



Herpetologica and Herpetological Monographs Instructions for Authors – 2025

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Herpetologica and *Herpetological Monographs* publish original papers dealing largely or exclusively with the biology of amphibians and reptiles. Manuscripts are especially encouraged that quantitatively test important hypotheses, address important theoretical issues, and carefully analyze the diversity, systematics, and evolution of amphibians and reptiles. *Herpetologica* publishes manuscripts that are usually 45 or fewer pages, including title, text, appendices, tables, captions, and figures. This total page count does not include files that will be supplemental online-only files.

Herpetological Monographs publishes lengthy manuscripts that are monographic in scope and usually longer than 45 manuscript pages.

Herpetologica and *Herpetological Monographs* do not publish notes or short communications, although short manuscripts may be considered for *Herpetologica* by the Editor on a case-by-case basis. Submitted manuscripts will be evaluated for the appropriateness of the topic for the journal and on their scientific merit, including the importance of hypotheses or theories addressed and quality of the experimental design and writing.

Cover letters are required when submitting a manuscript. Cover letters should briefly summarize the scientific scope, importance, and appropriateness for the journal. Cover letters should also indicate that all contributors observed appropriate ethical and legal guidelines and regulations for the acquisition and use of study animals. Specifically, local/state/federal permit numbers, and Institutional Animal Care and Use and Institutional Review Board (or equivalent, for non-USA research) protocol numbers must be provided in the cover letter and also in the acknowledgments section of the manuscript. See the ETHICS POLICY FOR PUBLICATIONS OF THE HERPETOLOGISTS' LEAGUE at the end of this document for more information. In addition, authors should read HL's policy on the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in the conduct of research and the preparation of manuscripts. Authors will be asked to affirm their compliance with that policy when the manuscript is accepted.

MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION

Beginning on 1 January 2026, the Herpetologists' League journals will be hosted online by BioOne, with both of our journals available on their Subscribe to Open (S2O) platform. Whereas HL journals remain society-published, our new publications services provider will be Kriyadocs, a subsidiary of Exeter Premedia Services, Ltd. The Kriyadocs platform is a more user-friendly and intuitive interface, including features that allow real-time changes to be tracked as accepted manuscripts make their way through the publication process. This platform should reduce the burden on authors and reviewers and reduce the time required between submission and initial decision.

For manuscripts intended for publication in *Herpetologica*, please visit: <https://thl.kriyadocs.com/submissions/submit/thl/herp/login> and follow the submission instructions.

For manuscripts intended for publication in *Herpetological Monographs*, please visit: <https://thl.kriyadocs.com/submissions/submit/thl/hmon/login> and follow the submission instructions.

Corresponding authors will be prompted to enter ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) credentials when submitting a manuscript. An ORCID credential is a universal persistent identifier (PID) that aids in accurately linking researchers and contributors around the globe with their individual scholarship and writing. If you do not yet have an ORCID credential, you must register for one, at no cost, before you will be able to submit a manuscript to Herpetologists' League publications. ORCID is a global, not-for-profit organization. Learn more about ORCID and register your own individual PID by visiting <https://orcid.org/>.

PREPARING MANUSCRIPT FILES

In preparing the manuscript and graphics, we ask that all potential authors follow the guidelines given below in their entirety. Manuscripts ready for submission should be uploaded in MSWord (*.doc or *.docx).

If any figures accompany the manuscript, each must be uploaded as an individual graphics file, separate from the manuscript text file. Figure files should be in correct numerical order and clearly labeled. Do not include any caption information within figure files. Captions for any figures should be included at the end of the manuscript file, in a final section with the primary heading "Figure Captions."

We also encourage submission of supplemental material associated with a manuscript to the Kriyadocs repository. The supplemental material should not be essential for inclusion and interpretation of the manuscript, but should support the analysis presented and be beneficial to some readers. Examples of such materials include more detailed methods, data sets, additional tables or figures (including color images), video and audio files, etc. During the submission process, authors will be prompted to upload supplemental files. The size-limit for any single uploaded file is 250 MB.

Publication Charges

Authors who are not members of HL are required to pay a processing fee of \$250⁰⁰ per accepted article. The entire processing fee is waived, however, for members of HL. In the case of multi-authored papers, at least one of the authors must be a member of HL before a manuscript is finally accepted in order for the processing fee to be waived. For manuscripts submitted by nonmembers, the Kriyadocs system will provide an opportunity for authors to join HL prior to publication (in the event of acceptance). Because HL journals will be published only in electronic format beginning in 2026, color figures can be included, as appropriate, at no charge.

Effective January 2026, *Herpetologica* and *Herpetological Monographs* will be published under the Subscribe to Open (S2O) model. This is a conditional open access model, in which a decision will be made by BioOne to open a volume if subscriptions reach a specified threshold compared to previous years. If the subscription rate meets that threshold, the journal's content will be designated open access for all users. If the threshold is not met, that volume will be closed to non-subscribing institutions. That content will, of course, be open to all subscribing institutions and to all individual members of HL. An advantage of S2O is that the decision to publish a given volume as open access does not incur any cost for the author. S2O relies upon continuing institutional subscription renewals to support the costs of open access for all users.

MANUSCRIPT DOCUMENT FORMAT

All manuscripts must use American English spelling and grammar conventions. Use active voice consistently throughout the manuscript. If an author submits a supplemental file that will be posted online only, the file must be in final format. Neither the Editors nor press staff will make any changes to the content or format of any supplemental file. If the article is accepted, the supplemental file will be posted online “as is.”

