

## ECOLOGIA BALKANICA - INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS (2024)

### *General information*

Submissions to “*Ecologia Balkanica*” can be original studies dealing with all fields of ecology, including ecology and conservation of microorganisms, plants, animals, physiological ecology, behavioral ecology, population ecology, population genetics, community ecology, ecosystem ecology, parasitology, animal evolution, ecotoxicology, ecological monitoring and bioindication, landscape and urban ecology, conservation ecology, as well as new methodical contributions in ecology. **The journal is dedicated to publish studies conducted on the Balkans and Europe.** Studies conducted anywhere else in the world might be accepted only as an exception after decision of the Editorial Board and the Editor-In-Chief.

### *Manuscript submission*

The following types of manuscripts are accepted: *short research notes* (up to 4 pages), *research articles* (4 to 10 pages) and *review papers* (10 to 20 pages). *Short research notes* are shorter submissions of a preliminary nature or those including new records or observed phenomenon, etc. *Research articles* should present significant original research in the various fields of ecology, mentioned above. *Review papers* should deal with topics of general interest or of contemporary importance, being synthetic rather than comprehensive in emphasis.

*Manuscripts must conform strictly with the instructions for authors and sent to the Editor.* Incoming manuscripts are initially evaluated by the Editor. Manuscripts may be rejected without peer review if they do not comply with the instructions to authors or are beyond the scope of the journal. If the manuscript is acceptable, it will be forwarded to reviewers for evaluation. All manuscripts are peer-reviewed by 2 or 3 independent reviewers. After final edition and approval by the Editorial Board, the manuscript will be accepted for publication. The Editor reserves the right to make editorial changes. The authors agree, after the manuscript's acceptance, with the transfer of copyright to the publisher.

## *Legal requirements*

Ecologia Balkanica follows the standards for Ethics and Publication Malpractice set by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). Conformance to standards of ethical behavior is therefore expected of all parties involved: authors, reviewers, editors, and the publisher. Submission of a manuscript implies: that the work described has not been published previously (except in the form of an abstract, or as part of a published lecture, or thesis); that it is not under consideration for publication anywhere else; that its publication has been approved by all co-authors, if any, as well as by the responsible authorities - tacitly or explicitly - at the institute where the work has been carried out. The publisher will not be held legally responsible should there be any claims for compensation.

## *Manuscript preparation*

### *Language*

The manuscripts must be written in English. *Contributors who are not native English speakers are strongly advised to ensure that a colleague fluent in the English language, if none of the authors is so, has reviewed their manuscript.* Spelling should be British or American English and should be consistent throughout the text. All abbreviations and acronyms should be defined at first mention. To facilitate reader comprehension, abbreviations should be used sparingly.

### *Technical information*

Submissions must be in electronic version only, as well as the original figures and tables, implemented in the text. Figures must be sent as separate files as well (see more information below). The manuscript text should be prepared in rich text format (.rtf), justified, font size 11, font "Book Antiqua", without footnotes, column or page breaks, single spaced (about 60 lines per page), on A4 (210 x 297 mm) paper, with margins of exactly 2.5 cm on each side. Pages and lines should not be numbered.

The manuscripts should conform to the following format:

*Title:* Provide a title that is concise, but also an informative synthesis of the study. Where appropriate, include family or higher taxon.

*Author(s):* Full first name(s), middle initials and surname(s) in ***bold italic***. The corresponding author should be marked with the \*-symbol.

*Affiliation(s) with postal address:* As complete as possible. Affiliation should be given in the following order – University (Institute), Faculty, Department, postal address, city, COUNTRY (in capital letters). E-mail address is given only for the corresponding author!

*Abstract:* Maximum length 250 words. The abstract should state briefly the objective of the research, the primary results and major conclusions, with no description of methods, discussions, references and abbreviations.

*Key words:* Usually 3–10 words suitable for information-retrieval system.

The standard order of sections should be: Abstract, Key words, Introduction, Material and Methods, Results, Discussion (or Results and Discussion), Conclusions (optional), Acknowledgements (optional) and References.

The *Introduction* has to explain the actuality of the researched problem and give the aim of the study.

