the text, or, more specifically, the author's prose style, cannot be underestimated. Ultimately, a scientific article must capture the attention of its readers by the importance of its content and its clarity of expression. Chapter 5, *Prose Style for Scientific Writing*, in the *CBE Style Manual* offers helpful suggestions for achieving succinctness and clarity, and avoiding verbiage and distressing grammatical errors.

Although frequently avoided, particularly in scientific articles, the active voice is the one in which people usually speak and write. It is perfectly acceptable and very useful in scientific writing. Not only is active voice ("We determined") less wordy and ambiguous than passive voice ("It was determined"), but its use is also less likely to result in dangling participles and other misplaced modifiers. When appropriate, use active voice.

Verb tense is another area that deserves comment. Completed procedures and observations are described in the past tense ("was," "were"), but present tense is used when presenting directions, conclusions, generalizations, and references to stable or current conditions.

Because *Great Basin Naturalist* articles cover diverse disciplines, we ask our authors to avoid excessive use of unfamiliar abbreviations, jargon, and overly technical vocabulary. Such terms hinder understanding by members of other disciplines and prevent a free exchange of ideas.

For maximum clarity, the body of the text should be divided into the following sections.

- **Introduction.** The introduction need not be long, but it must adequately introduce the research. At the end of the introduction, clearly state the purpose of the research.
- **Methods.** The methods section should contain all the information necessary for other researchers to duplicate the study. The description of the experimental or sampling design

should be clear to the reader. Use a simple figure to present this information if it helps the reader understand the procedures. Another vital part of this section is a description of all statistical procedures used.

- **Study Site Description.** It may be appropriate to include a description of the study area in a separate section. This usually precedes the methods section, but it may also be contained within that section.
- **Results.** The results should be separate from the discussion. In this section, state the results using text, figures, tables, or any workable combination thereof. This section is not for the interpretation of results.
- **Discussion.** The discussion is the forum in which the study results are interpreted and compared with results from other studies. Interpretations should be consistent with results, and they should correspond with the stated purpose(s) of the research.

We highly recommend the following article as one that is helpful to authors in writing and critiquing their own work:

Kuyper, B. J. 1991. Bringing up scientists in the art of critiquing research. *BioScience* 41:248–150.

Easily understood, effectively placed headings and subheadings help the reader quickly grasp the content and structure of the paper. The *Great Basin Naturalist* uses three levels of headings within textual material.

- **Primary headings** are centered in all capital letters with space above and below. In general, primary headings should be restricted to STUDY AREA, MATERIALS AND METHODS, RESULTS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, ACKNOWLEDGMENTS, LITERATURE CITED, and APPENDIX, or variations of any of the above. Do not use INTRODUCTION as a heading.
- **Secondary headings** are centered in upper- and lowercase letters with space above and below.
- **Tertiary headings**, set in all capitals, are indented from the left margin and followed by a period and a 1-em dash (two hyphens in typescript). Do not use secondary or tertiary headings unless major sections are long and/or the text is complex. In articles requiring only two levels of organization, tertiary headings should be used directly under primary headings.

Literature Cited. References to published literature and unpublished documents used

in an article are cited in both the text and a separate bibliographic section.

References in the text are cited by author and date: e.g., Potter (1980) or (Potter 1980). Multiple citations should be separated by commas and listed in chronological order (Baker 1968, Flake 1973, Agnew 1986). In citations having more than two authors, use "et al." after the name of the first author (MacCracken et al. 1985).

Use the heading LITERATURE CITED for the list of references following the text. Include only references actually cited in the text. No reference should be included unless the pertinent publication facts have been verified against the original document. Page numbers seem to be particularly susceptible to transposition and other typographical errors. The responsibility for accuracy of reference material lies with the author, not the copy editor.

The list of literature cited must be alphabetical by authors' surnames. Initials are usually sufficient for given names unless confusion would result when family names and initials are identical for different authors. In such cases write out the first given name for each author.

The *Great Basin Naturalist* no longer abbreviates titles of periodicals and names of publishers. Include full titles as they appear on the title page, but omit initial articles. *The American Midland Naturalist* and *The Great Basin Naturalist* become, respectively, *American Midland Naturalist* and *Great Basin Naturalist*.

As a general rule, too much bibliographical information is better than too little. Unnecessary data can be deleted.

Following are examples of the most common types of bibliographic references.