Manuscript Sections and Formatting

Manuscripts are usually arranged in the following order: Title Page, Abstract and Key Words, narrative text (usually comprised of an Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, and Discussion, as described below), Literature Cited, appendices, tables, and figure captions. Figures are submitted as separate files, as described below.

Section headings.—Three levels of headings are allowed:

- Primary heading: Centered text, in all-caps font. This level is usually reserved for the primary text sections, including MATERIALS AND METHODS, RESULTS, DISCUSSION, and LITERATURE CITED (but also SPECIES ACCOUNTS, etc., for some manuscripts; see Special Consideration for Taxonomy Papers later in these instructions).
- Secondary heading: Centered text in title case (i.e., each major word capitalized—e.g., “Statistical Analyses”; “Genetic Divergence and Monophyly Tests”). This level is usually reserved for major subsections of the primary sections listed above.
- Tertiary heading: Left-justified heading in bold font style, and in sentence case (i.e., only the first word and proper nouns begin with a capital letter), followed by a period and an em-dash. For example, “**Mountain area.**—This site is...” This level is used to distinguish important subtopics within secondary sections and is also always used for the **Acknowledgments**.

Title Page

Include the manuscript title, author’s name(s), author’s address(es), a footnote for any necessary updates to address information, a correspondence footnote, and suggested right running head text (RRH). The right running head (RRH) is the final item on the title page. The RRH should not exceed 80 characters, including spaces. The final RRH text may be edited for length and clarity. Titles should not exceed 18 words.

Sample title page.—See below.

Effects of Population Density on Patterns of Movement and Behavior of Gopher Tortoises

(Gopherus polyphemus)

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RRH: Guyer et al.—Behavioral Ecology in *Gopherus*

Abstract.—The Abstract follows the title page, and is a single paragraph limited to 400 words. It should state the major points of the paper as clearly and concisely as possible without referencing the text and without in-text citations or detailed statistical results. The abstract paragraph should begin with the all-caps word “ABSTRACT” in indented text, followed by a colon—e.g., “ABSTRACT: Patterns of habitat selection ...”. A second Abstract in any modern language may be included after the Acknowledgments, at the end of the manuscript narrative.

Key Words.—The key words paragraph separates the Abstract from the Introduction. Close attention should be given to choosing key words because they will be used to index the article in online databases that are used by potential readers to find the article. Authors may supply up to six key words, and key words should not include any words or phrases already appearing in the manuscript title.

Body of the manuscript.—The main body of the manuscript text usually includes primary sections for the Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, and a final Acknowledgments paragraph before the Literature Cited. However, some manuscripts work best with a different arrangement of sections (e.g., separate headings for multiple experiments if they use substantially different methods from one another); authors should use their best judgment in this matter.

Sample Heading Format

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Experimental Condition 1: *Anaxyrus americanus*

Collection and maintenance.—We collected 50 adults of ...

Acknowledgments.— The acknowledgments paragraph typically recognizes those who have contributed direct or indirect technical help in preparing the final research manuscript but who are not also authors. This can include acknowledgment of grants, fellowships, and other funding organizations or supportive institutions, and thanks to helpful supervisors, reviewers, colleagues, or field, laboratory, or administrative support staff. The Acknowledgments should also include all relevant permit and protocol numbers for the legal and ethical acquisition and use of study animals.

- The acknowledgments paragraph should follow the Discussion and precede the Literature Cited.
- Use a tertiary heading for this paragraph, regardless of whether a secondary heading has been used within the discussion section.
- Be as concise as possible.
- Use initials instead of first names for individuals. For example, “**Acknowledgments.**—We thank K. Wadsworth...” rather than “Acknowledgments.—We would like to thank Katherine N. Wadsworth....”

IN-TEXT CITATIONS AND THE LITERATURE CITED SECTION

The Literature Cited follows the Acknowledgments. We strongly suggest that authors use a citation management software application when incorporating literature into your manuscript (e.g., EndNote, ProCite, etc.). All in-text citations, including those of taxonomic authorities, must be provided in the Literature Cited, and all references in the Literature Cited must be cited somewhere in the manuscript. Confirm that dates and spelling of in-text citations correspond with the literature cited entries.

- Papers accepted for publication should be cited as “(Smith, in press)” in the text, and a full reference should appear in the Literature Cited; list “In press” in place of the year of publication, and provide the article title and the name of the accepting journal (e.g., “Smith, A.B. In press. How green is your frog? *Herpetological Miscellanea*.”).
- Do not cite unpublished data or manuscripts. Any observations, data, or manuscripts that have not been accepted for publication or published should be cited as personal observations—e.g., “(A.B. Clark, personal observation).” These citations should not appear in the Literature Cited.
- Citation of non-peer-reviewed sources, such as meeting abstracts and most web sites, should be avoided whenever possible. Such sources are not reliably available to readers in the future. Please seek updated publication information for recent abstracts, contact the researcher directly for the most relevant recent citation, or locate and provide a persistent Digital Object Identifier (DOI) whenever possible.
- Dissertations and theses should be cited, unless the information has also been published in a peer-reviewed source.
- For all commercially available software mentioned in the text, specify the exact version used for your analyses, and list the software publisher and locale. For example, in the case of SPSS “SPSS (v22; IBM Corp., Armonk, NY).” Do not include these citations in the Literature Cited.
- For all other software used for your analyses, provide a citation to the relevant scholarly work in the text where appropriate. For example, in the case of R package lme4 “(Bates et al. 2015)”. Do provide this full reference in the Literature Cited. For

this example, “Bates, D., M. Maechler, B. Bolker and S. Walker. 2015. Fitting linear mixed-effects models using lme4. *Journal of Statistical Software* 67:1–48. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18637/jss.v067.i01>.”

