



Instructions to Authors

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General Information

The *Journal of Herpetology* is a peer-reviewed scientific journal published by the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles four times a year. We publish work from around the world. Although all submissions must be in American English, we welcome an additional, second-language abstract.

The *Journal of Herpetology* normally publishes manuscripts ≤ 6000 words, including title, abstract, and the body of the manuscript. Word count does NOT include the literature cited section, appendices, tables, figures, and legends. Word limit extensions beyond 6000 words are possible, but an author should consult one of the co-editors before submission.

Suitable Topics

The *Journal of Herpetology* publishes reviews and original hypothesis-driven research covering all aspects of biology of amphibians and reptiles. We especially encourage research that addresses expansive questions in biology using amphibians and reptiles as model systems. We encourage authors to submit manuscripts that are data-driven and rigorous tests of hypotheses or provide thorough descriptions of novel taxa (living or fossil). Topics may address theoretical issues in a thoughtful, quantitative way. Such papers must have a central focus that proposes a new argument for understanding a concept or a new approach for answering a question or solving a problem.

Papers on captive breeding, simple descriptions of new techniques or sampling methods, anecdotal or isolated natural history observations, geographic range extensions, and essays should be submitted to our sister journal, *Herpetological Review*. If you are not sure as to the suitability of a topic for submission to the journal, contact the editors before submitting your work.

Suitable topics for submission include:

- 1) Behavior, both field-based behavioral ecology and laboratory studies.
- 2) Conservation Biology and Wildlife Management, submissions should address evaluation of conservation and management measures related to herpetofauna and may focus on policy.
- 3) Ecology, from population to ecosystem levels.
- 4) Genetics and Evolution, including population and landscape genetics, and genomics.
- 5) Development and Morphology, including evolutionary developmental biology and functional morphology.
- 6) Parasitology and Diseases, submissions can address experimental comparisons, veterinary case studies, emerging threats, emerging therapies, or geographic changes; novel parasite documentation should be sent as a Natural History Note to *Herpetological Review*.
- 7) Physiology, both field-based physiological ecology and laboratory studies.



8) Systematics, Taxonomy, and Biogeography, including molecular and morphological approaches.

9) Techniques, including hypothesis/question-driven technically oriented submissions with quantitative components, and that contain significant biological content, show innovation and improvements of sampling, improved statistical methods, and that ultimately make significant advances in a field of herpetology; innovations in museum techniques, especially museomics, would

also be suitable. Such submissions are topical and are published under a discipline heading rather than under a “Techniques” heading.

10) Review papers, contributions that evaluate and summarize the state of an area of study, and that specify future directions of research. Such review papers will either be solicited by the editorial team at the *Journal of Herpetology* or submitted independently by an author(s).

Examples.

GORIS, RICHARD C. 2011. “Infrared Organs of Snakes: An Integral Part of Vision.” *Journal of Herpetology* 45 (1): 2–14. <https://doi.org/10.1670/10-238.1>.

GREENE, HARRY W., AND KEVIN D. WISEMAN. 2023. “Heavy, Bulky, or Both: What Does “Large Prey” Mean to Snakes?” *Journal of Herpetology* 57 (3): 340–66. <https://doi.org/10.1670/22-068>.

Ethics

The *Journal of Herpetology* demands high ethical standards. Submitted work cannot include plagiarized or falsified data. Consult the [SSAR Ethics Statement](#) before submitting manuscripts. Authors are responsible for the legal and ethical acquisition and treatment of study animals. The Acknowledgments section must list the numbers of all collection or research permits required at the study location, as well as export and import permits needed to move specimens across country borders. When submitting their work, authors must certify they followed all necessary procedures. Submitted studies that deviate from acceptable practices will be rejected. Studies that require the sacrifice of animals should do so responsibly using only sample sizes that are reasonable and necessary.

Institutional Animal Care and Use Approval

All research involving live vertebrate animals must comply with applicable institutional, national, and international regulations governing the care and use of animals. Authors are responsible for ensuring that appropriate oversight was in place before research began.

Institutional approval: Research conducted at institutions with an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) or equivalent oversight body must have received formal protocol approval prior to initiation of the study. IACUC protocol numbers must be provided in both the Materials and Methods section and the Acknowledgments. Authors at institutions outside the United States, or in settings lacking a formal IACUC, must identify the institutional or governmental body that approved the research and provide the relevant approval or permit numbers. If no institutional oversight was required (e.g., purely observational fieldwork



involving no capture or handling), authors must explicitly state this and explain why approval was not sought or required.

Minimally, all research involving live amphibians and reptiles must adhere to the Guidelines for Use of Live Amphibians and Reptiles in Field and Laboratory Research (https://bit.ly/ASIH_Herps). Additional applicable guidelines, such as those governing specific taxa or research contexts (e.g., euthanasia, radiography), should also be followed and cited. Authors must attest in their Materials and Methods section that all contributors complied with applicable ethical and legal guidelines for the acquisition and use of study animals, and that IACUC or equivalent protocol numbers are provided in the manuscript. Submitted manuscripts that do not meet these requirements will be returned to authors without review.

Use of Artificial Intelligence in Manuscript Preparation

The *Journal of Herpetology* recognizes that artificial intelligence (AI) tools, including large language models (LLMs) and AI-assisted writing platforms, are increasingly used in research and scientific writing. The following policy governs their use in manuscripts submitted to this journal.

