

# Rhode Island *Naturalist*



## **Author's Guidelines for *Rhode Island Naturalist***

As we did with *Rhode Island Naturalist* in the past, as well as its predecessor *RINHewS*, the Rhode Island Natural History Survey's manuscript guidelines are modeled from those of *Northeastern Naturalist* and other journals from Eagle Hill Publishing. However, we do welcome a much wider variety of submissions, consequently many of our requirements are more relaxed. Nevertheless, substance, quality, and clarity of presentation remain important.

### **Types of manuscripts**

*Research Articles* are longer pieces that should follow the standard structure for scientific journal articles. They should be written for an interdisciplinary readership, keeping in mind that Survey membership includes many non-specialists. Technical terminology should be minimized, or briefly but clearly defined if necessary to include. Research Articles should have the sections expected in any journal article (not all are always needed): Abstract, Introduction, Field-Site Description, Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusions, Acknowledgments, Literature Cited, and Appendix. If you are unclear about what each section should contain and how it should be structured, review the *Northeastern Naturalist* guidelines at <https://www.eaglehill.us/programs/journals/vena/NENA-formatting-guidelines.pdf>, or consult any good guide to science writing.

*Research Notes* need not follow the typical structure or include all the listed sections, but should still be written as clear, concise science.

*Other types of submissions* can be less formal. These could include general interest articles, informal "Notes from the Field," stories about specific taxa, reviews of recent books related to natural history (plants, animals, habitats, geology, hydrology, soils, etc.), "Focus On" pieces featuring one of the RINHS member organizations, profiles of prominent Rhode Island naturalists, articles on the history of natural history, photos, art, maps, and even opinion pieces related to natural history or conservation. These types of manuscripts can have a variety of formats and heading structures—whatever it takes for a clear presentation. They may or may not include references. Photographs, figures, and tables can be included in any type of article.

### **Writing style**

Our goal is to have the information presented in a manner that is as clear, engaging, and concise as possible. Write in active voice using first person pronouns, rather than passive (e.g., "I collected blood samples from 35 Diamondback Terrapins ..." rather than "A total of 35 blood samples was collected from Diamondback Terrapins ...").

## Format

Manuscripts should be typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, with left-justified text in one column on 8.5 by 11-inch pages, with 1-inch margins on all sides. The entire manuscript should be single-spaced with 12-point spacing after each paragraph, with no indents (easily done using the “Paragraph” menu in MS-Word). All manuscript pages should be numbered.

On the first page, the manuscript should give 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 title should generally be no more than 20 words long, if possible. Capitalize the first letter of words in title, other than words like “and,” “by,” “for,” “from,” “of,” 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. Also include a 1-sentence biographical blurb about each author.

Major headings, i.e., Introduction, Methods, etc., should be centered, in 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 sentence case (only first letter of the first word capitalized). Sub-subheadings, or 3rd-level headings, should be in italics at the beginning of paragraphs, in sentence case, followed immediately by a period, and then the text. Note the accompanying example of the formatting for a major heading, subheading and 3rd-level heading.

<b>Results</b>
<b>Fish abundance data</b>
<i>Deepwater trawl surveys.</i> The deepwater trawl collections made from 1998 to 2011 resulted in the capture of nine species of ...

For research articles and notes, footnotes should only be used in tables. For all other articles, footnotes may be cited in the manuscript text, and should be placed in a separate section toward the end of the manuscript (i.e., formatted as endnotes rather than page-by-page footnotes).

## Species names

The scientific name, authority for the name (<http://www.itis.gov> is a good source), and common name for each species should be given at least once (either the first time mentioned in the text, or, if applicable, in a table or appendix that lists the species discussed) in the format: *Eretmochelys imbricata* L. (Hawksbill Sea Turtle) or *Ursus americanus* (Pallas) (American Black Bear). Once a scientific name has been mentioned, the simplest, most widely recognized accurate name appropriate for the context of the article—usually the common name—should be used throughout the remainder of the manuscript. Abbreviations (*E. imbricata*) are preferred in subsequent mentions of a species’ scientific name, except when the name begins a sentence, or when the use is ambiguous. Italicize scientific names, but 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. Please note that our policy

is to capitalize the first letters of the common names of all species, but not higher taxa (e.g., Humpback Whale vs. whales).