- For commercial equipment used, provide details of the model and identify the manufacturer. For example, “Thermochron iButton DS1921 Kit (Maxim Integrated).” Do not include these in the Literature Cited.
- Peer-reviewed electronic resources should be cited in the same manner as print-based publications.

Formatting for Most Common Types of References

- Article in a print journal
 - Include author name(s), year of publication, article title, journal name (volume and page range). Example:

May, P.G., and T.M. Farrell. 2012. Growth patterns of Dusky Pygmy Rattlesnakes (*Sistrurus miliarius barbouri*) from central Florida. *Herpetological Monographs* 26:58–79.

- Books and edited volumes cited in their entirety
 - Following author names(s), provide year of publication, and the complete title with any volume or edition information, the name of the publisher, and the country of publication (but not the city or state).
 - Book example:

Stebbins, R.C., and N.W. Cohen. 1995. *A Natural History of Amphibians*.
Princeton University Press, USA.

- Edited volume example:

Gans, C., A.d’A. Bellairs and T.S. Parsons (eds.). 1969. *Biology of the Reptilia*,
Volume 1, Morphology A. Academic Press, USA.

- Chapter in a book
 - Include the chapter author name(s), year of publication, chapter, the page range the chapter appears on, the complete book title with any volume or edition information, then the editor(s), and the publisher and country of publication (but not the city or state). Example:

McDiarmid, R.W., and R. Altig. 2010. Morphology of amphibian larvae. Pp. 39–53 in *Amphibian Ecology and Conservation: A Handbook of Techniques* (C.K. Dodd, Jr., ed.). Oxford University Press, UK.

- Thesis or dissertation

- Include author name, year of publication, title (set in title case), and indicate the degree and university. Include the state only when needed to distinguish a university from others with similar names. Example:

Neuman-Lee, L.A. 2016. Anthropogenic and Natural Stressors and Their Effect on Immunity, Reproduction, and the Stress Response. Ph.D. dissertation, Utah State University, United States of America.

- Software

- For all software employed in your analyses, commercial and non-commercial, provide the exact version number used as part of your in-text citation, e.g., “SPSS (v22; IBM Corp., Armonk, NY)”; “R v4.1.0 (R Core Team 2021).”
- For commercial software, there is no need to include a full reference in the literature cited section.
- For all other software, provide a named citation to the definitive description of the software in the text, and include a full reference in the Literature Cited.
- Example:
 - For Program MARK, in-text citation: “White and Burnham 1999”
 - Full reference in Literature Cited:

White, G.C., and K.P. Burnham. 1999. Program MARK: Survival estimation from populations of marked animals. *Bird Study* 46(Supplement):120–138.”

- Non-peer-reviewed technical reports and print media

- Cite non-peer-reviewed technical reports and print media only when unavoidable. Provide complete publication information for all reports, including any subtitles, editors, publication or report numbers, and name a publishing authority.
- Example, technical report:

Reed, R.N., and G.H. Rodda. 2009. Giant Constrictors: Biological and Management Profiles and an Establishment Risk Assessment for Nine Large

Species of Pythons, Anacondas, and the Boa Constrictor. Open-File Report
2009–1202. U.S. Geological Survey, USA.

- Example, print media:

Guam Economic Review. 1998. Statistical highlights. Guam Economic Review
20:11–32.

- Web sites

- For citations of web sites, provide complete reference information whenever possible. Include the site author name(s), the year of publication, the page title, provide a current functional URL, and the date that you accessed or downloaded the information (whenever possible). Also list the name of any publishing authority or hosting credit, whenever available.

- Example:

Frost, D.R. 2016. Amphibian Species of the World: An Online Reference.

Available at <http://research.amnh.org/herpetology/amphibia/index.html>.

Accessed on 18 May 2016. American Museum of Natural History, USA.

APPENDICES AND SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Detailed information not essential to the text should be placed in appendices or in a separate supplemental materials file.

Appendices follow the Literature Cited. When used, use the primary heading APPENDIX (with Roman numerals I, II, etc., only when there are two or more). A secondary heading such as “Experimental Protocols” may follow the primary heading. Appendices containing specimens examined have special formatting requirements described later in the section on taxonomic papers.

Supplemental materials appear online only. Examples of supplemental materials include more detailed methods, data sets, additional tables or figures, and any video or audio files, etc. Supplemental materials should be cited in the text as, e.g., “Supplemental Tables S1, S2, available online” at the first mention in the text, and referenced as, e.g., “Tables S1, S2” for subsequent citations. Neither the Editors nor press staff will make any changes to the content or format of any supplemental files. If the article is accepted, the supplemental material will be posted online “as is.”

TABLES

Your tables should immediately follow any Appendix, if present, or immediately follow the Literature Cited otherwise. Each table should appear on a new page within the manuscript file itself. Use page breaks to separate tables, and use section breaks if necessary to include tables in

landscape page orientation. A new section break can be used each time you need to include a page with a different orientation to the previous page. It is strongly suggested that you use the table function in your word processing software to design simple and clear tables. Tables should not be included as separate files.