Permitted uses: Authors may use AI tools to assist with the following limited tasks: (1) generating, testing, or debugging computer code used in data analysis; (2) improving grammar, syntax, and readability in the final stages of manuscript preparation, provided the scientific content has been generated entirely by the authors.

***Prohibited uses:* AI tools may not be used to substantially draft the text of any manuscript section. The scientific reasoning, data interpretation, and conclusions presented in submitted manuscripts must reflect the original intellectual contributions of the authors.**

Disclosure: Authors must disclose any use of AI tools in manuscript preparation. Disclosure should appear in the Acknowledgments section of the manuscript, specifying which tools were used and for what purpose. Example: “Large language model assistance (ChatGPT, OpenAI) was used for grammar editing of the final manuscript.” Manuscripts that do not comply with this policy may be returned without review or retracted following publication.

Transparency and Openness Promotion (TOP)

Plagiarism, fraudulent data, or other nefarious acts have resulted in an increasing number of papers retracted from scientific journals (M. Roston: “Retracted Scientific Studies: A Growing List”, Science Section of The New York Times, 28 May 2015). In response, scientists in the human sciences have created guidelines better to ensure transparency and openness in their published papers. Following the example of other zoological or organismal-oriented societies, SSAR has adopted general guidelines to help ensure transparency and openness in its published manuscripts. When submitting a manuscript, authors must complete the TOP form, acknowledging their responses to these five items:

a. Citations: In addition to normal scholarly sources, all data sets, program code, and their references must be cited in the text.

b. Data & Research Materials: Authors will indicate whether they will make their raw data and research available to the wider scientific community, and if so, where they



will be deposited.

c. Design & Analysis: Authors will follow and report the research design and data analysis standards specified by their discipline (e.g., ecology, systematics).

d. Preregistration of Studies: The SSAR does not encourage authors to preregister (i.e., publish) their research proposal. If authors do, however, they will indicate where it was preregistered.

e. Replication: Ordinarily, the SSAR does not recommend submitting any level of replicate studies. An exception might include the study of one or more populations over time to determine, for example, how accumulating changes in landscape or climate over decades have affected them.

Location Data for Threatened & Endangered Species and Voucher Specimens

T&E Species: Publishing exact location data for populations of rare or endangered amphibians and reptiles can facilitate poaching and further exacerbate their vulnerability (Lindenmayer and Scheele, 2017, *Science* 356:800–801). The *Journal of Herpetology* will publish regional or general location data, but not exact locations for rare, endangered, or other conservation-sensitive populations, or those especially vulnerable to poaching. Rather, readers interested in populations of conservation concern may contact the authors of these studies for location data.

Other Species: Any population can be vulnerable to local interests unknown to the Journal Editors. If authors have reason to suspect that their study populations would be vulnerable after the publication of exact location data, they may withhold such data.

Voucher Specimens: Voucher specimens collected during systematics studies (and their location data) are deposited into institutional collections. Researchers interested in these species will need to contact the responsible taxonomist and/or institutions for these exact location data.

Manuscript Preparation, Submission, and Acceptance

Preparation: Follow the instructions provided below *carefully* (a current issue of the *Journal* will provide examples of correct formatting and style). Manuscripts that are improperly formatted may be rejected before peer review.

Submission: Submit your manuscript files electronically and submit your text and figure files separately. *Please avoid* emailing your manuscript files directly to the Editor.

Review Process and Acceptance: A correctly formatted manuscript can shorten the review process and reduce costs to the Society. Manuscripts accepted for publication will present credible, reliable



science and communicate their message effectively through an organized structure and a clear flow of ideas.

Language and Grammar (grammar, syntax, and active voice)

Manuscripts must be written in active voice (e.g., “We studied...” rather than “...was studied”), using proper English grammar and syntax. Regardless of country of origin, we recommend that you ask a colleague to read the manuscript before submission, as an independent reader can often identify problems before the review process begins. Reviews by colleagues before submission are particularly important if your native language is not English. Finding an English-speaking colleague to provide a pre-submission review of your work, even if not in your area of expertise, will likely smooth the review process. Grammatically flawed manuscripts will be returned to authors without review. To facilitate the publication of work from non-English-speaking countries, scientists affiliated with SSAR provide a free pre-submission review service. Contact details for these volunteers can be found at: <https://ssarherps.org/publications/manuscript-review-service/>.

Summary of Common Errors

- i. Title page, text sections, Literature Cited, or tables are improperly formatted (detailed formatting instructions appear below).
- ii. Papers are written in passive (rather than active) voice.
- iii. Files (including revisions) are sent directly to Editors rather than uploaded to the *Journal* website.
- iv. Figure files are embedded in the text files rather than uploaded separately to the *Journal* website.
- v. Authors not fluent in English fail to have an English-fluent colleague review and rewrite the manuscript (if the grammar is poor). This can result in rejection before peer review.
- vi. Authors fail to complete detailed responses to all reviewer comments. This can result in rejection.

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FORMATTING DETAILS

A) Overall Document Format

Manuscripts must not exceed 6000 words (see General Information for what counts toward the limit).

-Double-space entire manuscript, including lit. cited, figure legends, table legends & contents.