*Materials and Methods* have to provide sufficient information to permit repetition of the experiment and/or fieldwork. The technical description of study methods should be given only if such methods are new; otherwise a short presentation is enough.

The *Results* section must be a concise presentation of the finding of the study.

The *Discussion* section should be separated from the results section at full-length papers and should deal with the significance of the results and their relationship to the aims of the paper. Also include how the findings of the paper will change or influence the state of our knowledge about the topic at hand. In separate cases a joint section "Results and Discussion" is allowed, but not preferable.

The *Conclusions* should shortly describe the main contributions and recommendations of the study without including citations and statistics.

In the *Acknowledgements* section all persons and organizations that helped during the study in various ways, as well as the organization that financed the study must be listed.

*Short Notes* (generally less than four-five manuscript pages) should be produced as continuous text, preceded by an abstract of no more than 150 words.

*Tables:* The tables must not repeat information already presented in the figures or in the text. Each table must be self-explanatory and as simple as possible. Avoid large landscape oriented tables! Tables must be numbered consecutively. They should be placed within the text at the desired position by the author(s). An explanatory caption, located on the top of the table, should be provided.

*Example:*

**Table 1.** Shannon-Wiener indexes in the burned ( $H_{\text{burned}}$ ) and control ( $H_{\text{control}}$ ) territory for the total duration of the study (2004–2006).

*Figures:* They must not repeat information already presented in the tables or in the text. Lines and letters in figures must be able to be enlarged or reduced without reduction in quality. They should conform to the size of the type area (up to 16 × 24 cm) which is the limit for all illustrations. Magnification should be shown by scale bars. All illustrations must be sharp, of high quality with at least 300 dpi. The following formats are acceptable: JPEG, PNG, TIFF, EPS. The figures must be numbered consecutively and should be provided with an explanatory legend below them. When the figures present maps of the studied area, we recommend using some kind of GIS software for the preparation of the maps, or use of other indicative or topographical maps. Satellite or aerial photos (especially from Google Earth) of the studied area are not recommended. All figures must be placed within the text at the desired position by the author(s).

*Example:*

**Fig. 1.** Indicative map of the study area.

### *Citations and references*

From January 2020, *Ecologia Balkanica* has adopted the APA (American Psychological Association) bibliographic style (7<sup>th</sup> edition – 2020).

#### *APA Referencing Basics: In-Text Citation*

In-text references must be included following the use of a quote or paraphrase taken from another piece of work. Submitted manuscripts will be pre-checked for plagiarism and auto-plagiarism. In-text citations are citations within the main body of the text and refer to a direct quote or paraphrase. They correspond to a reference in the main reference list. These citations include the surname of the author and date of publication only. For example: Smith (2017) states... Or ... (Smith, 2017). In case of two authors: the surname of both authors is stated with an ampersand between. For example: Smith & Smith (2017) state... Or ... (Smith & Smith, 2017). In case of three or more authors add „et al.“ after the first author’s surname (*et alii*, from Latin means „and others“): Smith et al. (2017) state... Or ... (Smith et al., 2017).

If the author of the cited source is unknown, the first few words of the reference should be used. This is usually the title of the source. If this is the title of a book, periodical, brochure or report, it should be italicized. For example: (*A guide to citation*, 2017). If this is the title of an article, chapter or web page, it should be in quotation marks. For example: (“APA Citation”, 2017).

Citing authors with multiple works from one year:

Works should be cited with a, b, c etc. following the date. These letters are assigned within the reference list, which is sorted alphabetically by the surname of the first author. For example: (Smith, 2017a) Or (Smith, 2017b).

Citing multiple works in one parentheses:

If these works are by the same author, the surname is stated once followed by the dates in order chronologically. For instance: Smith (2007, 2013, 2017) Or (Smith, 2007, 2013, 2017)

If these works are by multiple authors then the references are ordered alphabetically by the first author separated by a semicolon as follows: (Brooks, 2000; Smith & Smith 2017; Swaen, 2015, 2017a, 2017b; Thomson et al., 2015).

Citing a group or organisation: (World Health Organization, 2015).

*Examples:*

## **A journal article**

### **Citing a journal article in print:**

Author, A. (Publication Year). Article title. *Periodical Title, Volume*(Issue), pp-pp.