- The table caption should appear before the table. Be brief, but provide enough content to allow the meaning of the table to be understood independent of the manuscript narrative (e.g., include species names, definition of acronyms, explain variable names, etc., as appropriate). The caption should not include interpretation of your results.
- Table captions are formatted using a tertiary heading style. Begin with the word “Table” and table number in bold font, and then provide caption text; e.g., “**Table 1.**—Mean weekly temperatures....”

Footnotes (indicated by superscripted symbols, letters, or numbers) may be used at the end of a table when more detailed explanation is needed. Footnotes are placed below the table.

Table 1.—Number of female and male first authors publishing in three of the subdisciplines covered by North American herpetological journals. *P*-values are based on chi-square comparisons between genders within time periods.

Subdiscipline	Time period	Gender ^a		<i>P</i>
		Females	Males	
Systematics	1973–1982	30	482	0.07
	1983–1993	52	541	< 0.01
Ecology and evolution	1973–1982	90	1007	0.80
	1983–1993	226	978	< 0.01
Anatomy and physiology	1973–1982	33	289	0.22
	1983–1993	53	308	0.84

^a Data adapted from Wilson (1998).

FIGURES

During online submission, each figure file will be uploaded individually. In preparing graphics for your figure files, follow the guidelines from our publisher, summarized below. Before submission, authors should print figures and inspect them carefully to ensure they are clear and readable at the appropriate size for print publication.

Figure Captions

- Captions for figures are listed within the manuscript file, rather than appearing in the graphic files for your figures. Captions should be grouped together on a final separate page of the manuscript, following any tables, with the primary heading “FIGURE CAPTIONS.”
- Figure captions are formatted using a tertiary heading style; captions begin with the word “Figure” and the figure number in bold font. For example, “**Figure 1.**—Mean weekly temperatures...”
- Caption content should be brief but provide enough information to allow the meaning of the figure to be understood independent of the manuscript narrative. As with table captions, include species names, definition of acronyms, etc., as appropriate. The caption should not include interpretation of results.

Figure graphics.—

- Authors should design their figures to fit on letter size paper with 1.5 inch (38 mm) margins. However, figures should also be designed to accommodate a caption on the same page within this printed area.
- Resize figures for one-column (minimum 90 mm wide) or two-column (minimum 180 mm wide) placement before submitting manuscripts so that reviewers and editors can check for readability and size of lines and text.
- Authors should ensure that lines are one point thick, letters and symbols are a minimum of 1.5–2.0 mm high (6–10 point font), and decimals are visible after reduction. All lettering of figures should be in a sans serif font such as Arial or Helvetica.
- If a figure includes more than one image or panel, then the images should be arranged together in one electronic file with adjacent images abutting one another and each image identified by a capital letter (A, B, C) set in 10-point text and placed at the lower left corner. Each image or panel should be identified clearly in the figure caption. Do not separate photos in a single figure with narrow white or black lines.
- Overlapping symbols should be counter-shaded in white (i.e., surround each overlapping solid symbol with a 1-point thick white line). Solid circles, squares, triangles, diamonds, and hexagons are preferred symbols. Illustrations with more symbols might contain open versions of these same shapes. The figure (not the caption) should contain a key to the symbols.
- Plot frames should not be used to surround any type of figure except a map.
- Include a scale to indicate distance or size when appropriate.
- Ordinarily, text indicating the magnitude of scale bars should appear in figures rather than in captions.
- All axes of graphs should be labeled in title case.
- Abbreviations on figures should follow the conventions given in these instructions, such as for measurement units and statistical abbreviations (details below).
- For figures in color, authors should use a color palette suitable for readers with varying degrees of colorblindness. For example, avoid red and green combinations. In addition, use different patterns or symbols in addition to color. For example, rather than use green and red circles, choose blue squares and red circles.

- In preparing graphics, please follow these technical guidelines to ensure that graphic files are prepared to achieve accurate, timely publishing, without additional costs.
 - **File Size:** Individual figure files may not exceed 25 MB.
 - **Accepted File Formats:** Authors should only submit figures in the following formats: .jpg (JPEG), .tif (TIFF), .eps (Encapsulated Postscript), and .png (Portable Network Graphics). Do not submit figures embedded in Word or PowerPoint files. Figures prepared in graphics programs such as Photoshop should be exported as, and saved in, one of the accepted formats before submission.
 - **Color:** Both RGB and CMYK color models are accepted.
 - **Resolution and DPI Requirements:** Use a *minimum* of 300 dpi for both color and grayscale images and a minimum of 600 dpi for line art.

Maps.—

- Authors frequently submit maps that have been scanned or downloaded from internet sources. These types of maps are rarely acceptable for publication and may violate copyright laws. Maps should be redrawn in an appropriate illustration program and the scanned base map discarded from the figure. New maps generated with GIS software or R also are acceptable.
- Use shades of gray for topographic features such as areas above 1,000 and 2,000 m in mountainous regions or water in maps depicting the distributions of insular taxa.
- Ordinarily, do not include a small inset map showing the area enlarged in the map. For example, a map showing mountains in SE Brazil should not have an inset map of South America or Brazil.
- Orient the map so that north is at the top. Do not include a compass symbol showing north, south, east, and west.
- Maps should be enclosed in a single or doubled frame (each line 1 point thick) and have tick marks and numerical labels for latitude and longitude. Use a small font (6–7 points) for degrees latitude and longitude and place numerals adjacent to the tick marks, just outside of the inner frame.
- Add a scale bar to the map, showing distance in km.

GUIDELINES FOR CITING TABLES AND FIGURES IN THE TEXT

In addition to the guidelines listed here, see examples of published tables and figures in a recent issue of *Herpetologica* or *Herpetological Monographs*.

