Caribbean Naturalist – Formatting Guidelines

Qualitative requirements. Care should be taken in manuscript preparation. Substance, quality, and clarity of presentation are very important and will receive critical review. **If, after reading the following, you have any doubts about the proper formatting of particular aspects of a manuscript, please refer to the sample manuscript available on the journal website at www.eaglehill.us/programs/journals/cana/sample-submission.**

Manuscript Structure

- **Original research articles** should be written for an interdisciplinary readership. Discipline-specific terminology should be briefly defined or referenced. All research articles should generally have the following sections, in order: Abstract, Introduction, Field-Site Description, Methods, Results, Discussion, Acknowledgments, and Literature Cited. The Abstract should give a tight synopsis of the article and should succinctly state the objectives and scope of the research, the methods used, results, and principal conclusions. The Introduction, with appropriate clarity and brevity, should identify the problem or question being investigated, include historic perspectives, state the specific hypothesis being examined, and summarize the overall research design. The Field-site Description section is required for field-based research and should include geographic boundaries, a general habitat description, and additional information as necessary. The Methods section should describe the design of the research and provide a sufficient level of detail so that results could be reproduced; the methodology for all data presented should be adequately described in this section, with any specialized methods concisely explained for a wide range of science-oriented readers. The Results section should present data in a clear and simple format, without redundancy. The Methods and Results sections should be tightly linked. The Discussion section should not be a restatement of results, but should appropriately revisit the research objectives and summarize and evaluate evidence for each conclusion and how well the study answered the research question(s). In addition, discuss unsettled points, compare results to previously published relevant work, identify practical applications of the research, and raise questions that remain and are worthy of further exploration. The Discussion section should not be a prolonged general review of the literature. The Acknowledgments section should note significant help received and financial assistance. The Literature Cited section needs qualitative constraint and should only include literature of significance. Detailed figures, tables, and discussions of statistics should be included to the extent useful for effective communication of results and interpretation of their significance.

- **Research summaries and general interest articles**, including review papers, discussions of important current issues in natural history science, and history of science articles, should be condensed, yet generally readable summaries and discussions of a broad base of previously published research papers, data, and/or technical reports. These type of manuscripts can have a variety of formats, but minimally need an Abstract and Introduction and Literature Cited sections. Photographs, figures, and tables can be included.

- **Notes or short communications** on unusual but limited field observations which are of broad interest to field biologists are considered. Authors should augment these observations where appropriate with regional summaries or additional biological information to put them in context. Notes should include a concise discussion of the scientific significance of the observations, references to vouchedered collections (if appropriate), and references to the technical literature. Notes should minimally have an Abstract and Acknowledgments and Literature Cited sections. Notes should include only one level of headings within the main text section, and those headings should be formatted as described for 3rd-level headings in the “Format basics” section below.

If the option of publishing a **photo essay** about Caribbean natural history appeals to you, such manuscripts may be submitted for publication to the journal, Natural History Now, which is also published by the Institute, and which mirrors these essays within the Caribbean Naturalist, in a section called Natural History Now. For formatting and submission guidelines, see www.eaglehill.nhow. Photo essays should provide an academically rigorous overview of a selection of photos with detailed captions. They are opportunities for field biologists to provide significant peer-reviewed interim updates from ongoing natural history studies prior to the publication of a final report or research papers, in an authoritative "public service" format that is of interest to all who are curious to learn more about natural history. There are no page charges for Natural History Now publications. Photo essays pair well with and thus anticipate the publication of traditional research articles.

Writing style: Our goal is to have the information presented in the journal in a manner that is as clear, engaging, and concise as possible. Towards that end, we now ask that authors use sentences written in active tense, except in instances where its use would make a sentence more wordy, awkward, or unnecessarily complex. We also encourage authors to abandon the old taboo about avoiding the use of the first person in scientific writing, as we agree with the growing sentiment that its use is not at all at odds with the goal of scientific research to be as objective as possible and generally makes it crystal clear which actions and interpretations are attributable to the author(s), which is not always obvious, especially when a paper includes discussion of other related research in the field or builds upon/incorporates the work of others or previous preliminary studies.