Author, A., & Author, B. (Publication Year). Article title. *Periodical Title, Volume*(Issue), pp-pp.

Author, A., Author, B., & Author, C. (Publication Year). Article title. *Periodical Title, Volume* (Issue), pp-pp.

### **Citing an online journal article:**

Author, A. (Publication Year). Article title. *Periodical Title, Volume*(Issue), pp-pp.  
doi:XX.XXXXX or Retrieved from URL

Author, A., & Author, B. (Publication Year). Article title. *Periodical Title, Volume*(Issue), pp-pp. doi:XX.XXXXX or Retrieved from URL

Author, A., Author, B., & Author, C. (Publication Year). Article title. *Periodical Title, Volume*(Issue), pp-pp. doi:XX.XXXXX or Retrieved from URL

*Notes:* When creating your online journal article citation, keep in mind: APA does NOT require you to include the date of access/retrieval date or database information for electronic sources. You can use the URL of the journal homepage if there is no doi number assigned and the reference was retrieved online. A doi (digital object identifier) is an assigned number that helps link content to its location on the Internet. It is therefore important, if one is provided, to use it when creating a citation. All doi numbers begin with a 10 and are separated by a slash.

## **A book**

### **Citing a book in print:**

Author, A. (Year of Publication). *Title of work*. Publisher City, Country: Publisher.

Author, A., & Author, B. (Year of Publication). *Title of work*. Publisher City, Country: Publisher.

Author, A., Author, B., & Author, C. (Year of Publication). *Title of work*. Publisher City, Country: Publisher.

*Notes:* When citing a book in APA, keep in mind: capitalize the first letter of the first word of the title and any subtitles, as well as the first letter of any proper nouns. The full title of the book, including any subtitles, should be stated and *italicized*.

### **Citing an e-book:**

E-book is short for “electronic book.” It is a digital version of a book that can be read on a computer, e-reader (Kindle, Nook, etc.), or other electronic device.

*APA format structure:*

Author, A. (Year of Publication). *Title of work*. Retrieved from <http://xxxx> or DOI:xxxx

Author, A., & Author, B. (Year of Publication). *Title of work*. Retrieved from <http://xxxx> or DOI:xxxx

Author, A., Author, B., & Author, C. (Year of Publication). *Title of work*. Retrieved from <http://xxxx> or DOI:xxxx

**Citing edited book:**

Author, A. (Ed.). (Year of Publication). *Title of work*. Publisher City, Country: Publisher.

Author, A., & Author, B. (Eds.). (Year of Publication). *Title of work*. Publisher City, Country: Publisher.

Author, A., Author, B., & Author, C. (Eds.). (Year of Publication). *Title of work*. Publisher City, Country: Publisher.

**Book without known author:**

*Example: Management plan for the protected area for birds BG 0002086, "Rice Fields Tsalapitsa".* (2013). Retrieved from <https://plovdiv.riosv.com> (In Bulgarian)

**Proceedings or book chapter:**

Author, A. (Year of Publication). Title of work. In A. Author (Ed.). *Title of the book or proceedings*. (Edition, pp. XX-XX). Publisher City, Country: Publisher.

Author, A., & Author, B. (Year of Publication). Title of work. In A. Author, & B. Author (Eds.). *Title of the book or proceedings*. (Edition, pp. XX-XX). Publisher City, Country: Publisher.

Author, A., Author, B., & Author, C. (Year of Publication). Title of work. In A. Author, B. Author, & C. Author (Eds.). *Title of the book or proceedings*. (Edition, pp. XX-XX). Publisher City, Country: Publisher.

**Software:**

Author, A. (Year of Publication). *Name of software*. Vers. XX. Retrieved from <http://xxxx>

*Example:*

StatSoft Inc. (2004). *STATISTICA (Data analysis software system)*, Vers. 7. Retrieved from <http://www.statsoft.com>

**Website:**

Author, A. (Year of Publication). *Title of page*. Retrieved from <http://xxxx>

*In case of citing website with unknown author:*

*"Title of page"*. (Year of Publication). Retrieved from <http://xxxx>

**European Directive:**

Official European directives, issued from the European parliament and of the Council (EC) should be cited as follows (example):

EC. (2010). Directive 2010/63/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes. *Official Journal of the European Union*, L276, 33-79. Retrieved from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:276:0033:0079:en:PDF>

**Legislation:**

Official laws, orders etc. should be cited as follows (see examples).