Capitalize the word “Table” in in-text citations when citing any numbered table, e.g., “(Table 1).” Also capitalize the word “Figure” when citing any numbered figure, e.g., “(Figure 1)”.

When two figures or tables are cited, use a comma to separate table or figure numbers; e.g., “(Tables 2, 3; Figures 6, 7).” When a range of figures or tables are cited, use the longer endash symbol to indicate the range of numbers; e.g., “(Tables 2–4; Figures 6–9).”

GENERAL STYLE AND USAGE GUIDELINES

This section provides general guidance for common word usage, style, punctuation, the use of numbers and mathematical symbols, abbreviations, etc. Please apply these standards consistently.

Scientific and Standard Names

Standard English names should follow the nomenclature of Nicholson et al. (2025) for North American species. Scientific names that are valid under the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (<http://www.iczn.org>) may be used as needed for each paper. In formatting scientific names, the genus is capitalized and italicized; the specific epithet is lower case and italicized (e.g., *Drymobius margaritiferus*). Unless the binomial is used at the start of a sentence, the genus can be abbreviated after first use (e.g., *D. margaritiferus*) unless another genus is mentioned that begins with the same letter.

Citation of scientific names.—Traditionally, *Herpetologica* and *Herpetological Monographs* have not required manuscripts to provide the author of each scientific name. If an author chooses to include authorship of scientific names, they have three options:

- (1) Include the author but not the date at first mention of the name in the paper—e.g., “We found specimens of *Bothrops jonathani* Harvey above 2,000 m.”
- (2) Place the date after the author (do not separate it with a comma)—e.g., “We found specimens of *Bothrops jonathani* Harvey 1994 above 2,000 m.”
- (3) Enclose the date within parentheses—e.g., “We found specimens of *Bothrops jonathani* Harvey (1994) above 2,000 m.”

The Code (ICZN) recommends Option 2. If authors elect to use Option 2 or 3, in which citations are dated, a full reference must be included in the Literature Cited.

Please note that if a species has been transferred to a different genus, then the authorship must appear inside parentheses, with or without the date, and always omitting a comma—e.g., either “*Rhinocerothis jonathani* (Harvey 1994)” or “*Rhinocerothis jonathani* (Harvey).”

Italics

- Use italics only for names of genera and species and for common statistical abbreviations (e.g., $n = 10$, $P < 0.05$). Do not use italics for headings or emphasis.
- Common foreign words are not italicized (e.g., “sensu” or “et al.”).

Numbers

- Always spell out a number used at the beginning of a sentence (e.g., “Twenty species...”).
- Spell out all whole numbers less than 10, except as noted below.
- Use Arabic numerals:
 - For numbers of 10 or greater
 - When the number is followed by a unit of measurement (e.g., 9 mm; 5°C)
 - When the number is a designator (e.g., “Experiment 2”)
 - When the number is separated by a dash, as in a range of values (e.g., “2–3 scutes”)
 - When numbers of 10 or more are compared to numbers less than 10 within a sentence (e.g., “We collected 7 frogs, 9 salamanders, and 20 lizards...”)

- For decimal values. If a decimal value is less than one, always use a leading zero; e.g., “0.5”
- Include commas for values having four or more digits (e.g., “1,280”).
- Numbers or letters in a list should be enclosed in parentheses—e.g., “(1)..., (2)..., (3)...”
- Subscripts are useful for reporting sample sizes upon which a statistic is based—e.g., “Males have longer tails than females ($t_{35,66} = 2.55, P < 0.001$).” Note that reporting the statistic and probability allows you to omit the phrase “statistically significant.” That is, do not include statements such as “Size differences between the sexes were statistically significant.”
- Geographic coordinates can be in any standard format (e.g., decimal degrees, or degrees minutes seconds), without spaces between numbers, degree symbols, and the abbreviation for cardinal directions (e.g., 38.965667°N, 95.226639°W; datum = WGS84).
- The datum must be specified for geographic coordinates because the same coordinates can have different locations when they are based on different geodetic networks. If the datum used is the same for all coordinates, summarize this as “datum = WGS84 in all cases.”

Punctuation for Mathematical Symbols

- All mathematical operators are separated by spaces; e.g., “ $\alpha = 0.05; P < 0.025$ ”.
- A minus sign (using the longer en-dash symbol) or plus sign is separated from text by spaces when the symbol is used to indicate mathematical operation, e.g., “ $1 + 1 = 2$.” No space is used when the symbol indicates positive or negative values, e.g., “a value of +2.”
- A plus-or-minus sign (\pm) is separated from text by spaces when used to indicate a value plus-or-minus a measure of variation (e.g., “ 12 ± 0.02 ”).