- *Journals*

Arcos, M. L., A. de Vicente, M. A. Morinigo, P. Romero, and J. J. Borrego. 1988. Evaluation of several selective media for recovery of *Aeromonas hydrophila* from polluted waters. *Applied and Environmental Microbiology* 54: 2786-2792. [Only the initials of the first author are inverted; use the first author's name and "et al." for papers with seven or more authors.]

Ferguson, J. H., and C. H. Lowe. 1969. Evolutionary relationships in the *Bufo punctatus* group. *American Midland Naturalist* 81:

435-466. [Issue numbers are not included unless the journal is numbered by issue rather than by volume; the issue, supplement, or part number is then included in parentheses after the volume number:

3(6):42-57 56(suppl. 4):8-13
2(3, pt. 4):2-5.]

Tove, M. H., and D. L. Fischer. 1991. [If the year of publication has not been determined, use "In press" in place of the date.] Recent changes in the status of wintering gull populations in Utah. *American Birds*. [Omit volume and pagination for in-press citations.]

- *Books*

Brady, N. C. 1974. *The nature and properties of soils*. 8th ed. Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York. 639 pp.

Snedecor, G. W., and W. G. Cochran. 1971. *Statistical methods*. Iowa State University Press, Ames. [Repeating the state name would be redundant.]

- *Parts of books*

Smith, H. D., and C. D. Jorgensen. 1975. Reproductive biology of North American desert rodents. Pages 305-330 in I. Prakash and P. K. Ghosh, eds., *Rodents in desert environments*. Dr. W. Junk Publishers, The Hague, Netherlands.

- *Proceedings*

Schenbeck, G. L. 1982. Management of black-tailed prairie dogs on the National Grasslands. Pages 207-217 in R. M. Timm and R. J. Johnson, eds., *Proceedings of the Fifth Great Plains Wildlife Damage Control Workshop*. University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

- *Theses/Dissertations*

Cramer, K. L. 1988. Reproduction and life history patterns of *Peromyscus maniculatus* and *Perognathus* spp. in the northern Bonneville Basin, Utah. Unpublished dissertation, Utah State University, Logan. 101 pp.

- *Miscellaneous*

Tueller, P. T., C. D. Beeson, R. J. Tausch, N. E. West, and K. H. Rea. 1979. Pinyon-juniper woodlands of the Great Basin: distribution, flora, and vegetal cover. USDA Forest Service Research Paper INT-229. Intermountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, Ogden, Utah. 22 pp. [Subtitles are lower-cased.]

Literature citations of reports will not be used unless adequate information has been provided for the reader to readily locate the reference.

Appendices. Long lists of material related only indirectly to the topic should be included in an appendix. Lists of specimens examined, for example, would be appropriate.

Tables. Tables are costly to typeset and therefore should be used only when they are deemed the most effective means of presenting and summarizing data. If the data can be described in one or two sentences within the text, do not present the information in a table. Tables should be self-explanatory. The title, headings, and footnotes must contain sufficient information for the reader to understand the table without referring to the text. This will be achieved if the format is clear, simple, and well organized. Also, tables of similar information presented in similar or parallel formats will aid the reader. Chapter 6 of the *CBE Style Manual* offers helpful suggestions on compiling, presenting, and condensing information in tabular formats.

All tables should be numbered sequentially. Each table must be typed on a separate sheet(s), given a complete, intelligible title, and referred to by number in the text. The title describes the topic or general trends shown in the table; it should also include species, localities, and dates of study when appropriate. Include the number of samples (for example, $N = 24$) in the title or in a column heading, whichever would be more beneficial to the reader.

Make headings within tables brief and grammatically consistent with each other. Capitalize only the first word of column heads and items in stubs (row headings); do not use all uppercase letters. Footnotes to tables should be kept to a minimum. Asterisks (*), one, two, or three, should be used for probability, $P < .05$, $.01$, and $.001$, respectively. Lowercase letters are used to denote other footnotes.

Finally, a table that fits into one column of the *Great Basin Naturalist* two-column format is more likely to be printed close to its corresponding text. This, of course, is a relatively simple method of enhancing reader understanding.

Figures. Well-designed and prepared illustrative materials, whether photographs or black-and-white artwork, not only augment and clarify written material but also provide visual enhancement. On the other hand, poorly prepared graphics may minimize the author's or the journal's credibility.

In considering the addition of illustrations to an article, be certain the text is long enough to accommodate the artwork. In most cases two pages of typescript are required for each figure or table; three pages are preferred. When submitting an article for review, please do not send original photographs or black-and-white artwork. High-quality photocopies are adequate.