Biological Diversity Act. (2002). *State Gazette*, 77, 09.08.2002. (In Bulgarian).

Medicinal Plants Act. (2000). *State Gazette*, 29, 07.04.2000. (In Bulgarian).  
Protected Areas Act. (1998). *State Gazette*, 133, 11.11.1998 (In Bulgarian).

In case of papers written in other than Latin letters, if there is an English (or German, or French) title in the summary, it is recommended to be used. If there is not such a summary, the author's names must be transcribed and the title of the paper must be translated into English. If the name of the journal is also not in Latin letters it also should be transcribed (not translated). This should be noted in round brackets at the end of the paragraph, for instance: (In Bulgarian, English summary).

*Examples:*

Angelov, P. (1960). Communications entomologiques. I. Recherches sur la nourriture de certaines espèces de grenouilles. *Godishnik na muzeite v grad Plovdiv*, 3, 333-337. (In Bulgarian, Russian and French summary).  
Korovin, V. (2004). Golden Eagle (*Aquila heliaca*). Birds in agricultural landscapes of the Ural. Ekaterinburg, Russia: Published by Ural University. (In Russian).

Names of persons who provided unpublished information should be cited as follows: "(Andersson, 2005, Stockholm, pers. comm.)".

Published theses (BSc, MSc, PhD, DSc) are not considered officially published scientific literary sources, therefore from January 2015, *Ecologia Balkanica* no longer allows citations of such references. Citing references that are still "in press" are also considered frowned upon, but not forbidden. If possible, please avoid using such references.

### ***Additional requirements***

For special symbols (Greek letters, symbols for male and female etc.) use the Symbol list on the Insert menu in Microsoft Word with the following preferable fonts: Symbol, Webdings, Wingdings, Wingdings 2 and Wingdings 3. Degree symbols (°) must be used (from the Symbol list) and not superscript letter "o" or number "0". Multiplication symbols must be used (×) and not small "x" letters. Spaces must be inserted between numbers and units (e.g., 3 kg) and between numbers and mathematical symbols (+, -, ×, =, <, >), but not between numbers and percent symbols (e.g., 45%).

*Nomenclature and units.* Follow internationally accepted rules and conventions: use the [International system of units \(SI\)](#). If other quantities are mentioned, give their equivalent in SI. Please use a standard format for the units and be uniform in the text, tables and figures. Please choose one of two possible styles: "m/s" or "m s<sup>-1</sup>". When using "m s<sup>-1</sup>" leave a space between the symbols.

*Italic letters.* The Latin genus and species names must be cited completely once in the text and should be typed in *italic*.

### *Statistics*

Mean values should always be accompanied by some measure of variation. If the goal is to describe variation among individuals that contribute to the mean standard deviation (SD) must be used. When the aim is to illustrate the precision of the mean standard errors (SE) should be given. The last paragraph of Materials and Methods section should briefly present the significance test used. Quote when possible the used software. Real  $p$  values must be quoted both at significance or non-significance. The use of the sign is acceptable only at low values of  $p$  (e.g.  $p < 0.0001$ ).

### *Ethics*

The authors of articles that are based on experiments that caused injuries or death of animals should explain and justify the grounds of the study and state that the scientific results of the study is at least in trade-off with the sufferings caused. In the Materials and Methods section of the manuscript, the authors should explain in detail and as precisely as possible the conditions of maintenance, transport, anaesthesia, and marking of animals. When available, references should be added to justify that the techniques used were not invasive. When alternative non-harming techniques exist, but were not used, the manuscripts may not be considered for publication.

### *Proofs and Reprints*

Proofreads will be sent to the first (or corresponding) author for checking (a PDF file) only once and it should be returned without delay. Corrections should be limited to typographical errors. No additional changes of the manuscript are allowed. Following publication, the first (or corresponding) author will be provided with electronic copy (PDF) of the article.

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