Measurement Units and Abbreviations

- Follow the International System of Units (SI) and use SI abbreviations in the text, tables, and figures for units of measured variables or data. Common measurement units and their abbreviations include:
 - Millimeters = mm
 - Centimeters = cm
 - Meters = m
 - Kilometers = km
 - Milliliters = mL
 - Liters = L
 - Grams = g
 - Seconds = s
 - Minutes = min
 - Hours = h
 - Days = d (or day)
 - Week = wk
 - Month = mo
 - Years = yr
- Time of day should be indicated using a 24-hour clock without a colon (e.g., “1300 h”)
- Dates should be indicated using a Day Month Year format without commas (e.g., “7 May 2006”)

- Temperatures should be indicated in degrees Celsius, with a degree symbol and no spaces (e.g., “30°C”)
- Statistical abbreviations
 - n = sample size; lower case and italicized
 - \bar{X} = mean; capitalized and italicized; or use the word "mean"
 - SD = standard deviation, SE = standard error; often indicated as “ ± 1 SD,” “ ± 3 SE,” etc.; not italicized
 - r or r^2 (Pearson product–moment correlation), R^2 (coefficient of determination from regression analysis), F , t (from t -test), U , W = statistical symbols; all italicized
 - Greek letters are not italicized—e.g., “ ϕ , χ^2 ”
 - df = degrees of freedom, lower case; not italicized
 - P = probability; capitalized and italicized
 - NS (not significant); capitalized, not italicized, no periods between letters

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR TAXONOMIC PAPERS

Consult the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (<http://www.iczn.org>) for rules regarding formation, conservation, and application of zoological names. Also, consult the section on scientific names in this [guide](#). The information below is intended to standardize the overall style and format of taxonomic descriptions appearing in *Herpetologica* and *Herpetological Monographs*. In some cases, it might be preferable or necessary to diverge from this format.

Taxonomic papers in *Herpetologica* and *Herpetological Monographs* generally follow the standard sequence of sections (Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, and Discussion). In the materials and methods section, authors should include a version of the following statement: “We use the museum acronyms of Sabaj-Perez (20##)” and only define any museum acronyms that are absent from that source. In the results section, describe the results of analyses (e.g., morphometric, morphological, molecular) that support the proposed taxonomy. The formal description(s) may be included in the results section or may follow the Results as a separate section entitled Species Account(s) or Systematic Accounts (use a primary heading format for these sections).

Many systematists prefer telegraphic style for diagnoses and descriptions. Text in telegraphic style should be devoid of articles and verbs. Ordinarily, one or more modifying terms follow a noun—e.g., “ventrals smooth, 167–189” (not “167–189 ventrals”). Commas are used to separate modifiers, and semicolons are used to separate nouns plus their modifiers. Periods are only used at the end of paragraphs. For example, “...head wider than long, round in dorsal and lateral aspects; canthus rostralis sharp;...” In this style, paragraphs are used to organize descriptive information about regions of the organism. For example, the first paragraph might describe the head, the second might describe the body, etc. A change in style from telegraphic style to narrative containing complete sentences necessitates the addition of parentheses, a new section, or a new paragraph.

In studies where the discovery and description of a new species is based on a broad review of molecular or morphological variation in a group (e.g., revision of a species complex or analysis of variation in widespread species), it is preferable for such a review to be presented in the manuscript prior to the presentation of the formal species description(s), in which case the analysis of variation can serve as a justification for the recognition of new species.

Headings of Species Accounts

Herpetologica and *Herpetological Monographs* use two formatting conventions to identify new names. The new name(s) should be in bold font and followed by the designator sp. nov., gen. nov., fam. nov., unranked clade, or similar. The designators should follow the new name only at the beginning of the taxon’s formal description and if the new name(s) appears in the Key Words, but they should not appear anywhere else in the manuscript, including in tables, captions, and illustrations.

An example of the heading format for a new taxon appears below.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Bus orientalis sp. nov.

(Figs. 14, 16)

Synonymies and chresonymies.—Synonymies should be presented as a series of paragraphs, using hanging indentations (i.e., the format should be similar to that of the Literature Cited).

Authors should include a remark inside brackets to indicate whether they actually examined the type specimen. Authors may then supply short additional comments inside the brackets if necessary. Longer remarks regarding the nomen should be placed in a separate "Remarks" section at the end of the species account.

If the synonymy also contains a list of subsequent uses of that name (i.e., a chresonymy), then the list of references should begin after any remarks in brackets. References in the chresonymy should be separated by semicolons.

Authors should present true synonyms and subsequent uses of the name using the following format:

Genus species Author(s) Date:page number. Holotype sex (museum acronym number) from

"quote of published locality" (=corrected locality if necessary). [Examined/not examined; short additional comments if needed]. Author Date:page number; Author Date:page number.

To distinguish other nomina such as unjustified emendations, misspellings, and misidentifications from true synonyms, a complete nominal-complex is not used. Instead, a colon and reference(s) follows these names and the authors and dates of the names are omitted. Authors should add a remark explaining why the name appears in the synonymy; i.e., what kind of nomen the name is:

Genus species: Author Date:page number; Author Date:page number. [Misspellings].

Genus species: Author Date:page number; Author Date:page number. [In part, misidentifications].

Finally, authors should use bold font for remarks that make taxonomically important changes to existing synonymies, such as **new synonymy**.

An example of a synonymy follows:

Bus australis (Smith and Jones), comb. nov.
(Figs. 14, 16)

Aus connorsii: Georges 1945:206. [Nomen nudum.]

Aus australis Smith and Jones 1960:133. Holotype male (USNM 112233) from “Santacruz, Bolivia”
(=Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia). [Examined]. Jones 1963:400; Johnson 1964:28, their Fig. 3b.

Aus borealis Goode 1984:156. Holotype female (KU 332211) from “2 km N of Hwy 21, Texas, U.S.A.”
[Not examined; **new synonymy**]. Chambers 1980:10 (in part); Daniels 1989:224, 336.

Aus australus: Jerry 1980:445; Jensen et al. 1999:299. [Misspellings.]

Aus phillipsi: Sanders and Bright 1977:55. [In part, misidentification.]

Cus australis (Smith and Jones): Sanchez 2010:11; Tornillo et al. 2011:656.

Cus australum: Bridges 2012:344. [Unjustified emendation.]