## References

Use the author-year system for references in the text to cited literature. If the reference includes multiple sources, the citations are given in chronological order. For 2 authors, use “and” rather than the ampersand (&). For sources with more than 2 authors, use “et al.” in the citation. For sources by the same author(s) published in the same year, add a letter to the year (e.g., 1988a, 1988b) to distinguish between them. Do not use a comma between author and year. Sources within one series should be separated by commas, unless there are multiple sources by the same author(s); in that case, semi-colons are used to separate the lists that include comma-separated elements. Note the following examples:

(Jones and Frank 1925, Thorgood 1993, Smith et al. 2012)

(Jones and Frank 1925; Thorgood 1993a, b; Smith et al. 2009, 2012)

Do not repeat author names for multiple references by the same author, as above and not, e.g., “Smith et al. 2009, Smith et al. 2012” or “Thorgood 1993a, Thorgood 1993b.”

## Figures

All figures (graphs, maps, photos, etc.) need to be referenced within the manuscript, and numbered in the order in which they are first referenced (i.e., Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.) When referring to a figure within parentheses, use the abbreviation, e.g., (Fig. 2). For submission, lower-resolution figures may be embedded in the manuscript about where they should appear or be placed at the end of the manuscript (in which case insert a note like the one following this paragraph on a separate line in the appropriate place). Make sure all aspects of all figures are crisp and clear, with no fuzziness, pixilation, or jagged lines. Avoid the use of bold formatting and heavy lines. Figure text should be in Helvetica or Arial or comparable sans-serif font. Make sure all text is of sufficient size to be legible, but no larger than 10-point size. Figure captions should be provided for all figures. 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.,  $P$ ,  $r^2$ , etc.). In addition to any figures within the manuscript, provide each figure as a separate, high-quality, high-resolution (at least 600 dpi for grayscale, 350 dpi for color) digital file (jpg, tif, pdf).

<< **Figure 4 near here** >>

## Tables

Tables should be called out in the text and numbered as with figures. They can also be placed either at the appropriate place in the document or at the end before any figures (with the same sort of indicator line as above). Tables should be created and formatted as Microsoft Word tables or as simple rows of single-tab delimited text (never with long series of spaces). Very long tables are discouraged, and all tables must fit, in portrait mode only, within the margins on your manuscript page—with all table text at 10-point Times New Roman. Tables created in Excel

should be copied and pasted into the Word file, rather than placed by choosing “insert ... object.” Tables submitted as graphics that cannot be edited will be returned for re-submission. Tables should include a minimum of horizontal lines (top, bottom, between column headers and data) and no vertical lines. For column headings and entries within table cells, capitalize the first letter of the first word and proper names.

## **Literature Cited**

References are listed in alphabetical order. Set the paragraph format in Word to single-spaced, 0 points before, 6 points after, and a 0.25-inch hanging indent. There should be only a single line return at the end of each citation and no use of tabs or series of spaces. Use the same 12-point font as the text. The following examples should be carefully reviewed. Please note the sequence of information, use of italics, capital vs. lower case letters, initials, the use of spaces, parentheses, abbreviations, use of en-dashes vs. hyphens, use of capital letters for book titles, use of lower case letters for journal article titles, use of full journal names (except for “The” at the beginning) rather than abbreviations, etc. In particular, only the first author’s surname precedes his/her initials—for all other authors and for all 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. Our policy is to require the use of serial commas (or Oxford commas) before the conjunction in a series of items, and there should be a comma after the first author’s name even when there are only 2. Note the following examples for different types of citations:

### Journal articles:

Brodie, E.D., Jr., M. Barnes, and E.D. Brodie III. 1980. Differential avoidance of mimetic salamanders by free-ranging birds: The effect of temperature. *Science* 208:181–182.

Varghese, H.K., J. Miksis-Olds, N. DiMarzio, K. Lowell, E. Linder, and L. Mayer. In press. Foraging behavior of Cuvier’s beaked whales (*Ziphius cavirostris*) during a 12-kHz multibeam ocean mapping survey off southern California. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*.

### Book:

Raithel, C.J. 2019. *Amphibians of Rhode Island*. Rhode Island Dept. of Environmental Management, Division of Fish & Wildlife, Providence, RI.