Format basics. Manuscripts should be typed in 12 pt. Times New Roman font (if other fonts are needed for special symbols, please include a note as to which fonts were used so we can be sure to correctly match them), with left-justified text in one column on 8.5" by 11" pages, with 1" margins on all sides. All manuscript pages should be numbered. At the top of the first page, the manuscript should list the article title and author name(s), affiliation(s), address(es), phone number(s), and e-mail address(es) and should clearly specify the corresponding author. The first line of each paragraph should be indented by using an inserted 0.25" tab, rather than by using a “split boundary margin” in the ruler (see the checklist below for further information on this point). Major headings, i.e., Introduction, Methods, etc., should be centered, use title case (i.e., first letter of each major word capitalized) and in bold, with a blank line above. Subheadings, or 2nd-level headings, should be in bold on their own left-justified lines, in
Results

Fish abundance data

Deepwater trawl surveys. The deepwater trawl collections made from 1998–2011 resulted in the capture of 9 species of …
initials—for all other authors and for the list of editors of the parent publication, the initials are given before the surname; no spaces between an author’s initials; no spaces between volume number, colon, and page numbers. For book titles, capitalize all major words; for all other source titles (reports, articles, theses, etc.) only capitalize the first letter of the first word. Note the following examples for different types of citations:

Chapter or section of a book or a proceedings volume:

Journal articles:

Report:

Thesis or Dissertation:

Online source:

Use and acknowledgment of unpublished data. Authors should have written permission (from original source) for any use of unpublished data that is not their own. Credit for use of unpublished data should be made as a parenthetical within-text reference to the authors of the data, including their affiliation, and location. For example, “(J. Perez, University of Puerto Rico, Akron, Río Piedras, Puerto Rico, USA, unpubl. data) or (L. Hamm, US Geological Survey, Westfield, CT, and T. Plorank, US Forest Service, Northfield, MA, 2005 unpubl. data).

Additional guidelines. Additional manuscript guidelines are listed in the accompanying checklist of editorial considerations. These are intended for reference purposes.
CARIBBEAN NATURALIST – ROUTINE CHECKLIST OF EDITORIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The following is a routine checklist to be used to review whether your manuscript has met basic journal formatting guidelines. Manuscripts that significantly depart from these guidelines will be returned for revision prior to being considered for review. For visual examples of these guidelines, see the sample article available on the journal’s website (www.eaglehill.us/cana).

Title, author names, affiliations and contact info, and abstract

The title should generally be no more than 20 words long, if possible. Capitalize first letter of words in title, other than words like “and, by, for, from,” etc. Spell out at least full first names of all author(s). Each author’s name should be flagged with a superscripted number that corresponds to their affiliation and contact information, and add an asterisk for the corresponding author. Include a brief abstract for your article, generally with no more than 120 words.

Species names

The first time a species is mentioned after the Abstract, the scientific name with authority name(s) should be given, followed by the common name in parentheses (alternately, and preferably if there is one, the authorities can be provided in a table or appendix that lists the species discussed) … e.g., *Eusmilia fastigiata* (Pallas) (Smooth Flower Coral) or *Xiphias gladius* L. (Swordfish)

Once a scientific name has been mentioned, thereafter, the simplest, most widely recognized name appropriate for the context should be used (usually the common name).

Capitalize the first letters of the common names of all species.

Italicize rather than underline scientific names. Do not italicize sp. or spp.

Pay attention to whether the naming authority should be in parentheses, which denote that the species has been reclassified taxonomically since the original description. Unless needed due to the taxonomic focus of the manuscript, omit the year from the authority.

Main body of article

Paragraphs should be indented by first inserting a 0.25" tab in the document ruler and then hitting the tab key at the start of each paragraph. If you don’t first set the tab in the ruler, Word will instead automatically use a “split boundary margin” format is lost when pasting into the layout program we use. If you need to convert a document that already is formatted with the split boundary margin indents, first select all, then set the tab in the ruler, and then manually delete the split margins and insert tabs at the beginning of each paragraph.

Do not use ampersands (&).

Do not italicize … i.e., e.g., or et al.

Follow the quotation mark convention of only including punctuation within quotation marks if part of a longer quote … thus … “xxx”, “xxx”, and “xxx”.

Use minute and second marks for geographic coordinates, e.g., 42°51′36″N, 112°25′45″W

Use double quotes (“xxx”) instead of single quotes (‘xxx’), except when a quote is nested within another quote.

Follow comma conventions of including commas before the word “and” in a list … thus … a, b, and c

Place commas after … e.g., … i.e.,

Preferentially use parentheses instead of brackets, except when nested (xxx) instead of [xxx] … (xxx [mmm] zzz).