In the example, note the format used for *Cus australis*. Taxonomists frequently transfer species into different genera. In this example, Sanchez (2010) moved *Aus australis* into the genus *Cus*. Note also that the authors of the original name are included here, because the name is not a misspelling or unjustified emendation.

Holotype.—This brief section identifies the holotype and provides the specimen’s sex, museum number, basic locality information, and collector: “An adult male (FMNH 112233; field number HKV 2233) collected at locality on date by J.A. Smith (Fig. #).”

Paratypes.—The list of paratypes may be organized by sex or locality, whichever is most concise and clear. See recent journal issues for examples.

Referred specimens.—List nontype specimens examined here if the list is brief, or in an Appendix if the list is lengthy.

Diagnosis.—State clearly and concisely those characters that distinguish the new taxon from others within the same clade (e.g., species complex or genus).

Comparisons.—Make comparisons to any species with which the new species might be confused—e.g., “Unlike species B (characters in parentheses), the new species has a wider head (narrower), 167–178 ventrals (180–199), ...”

Description.—Authors may provide a single section containing a detailed description of the type series or separate sections for description of the holotype and variation. This section should provide concise descriptions of as many characteristics as needed to give a clear mental picture of the organism. Sections on coloration and measurements of the holotype are usually included at the end of the description. Rather than introduce new tertiary headings, authors should begin the first paragraphs on these topics with “Measurements of holotype (in mm):...” and “Coloration:...”

Variation.—When the description of the holotype is not combined with the description of the entire type series, authors should add a summary of evident variation among the paratypes

and other referred specimens, including reference to sexual dimorphism, geographic variation, and/or ontogenetic changes.

Etymology.—A brief description of the derivation and meaning of the new name and, perhaps, the rationale for choosing it. The etymology section should explicitly state the gender of the new name and whether it is a noun in apposition, a patronym, or an adjective. A suggested name in English and/or the author’s native language may be included, but is not necessary.

Distribution and natural history.—Relevant summary of and commentary on the distribution, habits, habitat, life history, and ecology of the new taxon. An alternate heading name may be used, such as “Distribution and ecology.”

Larva.—Description of the tadpole or larval stage of a new species of amphibian, following recent style and format for the group being described.

Remarks.—Concise discussion of any additional aspects of the new taxon that are deemed important.

Registration of New Names

To minimize risks of taxonomic piracy, authors of manuscripts that propose new or revised scientific nomenclature are required to complete the following steps:

- Register the new name(s) with ZooBank.org (follow instructions available at that website). As a result, the author will be issued a life science identification (LSID) number for the manuscript that contains the proposed name(s). When completing this step, only a single LSID should be obtained for each article, even if multiple names are proposed therein.
- At the time that the LSID number is issued, the author must designate the manuscript as being accepted, but unpublished. The issued LSID number is static, and does not change even as the manuscript transitions to being a published article.
- As soon as you receive the LSID number for your manuscript, please add that information as part of the requested revisions, in the following manner:
 - Insert a hard return after the last entry in the literature cited section, then add two lines of text as follows:
 - **“ZooBank.org registration LSID: ###”** [replace # symbols with the LSID number for the publication, not the LSIDs of each new name. Note use of bold font in these entries]
 - **“Published on XX Month 20XX”**
- The author is responsible for updating the entry with ZooBank throughout the publication process. Once published, the author(s) should update the ZooBank entry accordingly.

Specimens Examined

Long lists of specimens examined should be placed in an appendix. Each species should be placed in a separate paragraph. Authors shall use bold font and all caps for country; bold font and title case for state, department, or province; and regular font for locality. Authors are encouraged to include latitude and longitude in their locality entries. Museum numbers for any specimens from the locality should be placed in parentheses. Use commas, semicolons, and periods as in the following example:

APPENDIX

Specimens Examined

Aus bus (4). **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Texas:** 2.5 km W of Marfa on State Hwy 27 (UTA 3333, 3334, TCWC 456); 6.0 km N of College Station, 23.567°N, 106.345°W (CAS 3478).

Aus cus (1). **MEXICO: Jalisco:** ca. 2 km N of junction of Hwy 150 and Hwy 100 (KU 44444).

ETHICS POLICY FOR PUBLICATIONS OF THE HERPETOLOGISTS' LEAGUE

For Researchers

Researchers must comply with all applicable standards, rules, and laws enacted to protect researchers or study organisms. Submitted studies that deviate from acceptable practices are subject to rejection. Applicable regulations include: (1) state, federal, and international laws concerning the collection and transport of live or preserved specimens; (2) legal acquisition of animals from reputable dealers; (3) Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval for the care of animals and study procedures used; and (4) Institutional Review Board review and approval for research involving human subjects. For institutions without an IACUC, researchers should adhere to applicable guidelines and regulations found in the ASIH-HL-SSAR Guidelines for Use of Live Amphibians and Reptiles in Field Research (Beaupre 2004). For countries other than the USA, approval must be received from those bodies and regulatory frameworks that ensure the ethical and humane care of animals used in research, teaching, and testing. All relevant permit and protocol numbers must be cited in both the cover letter and acknowledgments of the manuscript.

For Authors

All manuscripts (ms) will be submitted for peer-review to the Editor, who will assign them to an Associate Editor and, subsequently, independent outside reviewers.

Each author should:

1. Take responsibility for at least one component of the work.
2. Have access to the raw data and figure files for his/her component of the work.
3. Be able to identify who is responsible for other components.
4. Be confident in their co-authors' ability and integrity.