- Provide 2.5 cm (1 inch) margins on all sides.
- Use 12-point font size.
- Number all manuscript pages consecutively.
- Provide line numbering starting at the title page and continuing to the end of the document.
- Left-justify the entire document.
- Please avoid breaking or hyphenating words at the end of lines.
- Italicize only genera and species, and for appropriate headings (as indicated below).
- Please avoid the use of bold-face for emphasis; instead, reword sentences to provide appropriate emphasis.
- Please avoid uploading files in PDF format.

B) Formatting the Manuscript by Sections

Manuscripts are usually arranged in the following order: 1. Title page; 2. Abstract; 3. Key words; 4. Introduction; 5. Materials and Methods; Results; Discussion; 6. Acknowledgments; 7. Literature cited; 8. Appendices (not normally used); 9. Tables; 10. Figure legends; and 11. Figures.

I. Title Page.—The title page should include, in this order:

-“JOURNAL OF HERPETOLOGY”, centered

-The title, centered, which should be informative and concise

-The names of all authors, centered. Use numbered superscripts to distinguish author addresses. Do not leave a space between the author's name and the superscript. Use commas to separate author information, placing them outside any superscripts. Example: Regina Smith^{1,4}, Don Q. de la Mancha, III², and R. James Jones³

-The addresses of all authors, left-justified, italicized, matching superscript numbers above. Do not abbreviate states; include postal codes. Do name the country of residence (example: Alaska, USA). If different, authors may indicate present addresses. An e-mail address for the corresponding author is required.



Example:

¹*Department of Herpetology, Japanese Museum of Natural History, Kyoto, Japan 605-0931*

²*Department of Zoology, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska, USA 68588*

³ *Present address: Departamento de Zoología, Universidad de México, 48290 Puerto Vallarta, México*

⁴*Corresponding author. E-mail: Regina_S@JMNH.Sci*

-LRH: (left running head). Spell out the name of a single author (example: Regina Smith); Use initials and last name for two authors (example: R. Smith and R. Weasley); Use “et al.” for more than two authors (example: R. Smith et al.)

-RRH: (right running head). Provide an abbreviated title of no more than 50 characters, including the spaces between words. Example: if the full title is “Ecology and Reproduction of Timber Rattlesnakes (*Crotalus horridus*) in Kansas”, the abbreviated title might be “Ecology of Timber Rattlesnakes”

II. English-Language Abstract.—The abstract should begin on a new page and summarize the major points of the paper clearly and concisely without requiring the reader to refer to the text. It is limited to 250 words. The abstract heading should be indented, followed by a period and an em dash (e.g., Abstract.—Boreal Toads...).

III. Second-Language Abstract.—An additional abstract may be given just below the mandatory English-language abstract. It should be an exact translation of the English version and follow the same rules. The abstract heading should be indented, followed by a period and an em-dash. Use an equivalent of “abstract” in the chosen language (e.g., Resumen.—Sapos...).

IV. Key Words.—Used for indexing the article in online databases (but not printed in the Journal), key words should be placed after the abstract on the same page. Second-language abstracts should be followed by key words in that language. Careful selection will improve the visibility of your article.

The phrase “*Key words:*” should be italicized, including the colon.

– Up to eight key words may be used to identify major aspects of the manuscript, such as the key methods, key variables, study locations, or study organisms.

– Including the organism’s taxon (e.g., Family, Order, Clade) in the title or key word list can increase the likelihood of your paper being found during key word searches



- Do not repeat words that appear in the title.
- Key words should be listed in alphabetical order and separated by semicolons.
- Only the initial word in each term should be capitalized, unless it is a formal name. (example: *Key words*: Boreal Toad; Colorado; Disease; Survival).

V. Introduction.—The text should begin after the key words. Avoid unnecessary duplication with material covered in the Discussion. Do NOT include a heading for this section.

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VI. Materials and Methods; Results; Discussion.—Be concise and clear.

- The section headings should be centered and formatted in small caps. The introduction section lacks a heading.
- Secondary headings should be indented and embedded at the beginning of the first paragraph.
Each major word should be capitalized and italicized, followed by an em dash (Example: *Study Sites*.—Mesocosms were...).
- In any italicized heading, scientific names of species should not be italicized so that they stand out from other text. Example: “*Analysis of Paternity in Crotalus atrox*”.
- Please avoid the use of footnotes in the text.
- When citing ≥ 2 figures or tables, separate numbers with a comma (e.g., Figs. 6, 7; Tables 2, 3).

VII. Acknowledgments.—The text ends with the acknowledgments section that should be as concisely written as possible.

- Use a secondary heading. Spell “acknowledgments” with no “e” after “g” and format in italics. (Example: *Acknowledgments*.—).
- Use initials instead of first names for individuals. Example: “We thank H. Granger...”
- Provide the numbers of all collection, research, export, and import permits, as well as Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee approval.

VIII. Literature Cited

The Literature Cited section is one of the largest sources of errors. The *Journal of Herpetology*



follows Chicago-Style Citation formatting. Carefully follow all format instructions and examples below.