- *Photographs* (generally referred to as halftones), because of the nature of the reproduction process, are approximately two to three times as expensive to produce as line copy (black-and-white artwork). We recommend keeping halftones to a minimum. When they are included, please submit glossy originals with sharp focus, a full range of tonal values, and suitable contrast. Photographs that are slightly gray (low contrast) reproduce better than those with high contrast.

Photographs submitted with the final manuscript upon acceptance by the *Great Basin Naturalist* should be no larger than 22 x 28 cm. Ideally, the printed size will be between 50% and 100% of the original size. Smaller reductions tend to darken and lose details. Photographs can also be enlarged up to about 150% of original size without adversely affecting quality. Photomicrographs and electron micrographs should include a scale on the photograph or on an overlay.

- *Line copy* is black-and-white artwork. Prepared on a white background with black lines, it contains no grays. Graphs, diagrams, and charts fall into this category. Technical pens, flexible pens, and brushes, all used with black India ink, can produce line drawings, depending on the type of illustration desired. Technical pens will give evenly weighted lines suitable for graphs and charts. Flexible pens and brushes give smooth, tapered lines or softer, fuzzy effects, respectively.

Although line copy does not contain grays, the effect of gray areas can be achieved by using stippling, cross-hatching, or line contouring. Patterned screens with adhesive backings are also frequently used.

Line drawings should not be enlarged for publication, as enlargement reveals—and

magnifies—flaws that may not be obvious on the original. Reductions of black-and-white artwork should not exceed 50%. It is important that all lines, symbols, and letters be large enough on the original to withstand reduction and still maintain integrity and/or legibility.

- *Computer-generated graphics*, increasingly available in many institutions, are acceptable forms of black-and-white artwork as long as they are produced on laser, rather than dot-matrix, printers. The same requirements that apply to line art also apply to computer graphics.

- *General considerations for illustrations:*

1. For the sake of consistency, multiple pieces of artwork for one article or a series of articles should be prepared, if possible, by the same artist. A uniform reduction of multiple pieces will also aid consistency.

2. The general ratio of 2:3, in either a vertical or horizontal orientation, will result in artwork compatible with the *Great Basin Naturalist's* page and/or column dimensions.

3. Place necessary identifications, i.e., symbols, regression formulas, and scale bars, directly on the figure rather than in the figure legend.

4. Use symbols for data points, particularly on graphs. The most common are ○, ●, △, ▲, □, ■, ◇, ◆.

5. Identify all artwork on the back. Using a soft blue pencil, mark author and figure number, and indicate "top."

General Style and Usage Conventions

Provide the scientific name (genus and species) of all organisms when first mentioned in the vernacular form in both abstract and text even if the name appears in the title.

Use a comma to separate the elements (words, phrases, or clauses) of a simple series of more than two. A comma precedes the "and" or "or" (e.g., blue grama, buffalograss, and needleleaf sedge).

Underline generic and specific names in text (they will be italicized in print). Do not use italics or boldface type in manuscripts.

Follow *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* for spelling and word-usage questions. Also, consult *Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged*.

In numbers consisting of two to four digits, run the numerals together: 1000, 3959. Use comma separators for numbers of five or more digits: 45,808. Use numerals to express any number immediately preceding an abbreviation for a standard unit of measure or expression of time: 5 g, 20 mm, 4 h. In most other situations, use words for numbers one through nine and numerals for larger numbers. However, in a series containing some numbers of 10 or more and some less than 10, use numerals for all.

Write dates with no punctuation: 16 August 1989.

Standard abbreviations are acceptable for units of measure, directions and coordinates, Latin terms (most of which no longer require italics), and statistical terms. Acronyms and other less common abbreviations should be defined when first mentioned by writing out the term and enclosing the abbreviation in parentheses following it.

Always check the most recent issue of the journal for any changes in style or format.

A Final Word

Although we agree that adhering to established rules and maintaining a consistent style are hallmarks of good journalism, we also agree with a statement made in the preface to the University of Chicago's first (1906) edition of a *Manual of Style*:

Throughout this book it is assumed that no regulation contained therein is absolutely inviolable. . . . Each case . . . must largely be decided upon its own merits. Generally it may be stated that, where no question of good taste or good logic is involved, deference should be shown to the expressed wishes of the author.

Acknowledgments

Portions of this manuscript were extracted from the *CBE Style Manual* (5th ed.), *The Chicago Manual of Style* (13th ed.), *Guidelines for Manuscripts for Publications of the American Society of Mammalogists*, and previously unpublished *Great Basin Naturalist* style guidelines and instructions to authors.