### Chapter in a book or paper in a proceedings:

August, P.V., R.D. Kenney, and T.P. Husband. 2001. Mammals. Pp. 60–66 in: P.V. August, L. Gould, R. Enser, and H. Ginsberg (eds). *Vertebrates of Rhode Island. The Biota of Rhode Island*, Vol. 2. Rhode Island Natural History Survey, Kingston, RI.

### Dissertation or Thesis:

Smith, J.B. 1941. The pine forests of North America. Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Georgia, Athens, GA.

### Report:

Lucas, T., G.S. Delittle III, P. Russel, and Y.-C. Lee. 2012. The herpetological diversity of Lower Falls Management Area. Special Technical Report DNR-2012-27. South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, Charleston, SC.

### Online source:

NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration). 2000. Gulf of Mexico current data: 1990–1999. <http://www.noaa.gov/gulfmexico/currents>. Accessed 14 February 2020.

*Misc. reference tips.* References are sorted alphabetically by first author. For multiple references by the same first author, the order should be (1) single-author papers by year, (2) 2-author papers alphabetically by the second author’s surname and then by year, (3) 3+-author papers strictly by year without regard for other authors’ names. If author names are identical for multiple references, repeat names of authors rather than using an underscore. All authors’ names should be given, no matter how many. When the author is an agency (as in the NOAA example), it is clearer and more concise to cite in the text using the acronym and to include the acronym followed by the full name in parentheses in the Literature Cited. Note that prefixes such as Jr., Sr., III, etc. apply to the given name, not the surname (note the first journal example above). For titles that have a colon, always capitalize the first letter of the first word after the colon. 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.

*Use and acknowledgment of unpublished data.* Authors should have written permission (from the original source) for any use of unpublished data that are 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, Río Piedras, Puerto Rico, unpubl. data). Personal communications should be cited in the text in the same fashion, including affiliation.

### **Miscellaneous style requirements**

Do not use double spaces between sentences. You can always be safe by running a global find-and-replace of all double spaces with singles, then repeating it to catch any triple spaces.

Do not italicize i.e., e.g., or et al.; always use commas after e.g., or i.e., but there is no comma between the author and et al. in a citation.

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

As specified in the Literature Cited format, always use a serial comma before the word “and” in a list of three or more items—e.g., item 1, item 2, and item 3.

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

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

“Data” is the plural of “datum” and must be used as a plural noun at all times.

Use metric units (with English units in parentheses when necessary). Abbreviate units (e.g., m, g, km). Define any non-standard unit abbreviations at first use.

Define acronyms and abbreviations at first usage (but only if used again). It is not always necessary to define RINHS, RIDEM, or URI; you can presume that our readers will recognize those. Do not use postal abbreviations for state names (RI, MA, CT, etc.) in the text; spell out the names in full.

All dates should be given in the DD Month YYYY format with no comma—e.g., 24 August 1988. Times should be written in 24-hr formats without AM or PM, and with the time zone specified.

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

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  $\pm$   $\leq$   $\geq$  [find them in the Insert Symbol menu in Word] rather than an underlined + < >). Statistical symbols (e.g., *P*,  $r^2$ , *SD*, *d.f.*, *n*, etc.) should be italicized.

Use minute and second marks rather than single and double quotes for geographic coordinates, and the degree symbol rather than a superscripted lower-case o, e.g., 42°51'36"N, 112°25'45"W (all also in the Insert Symbol menu). Do not use the GIS convention of negative numbers for West longitudes.

When presenting a range of numbers, dates, etc., use en-dashes (with no spaces) rather than hyphens. This includes the page numbers in references. The key sequence to type an en-dash in Word varies between different keyboard layouts.

When preceding a range of numbers with a word like “from” or “between,” spell out the intervening word in the range and do not use either a hyphen or dash (e.g., not “from 1948–1955” or “between April-September,” but “from 1948 to 1955” or “between April and September”).

Neither en-dashes nor hyphens are appropriate as punctuation in a sentence where a colon or em-dash (the really long one) might be used—e.g., this example here in this very line (note there are no spaces with it).

Compound modifiers (two words used together like an adjective to modify another word) should be hyphenated (e.g., low-frequency sounds). A number and unit used together as a compound modifier also should be hyphenated, e.g., “35-mm camera” or “1000-m isobath,” but not “water depth of 1,000 m.”