General Instructions for Formatting Citations

- All references cited in the manuscript must appear in full in the Literature Cited section, and all references in the Literature Cited section must be cited in the text of the manuscript.
- Do not include personal observations and unpublished manuscripts in this section.
- Double space the entire section.
- Do not bold, underline, or italicize text other than scientific names.
- Do not use manual line breaks or tabs. Use indents instead.
- Cite references in alphabetical order. Example: Jones comes before Smith.
- If you use bibliographic software to format citations, remove the fields from the submission copy (keep a copy of the original document containing the fields for revision purposes).
- If there are multiple same-year references by an author with various coauthors, list single-author references before those with a coauthor. List two-author references first and multiple coauthors last. Example: (Smith, 1998), followed by (Smith and Jones, 1998), followed by (Smith et al., 1998).
- If the same author collaborated with different coauthors during the same year, order by the name of the junior authors. Example: (Smith and Bell, 1998) comes before (Smith and Jones, 1998).
- If there are multiple "et al." references by the same author, in the Lit. Cited, list them in chronological order regardless of the number of authors or their identities. Example: "Smith, Bell, Zundermeier, and Jones 1848" comes before "Smith, Abrams, and Bell 1856".
- Follow author names with the year of publication. Example: "Smith (1769)." If you are using a reprinted version, indicate this by listing both years. Example: "Smith, A. B. (1769) (1996)." For accepted articles, state "In press" in place of the year. Example: "Smith, (In press)".
- Do not capitalize the first word after a colon, unless it is a proper noun.
- Include all software packages used in the Literature Cited.

Article in a Print and/or Online Journal-Single Author (include DOI if available):

Example: BROWN, WILLIAM S. 2016. "Lifetime Reproduction in a Northern Metapopulation of Timber Rattlesnakes (*Crotalus horridus*)." *Herpetologica* 72 (4): 331–42.



<https://doi.org/10.1655/Herpetologica-D-16-00019.1>.

Citation in text: Brown (2016) or (Brown, 2016)

Article in a Print or Online Journal- Two Authors:

Example: GRAVES, BRENT M., AND DAVID DUVALL. 1993. "Reproduction, Rookery Use, and Thermoregulation in Free-Ranging, Pregnant *Crotalus v. viridis*." *Journal of Herpetology* 27 (1): 33–41. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1564902>.

Citation in text: Graves and Duvall (1993) or (Graves and Duvall, 1993)

Article or book that is "in press" (in the process of being published).

Example: CLARK, DAVID L. "Forthcoming- Five-lined Skinks (*Plestiodon fasciatus*) in Central Michigan". *Michigan Academician*. Alma College.

Citation in text: Clark (forthcoming) or (Clark, forthcoming)

Chapter in a Book

Provide publisher; do not provide publication state or country.

Example: GRAY, ROBERT H., AND LAUREN E. BROWN. 2005. "Decline of Northern Cricket Frogs (*Acris crepitans*).". In *Amphibian Declines: The Conservation Status of United States Species*, edited by MICHAEL LANNON, 47–54. University of California Press. <https://doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520235922.003.0009>.

Citation in text: Gray and Brown (2005) or (Gray and Brown, 2005)

Book

Provide publisher; do not provide publication state or country.

Example: ERNST, CARL H., JEFFREY E. LOVICH, AND ROGER W. BARBOUR. 2000. *Turtles of the United States and Canada*. Smithsonian Institution Press.

Citation in text: Ernst et al. (2000) or (Ernst et al., 2000)

Thesis or Dissertation

Indicate whether the degree is a thesis or a dissertation and provide the name of the academic institution.

Example: MACARTNEY, J. M. 1985. "The Ecology of the Northern Pacific Rattlesnake, *Crotalus viridis oreganus* in British Columbia." MSc thesis. University of Victoria.

Citation in text: Macartney (1985) or (Macartney, 1985)



Non-commercial Software

Provide a named citation to the definitive description of the software.

Example: WHITE, GARY C., AND KENNETH P. BURNHAM. 1999. "Program MARK: Survival Estimation from Populations of Marked Animals." *Bird Study* 46 (Suppl.): S120–39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00063659909477239>.

Citation in text: White and Burnham (1999) or (White and Burnham, 1999)

Example: R CORE TEAM. 2013. *R: A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing*. R Foundation for Statistical Computing. <http://www.r-project.org/>.

Citation in text: R Core Team (2013) or (R Core Team, 2013)

Non-Peer-Reviewed Technical Report

Use only where unavoidable.

Example: USGS (UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY). 1998. *National Water Quality Assessment (NAWQA) Program, Water Quality in the Ozark Plateaus*. Circular 1158.

Citation in text: USGS (1998) or (USGS, 1998)

Non-Peer-Reviewed Print Media

Use only where unavoidable.

Example: GUAM ECONOMIC REVIEW. 1998. *Statistical Highlights*. Guam Economic Review 20:11–32.

Citation in text: Guam Economic Review (1998) or (Guam Economic Review, 1998)

Online Reference

Use WebCite® (www.webcitation.org) to archive the website. Provide the regular citation, followed by the archival site provided by the service.

Example: FROST, D. R. 2004. "Amphibian Species of the World: An Online Reference." Archived by WebCite. <http://research.amnh.org/herpetology/amphibia/index.html>. Accessed 4 July 2011, <http://www.webcitation.org/T8g8UVs14>.

Citation in text: Frost (2004) or (Frost, 2004)

IX. Appendices and Supplementary Online Material

Appendices include detailed information not essential to the text but useful to readers interested in specific methods, formulae, computer code, large data sets, or the species



examined in taxonomic papers. If appendices must be included within the manuscript, they follow the Literature Cited section. They are optional and should be used sparingly. When used, the primary heading would be: Appendix (numbered 1, 2, 3 as needed), followed by secondary headings as needed.