For major headings, i.e., Introduction, etc., capitalize first letter of each word, other than words like “and, by, for, from,” etc.; insert a blank line above.

Subheadings, or 2nd level headings: on separate line; capitalize first letter of first word and proper names; insert blank line above.

Sub-subheadings, or 3rd level headings: indented and placed at start of paragraph, capitalize first letter of first word and proper names; italicize; follow immediately with a period; no blank line above.

Use Fig. instead of Figure, if used within parentheses … thus “… the trend shown in Figure 2 is …”, but “… an upward trend (Fig. 2).”

Numbers should generally not be written out, except at the beginning of a sentence or to avoid ambiguity.

Set off mathematical operators by single spaces when used with numbers or variable symbols; e.g., \(37.8 \pm 3.46\) mm, \(P > 0.05\). When these symbols are used as modifiers rather than operators, do not set off with a space—e.g., the +2.3 difference, length of >5 cm

Do not underline mathematical operators (e.g., use ± ≤ ≥ rather than an underlined + < >).

Use only subscripted and superscripted formatting provided by Word (not by changing position of characters in font menu).

Cite informal observations by colleagues as … (name, affiliation, location, pers. comm.) or (name, affiliation, location, unpubl. data).

Use metric units (with English units in parentheses when necessary). Abbreviate units (e.g., m, g, km).

All double spaces in the manuscript should be removed.

When signifying a range of numbers, dates, etc., use en-dashes (option key + dash key) rather than regular dashes.

All dates should be given in the DD Month YYYY format … e.g., 24 August 1988.
Citations within main body of text
Citations within text should be listed alphabetically rather than chronologically.
Do not use commas between authors and year published … (xxx 1999) … not (xxx, 1999).

Acknowledgments
Authors are encouraged to include an appropriate Acknowledgments (note spelling) section, thanking all those who significantly helped with or supported the research.

Literature Cited section
Format citations as hanging paragraphs; only one paragraph return per citation (at the end) and no tabs or multiple spaces.
Names of authors should not be fully capitalized, e.g., … R.G. Smith … not … R.C. SMITH
Substitute initials for author full first and middle names, with a period after each initial and NO space between initials, e.g., R.B. Smith

Note sequencing of author names and initials and comma before the “and”: Smith, Sr., A., B.B. Brown, Jr., and C.C. Gold III.
2000. Note that with the exception of the first author, the initials are placed before the surname.
If author names are identical for multiple citation listings, repeat names of authors rather than using an underscore.
In titles of books, capitalize the first letter of each word, other than words like “and, by, for, from,” etc.
For titles of articles, reports, dissertations, and theses, only capitalize the first letter of the first word and proper names.
For titles that have a colon, always capitalize the first letter of the first word after colon.
Use full journal names rather than abbreviations.
For publishers of books, reports, etc., list city, state or province (postal abbreviations), and foreign country.
For theses and dissertations, list the academic institution, city, state or province (postal abbreviations), and foreign country.

Tables
Format tables as “inserted” Word Tables. If using Excel-created tables, simply cut and paste into Word. Do not insert tables as objects in Word.
Alternatively, format tables as simple rows of single-tab delimited text (never using spaces or multiple tabs).
Do not insert vertical lines in tables
Tables should be formatted to fit within 5.28” or 8.125” width, with a font of 9 pt. Times New Roman.
For column headings and table “cells,” capitalize the first letter of the first word and proper names.

Figures
Scale figures to fit the printed page (up to 5.28", or 8.125"). Try experimental photocopy reductions to be sure.
Make sure size of text in scaled figures is no larger than 10 pt. Use only sans serif font such as Helvetica for labeling.
Bold formatting of text should be avoided. Lines heavier than hairlines should be avoided.
Figures should have no background color.
Avoid filling in broad figure elements with solid black. Use distinct shades of gray or different line patterns instead.
Avoid using gridlines in graphs.
For each character string (axis labels, legends, etc.), capitalize only the first letter of the first word and proper names.
Italicize scientific names and statistical symbols (e.g., P, r², etc.).
Provide each figure as a separate high quality high-resolution (600 dpi for grayscale, 350 dpi for color) jpg, tif, pdf file.
Make sure all figures are crisp and clear with ample contrast (no fuzziness or jagged lines).

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