Authors' names cannot be added or removed without their agreement. No author can be named on a ms unless s/he has approved the final version of the ms. One author, usually the corresponding author, must be thoroughly familiar with the original data for the entire study and be responsible for the integrity of the entire work. If the paper or any portion of it is found to be faulty or fraudulent, however, all co-authors share that responsibility. The corresponding author understands that s/he signs the cover letter that accompanies the submitted ms on behalf of the other authors.

The institutional affiliations of all authors must be disclosed in the by-line of the ms. All funding sources supporting the work and in the ms, and information on any conflicts of interest (personal or financial) must be noted by the author(s) in the acknowledgments section of the ms.

Herpetologists' League Policy on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

The Herpetologists' League (HL) has established policies for the appropriate application of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in the conduct of research and preparation of manuscripts. HL limits the use of AI in research to the generation and testing of computer code, including code applied in data analysis. AI should *not* be used to formulate hypotheses, summarize research results, or compose manuscripts. However, AI may be applied to improve grammar and composition in the later stages of manuscript preparation. Such application might

be especially helpful for authors who are not native speakers of English. Nonetheless, it is the author's responsibility to ensure that any minor editorial changes remain consistent with the original meaning of the text and with HL's Instructions to Authors. Because all authors are responsible for the conduct of their research and the content of their manuscripts, AI should *not* be used to replace those elements of the research and writing process that appropriately require scientists' direct input, nor should any AI application be listed as an author. Furthermore, any use of AI in the research and/or manuscript preparation *must* be explicitly described in the Methods section of the manuscript *and* in the cover letter to the Editor. Authors will be asked to affirm their adherence to HL's policy regarding the use of AI at the time of submission.

Duplicate or Prior Publication, Plagiarism, and Fraud

When submitting an article, the corresponding author should disclose in the cover letter any related manuscripts that have been submitted to, or are in press with, another journal.

- The following are not permitted under any circumstances:
 - The taking of material from another's work and submitting it as one's own (plagiarism).
 - The taking of material, including tables, figures, or data from the authors' own prior publication(s) (self-plagiarism).
 - Fabricating a report of research (fraud).
 - Suppressing or falsifying data to agree with one's conclusions (fraud — this includes altering graphical depictions of data so as to obscure, move, or introduce information).
- Important exceptions:
 - Reuse of control data in experimental studies might not be considered duplicate publication providing that the methodology is identical.
 - Doctoral dissertations and Master's theses that are made available in institutional repositories are not considered prior publication.
 - Republishing data to make a direct, illustrative comparison with new findings might be appropriate when the purpose of republication is to provide explicit comparisons with the new information.

If an author reuses images, tables or a significant amount of material from another author or previously published manuscript, permission from the copyright holder is required at the time of submission.

For Editors and Reviewers

The Editors, Associate Editors, and reviewers will treat manuscripts under review as confidential, recognizing them as the intellectual property of the author(s). Editors and reviewers will not make decisions on papers for which they might have any conflict of interest. A potential conflict of interest exists whenever an editor or reviewer is in a position to gain personally, financially, or professionally from a publication decision. This includes potential personal, financial, or professional benefits to family members, direct research collaborators, or close friends of the editor or reviewer. Editors and reviewers in with a potential conflict of interest should decline to participate in any relevant publication decision. If an editor or reviewer is

unsure whether a conflict of interest might exist, this should be discussed directly with the Editor in Chief prior to any participation in the peer-review process.

Reviewers may not purposefully delay publication of another person's manuscript to gain advantage over that person. Reviewers have a responsibility to report any suspected misconduct (including fraud or inappropriate animal care) to the Editor.

Any concerns about scientific misconduct raised during the review process will be investigated by the Editor. If the misconduct is confirmed, the Editor will reject the paper and write a letter to the author explaining why the paper was not suitable for publication.

Misconduct Discovered in a Published Article

If the Herpetologists' League (HL) or any member of the editorial staff receives a complaint about misconduct in a published article, the Editor will notify the author(s) and investigate the allegation in an impartial manner. If it appears there has been scientific misconduct, the Editor will notify the HL Board of Trustees.

After deliberation, the HL Board of Trustees will determine what action should be taken:

1. A society representative might be authorized to send the author a letter of reprimand.
2. If the infraction is severe enough, the appropriate official at the author's institution(s) will be notified. A Notice of Retraction will be published in the next available issue of the appropriate journal, and will be linked to the article in the online version.
3. If, through the author's actions, the society has violated the copyright of another journal, the Editor and HL President will send a joint letter of apology to the other journal.
4. The HL Board of Trustees might decide to ban the author(s) from future submissions to any of its journals &/or revoke membership to the society.

Ethics policy references.—This policy is adapted from several sources, including:

- Council of Science Editors, <http://www.councilscienceeditors.org>
- Herpetologists' League, <http://www.herpetologistsleague.org>
- International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, <https://www.iczn.org/the-code/the-code-online/>
- Office of Research Integrity. <https://ori.hhs.gov/>
- Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles, <https://ssarherps.org/about-ssar/ssar-ethics-statement/>
- U.S. Federal Policy on Research Misconduct, <https://www.aps.org/about/governance/policies-procedures/ethics-standards>

LITERATURE CITED IN THESE INSTRUCTIONS

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- Nicholson, K.E. (ed.). 2025. Scientific and Standard English Names of Amphibians and Reptiles of North America North of Mexico, with Comments Regarding Confidence in Our Understanding, 9th edition. Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles, USA.
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