Supplementary materials are hosted for free on BioOne (text provided by BioOne):

“Supplementary materials approved during peer-review and deemed useful for an article’s fuller appreciation and understanding are welcome. Please indicate on the content manifest which articles include supplementary materials and communicate (in the special instructions section, or by email) how these materials should be labeled on BioOne. Supplementary material may include, but is not limited to, multimedia material (such as video or audio clips), datasets, tables, or additional figures. Specialist file types can often be accommodated, provided users have the relevant software to download them. Total file size is typically limited to 50MB; please contact us with any questions.

When BioOne is the DOI registrar for a publication, DOIs will also be registered for Supplementary material, associating it with the source article. There is no cost for supplementary material hosting.”

X. Tables

Tables are used to present numerical information in a condensed form that does not duplicate material presented in the text or in Figures.

-Tables must be embedded in the document after the Literature Cited section and before the Figure Captions.

-Use the same font size, double spacing, and abbreviations as elsewhere in the text.

-Place each table on a separate page. Number tables consecutively using Arabic numerals that match their references in the text.

Example: “TABLE 1. Descriptive statistics for snake SVL ...”. (Note that “TABLE” is in small caps and that the text heading is NOT indented).

-Legends should be concise but sufficiently detailed so that tables can be understood without reference to the text. Each legend should appear on the same page as its table and above it.

-Please avoid the use of vertical lines. Any vertical lines should be removed from tables before submission.

-Capitalize only the initial letter of the first word (e.g., “Average length”).

- Please avoid the use of footnotes.

-If a Table is so long it extends beyond a single page, continue it on additional pages as needed.



Insert "TABLE #, continued" at the top of each such page, followed by an empty line.

XI. Figures

Figures provide numerical information, maps, specimen photographs, flow charts, or other images in visual form without duplicating material listed in the text or displayed in Tables. Please check a recent issue for additional examples.

-Figure legends should be placed together. They should be numbered in Arabic numerals in the same order as they are cited in the text. Each legend should be concise but sufficiently detailed to be understood without reference to the text. (While figure legends are included in the manuscript file, the actual figures are submitted as separate files in the Scholastics system.)

-Each heading should begin with the word "FIG", followed by a period. Example: "FIG. 1." (note that "FIG." is in small caps and that this text is NOT indented).

-Use the same font size, double spacing, and abbreviations as elsewhere in the text.

-When preparing graphics, follow the guidelines below:

-Figures with multiple parts should have each part labeled with a capital letter (A, B, C, etc.), and all parts of the figure should be submitted on a single page and in a single file.

-Figures may be black-and-white or color. Please use color discriminately, as not all figures require color.

-The *Journal* now provides color figures to authors at no additional charge. If color figures are desired, they should be submitted in color with the initial manuscript submission.

-Manuscripts that include a substantial amount of field data should include a figure (map) of the study area. Authors need not disclose exact study site locations (to protect sensitive species or areas). The figure should include sufficient detail (e.g., political boundaries, major topographic features) so that readers can see where in the state, region, province, etc., the data were collected.

-Prepare figures at high resolution (minimum requirements: grayscale or color images at 300 dpi or greater, line art at 1200 dpi).

-Submit graphics and artwork at full page size (do not exceed 21.5 × 28 cm). Make sure that it is sharp at the submission size. After reduction (usually to one or two columns), lettering in printed figures should be 1.5–2.0 mm high, and decimal points should be clearly visible. Authors will be charged for the extra work if the press must request a better version at the typesetting stage.



-All axes of graphs should be labeled, with a larger font size used for major labels than for minor or quantitative labels.

-Include a scale to indicate distance or size whenever appropriate.

-Do not use pictures taken from other sources without express permission. It is the responsibility of the authors to ensure that all copyright issues have been addressed.

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C) In-Text Citations

Please read this section carefully, as errors in citation formats are common. The *Journal of Herpetology* follows the Chicago citation style.

–Please avoid the use of bold, underline, or italics formats in the text.

– Cite references in chronological order, using a semicolon to separate citations and a comma to separate author names from dates. Example: “(Smith, 1975; Black, 1987)”. If there are multiple same-year references by the same author, list them as “(Smith, 2001a,b)”.

– Provide names for up to two authors “(Jones and Smith, 1987)”. For three or more authors, spell out the first author's name, followed by “et al.” (e.g., Granger et al., 1990).

If there are multiple same-year references by an author with different coauthors, list single-author references before those with coauthors. List two-author references first and multiple coauthors last. e.g., “(Smith, 1998; Smith and Jones, 1998; Smith et al., 1998)”.

– If there are multiple references by the same author and coauthor, or multiple references with the same first author and two or more coauthors, list them in chronological order regardless of the number of authors or their identity. Example: “(Smith and Jones, 1848; Smith et al., 1856a,b; Smith and Brown, 1858)”.

– Limit citation strings to 3 or 4 of the most pertinent references.

Special citations:

– Cite papers accepted for publication as “(Smith, forthcoming)” and place in the Literature Cited.

– Manuscripts that have not been accepted should be cited as “(Smith, *unpubl. data*)” and should not be placed in the Literature Cited.

– Cite unpublished observations as “(Potter, pers. obs.)”; do not list it in the Literature Cited.



- Non-peer-reviewed sources such as meeting abstracts and most websites should be avoided if possible; however, dissertations and theses should be cited if the information has not also appeared in refereed form.
- Commercial software cited in the text must include the version and source; e.g., SPSS 13.0, IBM.
- Commercial equipment: provide the model and manufacturer; e.g., “HOBO U23 Pro v2 External
- Temperature Data Logger (Onset Computer Corporation)”. Do not include either in the Literature Cited.
- Non-commercial software such as the program R; provide a citation in the text and in the Literature Cited. Peer-reviewed electronic resources should be cited in the same manner as paper-based ones.
- Whenever possible, place all citations at the end of the sentence rather than interspersed in the text. e.g., “Rattlesnakes are excellent subjects for research in many areas of biology (Klauber, 1972; Schaeffer, 1996; Schaeffer et al., 1996; Beaupre and Duvall, 1998).”

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D) Common and Scientific Names

Both common and scientific names vary in time and space. To maximize the ability of readers to identify study organisms across the world and over time but allow authors maximum flexibility in choosing their preferred authorities:

-If taxonomy has changed within the last 10 years, the former name of the organism may be presented at the first use of the name [example:

“*Aspidoscelis sexlineatus* (= *Cnemidophorus sexlineatus*)”]. Similarly, if your preferred taxonomic hypothesis differs from that of other authors, make sure to include the more commonly used name.

-Species occurring in the United States and Canada: standard English names should be provided at first occurrence. Standard names of all reptiles and amphibians must be capitalized and used in the plural (example: Barking Treefrogs). Follow <http://ssarherps.org/cndb/>. For species in other parts of the world, common names are optional—follow an appropriate regional reference if available

-When referring to common names of species, common names must be used in the plural, not the singular, because a common name does not refer to a single entity, but a population of individuals. For example: Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnakes, not the Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake. For more information, see De Queiroz, K. 2011. “Plural Versus Singular Common Names for Amphibian



and Reptile Species.” *Herpetological Review* 42:339–42.

E) Numbers

Always spell out a number used at the beginning of a sentence (Example: 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. Example: “9 mm”
- When the number is a designator. Example: “Experiment 2”
- When a range of values is given. Example: “2–3 scutes”
- When numbers of 10 or more are compared to numbers less than 10 within a sentence. Example: “The 7 frogs, 9 salamanders, and 20 lizards that we collected...”
- Decimal values; if decimal value is < 1, use zero before decimal. Example: “0.5”

-Use commas in numbers with four or more digits. Example: “280” and “5,280”.

-Avoid excessive significant digits. Example: when measuring length with a ruler whose smallest unit is 1 mm, report the mean value as “15.7 mm” and the standard deviation as “1.4 mm”.

-Numbers or letters in a list should be fully enclosed in parentheses. Example: Experiments (2), (3), and (4) failed; (1) did not.

-Geographic coordinates can be in any standard format, such as decimal degrees or UTM.

-Specify the datum for the geographic coordinates. Example: “datum WGS84”

F) Measurement Units and Abbreviations

Follow the International System of Units (SI) throughout.

-Linear measurement: Millimeters = mm, Centimeters = cm, Meters = m, Kilometers = km

-Area: hectare = ha

-Volume: Milliliters = mL, Liters = L

-Mass: Grams = g, Kilograms = kg

-Time: Seconds = s, Minutes = min, Hours = h, Days = d, Week = wk, Month = mo, Years = yr. For time of day, use 24-hour clock. Example: 1300 h



-Date: use Day Month Year with no commas, spelling out the name of the month. Example: "7 May 2006".

-Temperature: Celsius, with space after number and with a degree symbol before the abbreviation for temperature scale. Example: "30 °C".

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G) Statistical Abbreviations

-Please do not italicize Greek letters. Examples: " α ", " χ^2 "

-Italicize all other statistical symbols. Examples: " r ", " r^2 ", " F ", " t " (as in t -test)

-Sample size: letter "n" lower case and italicized. Example: " $n = 5$ "

-Mean or average: use " $\bar{X}$ " (capitalized and italicized) or spell out the word "mean"

-SD = standard deviation, SE = standard error, CI = confidence interval; often indicated as " $\pm$ SD", " $\pm$ SE", " ± 3 SE", 95% CI = 2.32–4.68, etc.

-All statistical tests should include the test statistic, df, and P -value.

-For test statistics, degrees of freedom should appear as subscripts (e.g., $F_{2,18}$, t_4). Otherwise, they can be reported as "df" (e.g., "df = 8").

-Probability: capitalize and italicize. Example: " $P = 0.003$." When not significant, provide the value, rather than using "NS" or " $P > 0.05$." Example: " $P = 0.43$ ".

H) Mathematical Signs and Symbols

-Separate mathematical operators by spaces on both sides. Examples: " $\alpha = 0.05$ "; " $P < 0.025$ "; " 12 ± 0.02 ".

-Separate a number from a symbol to indicate a mathematical operation. Example: " $1 + 1 = 2$ ".

-Do not use a space between the sign (– or +) and the number when indicating positive or negative values. Examples: " -2 °C", " $+2$ mm".



-The symbols for “similar to” and “nearly equal to” are not followed by a space. Examples: “~12”, “≈24”.

-Use “log” for log base x (e.g., log base 10 would be log10), and “ln” for natural log

-Use “male” and “female” or “M” and “F,” NOT the symbols ♂ and ♀.

-In mathematical functions, fences typically go in this order: { [()] }

I) Other Common Abbreviations

Standard abbreviations are listed below. Do not use other abbreviations without first defining them in the text and be consistent in your use throughout the manuscript.

ca. = “circa” or “around”; lower case, not italicized, followed by period

cf. = “compare with”; lower case, not italicized, followed by period

e.g., = “for example”; lower case, not italicized, period after each letter, followed by comma

i.e., = “that is”; lower case, not italicized, period after each letter, followed by comma

N = chromosome number; capitalized, not italicized (different from sample size)

SVL = snout–vent length; define this at first usage

vs. = “versus”; can be abbreviated in lower case without italics, or can be spelled out

sp. nov. and gen. nov. = “new species” and “new genus”; lower case, no comma before these terms
“pers. comm.” = “personal communication”

Spell out the full names of North American states. Example: “Colorado”

Capitalize and abbreviate the word “figure” (example: “Fig. 1”) except when used in a sentence (example: “Figure 2 demonstrates...”).

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J) Dashes and Hyphenation

-Use a hyphen for modifiers and two-word phrases used as an adjective. Examples: “20-mL syringe”, “24-hour clock”, “*t*-test results”, “life-history strategy”, but “20 mL of water” or “the life history of bullfrogs”.



-Do not hyphenate “Non” words. Example: “Nonparametric”.

-Other common prefixes such as neo-, co-, re- are not hyphenated except where necessary to prevent misreading or ambiguity. Example: “relocated” means “moved away”, but “re-located” is used to indicate that a radio-tracked individual has been found again.

-Avoid using long hyphenated phrases as adjectives. For example, avoid “We used black, sticky- sloping-plastic-matting as substrate in the aquaria”.

-Use commas to separate clauses, instead of hyphens. Example: “The town, which is more of a village, is the nearest place to buy supplies.”

-Use an en-dash, not a hyphen, for inclusive ranges of numbers or dates. Examples: “21–23 mm”, “Pp. 52–65”.

K) Other Common Word Usage

Modern word processors include both spellcheckers and grammar correction options, but these are far from perfect. The list below contains some common problems and is far from comprehensive.

–*Affect vs. effect*: “Affect” is usually used as a verb and means “to influence, or have an effect on,” whereas “effect” should usually be used as a noun that means an outcome or result.

–*Because vs. since*: “Because” usually means “for the reason that” whereas “since” usually means “from a time in the past until now”.

–*Because of vs. due to*: Do not use “due to” instead of “because of”.

–*Farther vs. further*: “Farther” indicates a physical or measurable distance, whereas “further” indicates a figurative distance, such as in advancing, elaborating, or developing an explanation or argument.

–*Infer vs. imply*: “Infer” means to deduce or conclude; “imply” means to hint or suggest.

–*That vs. which*: Usually, “that” is used with restrictive clauses. Example: “The snakes that we had captured” (the word “that” restricts the snakes being discussed to those that we captured). “Which” is used with nonrestrictive clauses. Example: “The snakes had all eaten frogs, which are common in the area” (the word “which” simply gives additional information about the frogs being discussed)

–*While vs. although and whereas*: “While” means “at the same time”; “whereas” or “although”



should be used to indicate “despite” or “even though”

–*Therefore* vs. *thus*: “Therefore” usually means “as a consequence” or “for these reasons,” whereas “thus” usually means “in this way” or “in that way”

–*Data*: The word “data” should always be used to indicate the plural (the singular is “datum”). Example: “The data are presented...”

–*Comprised of*: “comprised of” means “to contain”. For example, “the whole comprises its parts”. “Comprised of” should be avoided

–*Different from* is preferable to *different than* because it is consistent with how the word “differ” is typically used. Example: “Method A differs from method B in that...”

–*Use of non-specific pronouns*: Avoid use of pronouns that refer to subjects found in previous sentences. Example: “Thirty-three turtles used sandbars for nesting purposes. They apparently selected relatively predator-free nest sites.” would be better written as “Thirty-three turtles used sandbars for nesting purposes. Nesting turtles apparently selected relatively predator-free nest sites.”

L) Specimens

If the study involved collection of specimens, provide accession numbers in the text. Use the Standard Symbolic Codes for Institutional Resource Collections in Herpetology and Ichthyology (<http://herpetologistsleague.org/dox/CollectAcronym-Sabaj10.pdf>) for museum abbreviations.

-For taxonomic papers, see additional specific comments below.

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M) Special Considerations for Taxonomy Papers

Taxonomy papers will follow the same sequence of sections as above. See recent journal issues for examples.

-Consult the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (<http://www.iczn.org>) and closely follow the style, sequence, and terminology of other recent or major works on that group, to facilitate comparisons.

-Definitions of terms, museum abbreviations, and other codes used in text should be given in the Materials and Methods section. For standard museum codes, [click here](#).

-When a broad review is needed, as with analysis of variation in widespread species, present such material before the formal taxon description.



-Taxon descriptions may appear in the Results section or follow the Discussion as a separate section entitled Systematic Accounts.

-Only new names are given in bold. Example: "*Uraeotyphlus **gansi** sp. nov.*"

-Below the name, indicate, in parentheses, where illustrations and related information may be found: "(Figs. 1–4, Tables 1,2)".

-Next, list prior names, in chronological order. Example: *Uraeotyphlus malabaricus* (Beddome, 1870) in part; Boulenger (1882:92), *Uraeotyphlus oxyurus* (Duméril and Bibron, 1841) in part; Pillai and Ravichandran (1999:74–77, map IX).

-Next provide information about the holotype. Example: "*Holotype*.— HJ 3498, male, 20 October 2011, Jerusalem, Israel. Y. L. Werner (Fig. 1)".

-Information about Paratypes follows, organized by sex or geographical locality.

-Other specimens examined can be listed here, under "Referred Specimens", if the list is brief. Use an Appendix for a lengthy list. For all listed specimens, include locality data and museum numbers, but not the date of collection. The current location of the specimens must be included.

-The following headings are also used, in the following order:

Diagnosis.—A concise summary of distinguishing characteristics and diagnostic comparisons to related species or ones with which the new taxon may be confused.

Description of Holotype.—An explicit description of all aspects of the type specimen, following the style of leading authorities in the field. Include information on linear measurements, color in preservative, and other relevant aspects.

Variation.—A summary (often in Table form) of evident variation among the holotype, paratypes, and other referred specimens, including reference to sexual dimorphism, geographic variation, or ontogenetic changes.

Color in Life.—A brief description of color in life, if known. We encourage publication of color images of new taxa.

Etymology.—Brief description of the origin and meaning of the new name and the rationale for choosing it

Distribution.—Summary of the distribution of the new taxon.

Natural History.—, *Ecology*.—, or similar heading for presenting information on habits, habitats, life history, etc. This section may be combined with the previous one and named



"Distribution and Ecology".

Tadpole.—Description of the tadpole or larval amphibian stage, if known and relevant.

Remarks.—Concise discussion of any additional aspects of the new taxon that are deemed important, such as evolution and phylogenetic relationships.

N) Manuscript Submission and Processing

Manuscripts must be submitted electronically using the web-based submission site. Please submit your manuscript in Microsoft Word format or another text format (e.g., PDF). Registration (free) is required to access the submission site. Although you do not need to be a member of SSAR to access the site or to submit a manuscript, we strongly encourage all authors to join the Society. *Please avoid submitting your files directly to the editors via e-mail.*

You will be required to enter manuscript information, author names, addresses, and affiliations, and answer several questions before you can enter manuscript files. The website can accept a range of text and graphic formats, such as .doc and .JPG.

To prevent problems:

- Ensure that your document is formatted with North American letter page size (8.5 by 11 inches; 21.6 by 27.9 cm). Conversion to PDF format is otherwise likely to result in errors.

- Manuscripts can also be uploaded as PDF files, but the original word-processor files must accompany these.

- Upload each Figure as a separate graphics file. Figures should be in TIFF, GIF, JPG, Postscript, EPS, or PDF files.

- The online system will automatically merge the files, in the order identified by the author, into a single PDF file for use by the Editor, Associate Editors, and reviewers.

- You must approve the converted file before it is released for review. The conversion process may take several minutes.

- As part of the submission process, a cover letter may be uploaded as a separate file. The purpose of this letter to the editors is to: 1) concisely (*50 words or less*) explain why the manuscript is unique and appropriate to the journal; 2) verify that the manuscript is not being considered for publication elsewhere and adheres to journal format and ethical expectations; and 3) share any other specifics that the authors wish the editors to know about, such as the names of recommended reviewers.

Processing manuscripts can be a lengthy endeavor. Submitted manuscripts are first checked for a general fit to the guidelines presented here. Manuscripts that do not follow this document will be returned to authors for corrections and may be rejected outright. Manuscripts that meet the guidelines are passed on to the Editors, who assign an Associate Editor to handle the manuscript, identify reviewers, and recommend acceptance or rejection. The journal website automatically



updates as these stages are reached – please check the website for your manuscript's status. The initial review process currently averages 3 months, and about half of all submitted manuscripts are rejected. Most other manuscripts require some changes before the Associate Editor recommends acceptance. We strive to minimize processing time. Please be patient and limit queries regarding status to cases where a manuscript has been in review for more than six months. The editors will contact authors as soon as a decision is made about their work.

Approximately six weeks after final acceptance, authors will be contacted by the publisher with requests for clarifications or to review the page proofs. Original artwork and photographs may be requested at that time, along with a copyright release. It is the responsibility of the corresponding author to distribute the proofs to coauthors. Each author should check proofs carefully against the edited manuscript. The corresponding author should collate the corrections and return the corrected proofs to the managing editor within 48 h to prevent publication delays. Authors must assume full responsibility for detecting errors at this stage. Authors will be charged for changes in proofs other than correction of printer's and editor's errors. Manuscripts are generally published in the order of acceptance, and time from acceptance to publication is approximately four months.

O) ZooBank ID Numbers

Authors of new taxonomic names will be required to register their names with ZooBank before publication (Add your new names at <http://zoobank.org/>; then notify the editor of your ZooBank ID by email). The manuscript will then be published online as the final official version (i.e., it is not a preprint). The article will appear in print in the final hardcopy volume. However, each newly published taxonomic name must be associated with a ZooBank ID Number at the time of online publication.

It is the author's responsibility to ensure that the ZooBank ID Number(s) are provided to the editors before galley production or during author galley reviews. Ultimately, authors must ensure that the ZooBank ID Number(s) appear in the galleys before publication.

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