



NatSCA Notes & Comments: Guidelines for authors

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Aims and scope

NatSCA Notes & Comments are occasional articles that are published online. They are more formal than blog posts, but can be less structured and formal than *Journal* articles. They can include case studies, conference reports, editorials, book reviews, etc. *Notes & Comments* are not peer reviewed, but should be fully referenced.

Copyright

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Preparing your manuscript

Manuscript length will vary, depending on the type of article. A length of between 500 and 6,000 words is recommended.

Title

The title should concisely describe the nature of the article, and should not include abbreviations.

Authors

List all authors and their institutional affiliations, using numerical superscript where necessary to clearly indicate the relationships between names and institutions.

One author must be designated as the corresponding author, and their full postal address and email address listed. This person is the primary contact for the Editor and readers.

Abstract

The abstract should concisely summarise the article, in no more than 300 words. If you are unsure what should be included, please see this guide to writing an effective abstract:

http://www.adelaide.edu.au/writingcentre/learning_guides/learningGuide_writingAnAbstract.pdf

Keywords

Provide up to ten specific keywords, separated by commas. Please keep online search engines in mind; effective keywords will increase the findability of your article.

Main body

Articles should be divided into clearly labelled sections, with appropriate headings.

The *Journal* can accommodate up to three levels of headings, to be formatted as follows:

- Heading: Bold text, left-aligned, only initial word and proper nouns capitalised, no full-stop.
- Sub-heading: Italic text, left aligned, only first word and proper nouns capitalised, no full-stop.
- Sub-sub-heading: Regular text, left aligned and indented with a single tab, only first word and proper nouns capitalised, no full-stop.

Acknowledgements

Include Acknowledgements after the main text, and before References. Any individuals or organisations who contributed to the research or preparation of the manuscript should be acknowledged. All sources of funding and/or conflicting interests should also be declared here (see [Conflicts of interest and funding](#)).

References

The Journal uses the Harvard referencing system. All sources should be cited within the text and included in the reference list. This includes websites, archival documents, and personal communications.

Please follow the formatting in the Anglia Ruskin University Library's '*Guide to Harvard style of Referencing*' (<http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/harvard.htm>).

Footnotes are not accepted.

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Appendices

Appendices may be included, containing tables or figures too large to fit in the main body of the manuscript, raw data tables, or supplementary information. Appendices should be clearly labelled, using consecutive Roman numerals. Appendices should be referred to in brackets within the text, e.g. '(see Appendix I)'.

Style and language

All articles should be written in UK Standard English, in language that is accessible to a wide audience. Technical terms should be explained. If English is not your first language and you feel your manuscript would benefit from proof-reading, please contact the Editor (editor@natsca.org) for assistance.

A standard sans-serif font should be used (e.g. Arial, Calibri), at a size of 10-12 point. Formatting is largely unimportant, as this will be standardised during the layout stage prior to publication.

Abbreviations should be written out in full on first use. Thereafter, the abbreviation can be used in place of the full name, e.g. 'Natural Sciences Collections Association (NatSCA)' on first use, followed by 'NatSCA' thereafter.

Scientific names should be in italics. Genus and species should be used in the title and on first use within the text (e.g. *Homo sapiens*). Thereafter, the genus name can be abbreviated (e.g. *H. sapiens*), provided this won't cause confusion with other genera.

The International System of Units (SI units) should be used throughout. Where other types of measurement are necessary, include their SI equivalent in brackets.

Specimen citation

All museum specimens referred to should be cited with their accession number, prefixed by the unique five-letter MDA Code that identifies the institution (or the local equivalent, for non-UK collections). Example: LDHRN-NH.H.44 refers to the taxidermy walrus (NH.H.44) held at the Horniman Museum and Gardens (LDHRN).

Please also identify all holding institutions and their MDA codes (or equivalents), either within the body of the text or in a list (e.g. 'Specimens used in this study are held at the following institutions: Horniman Museum and Gardens (LDHRN), Oxford University Museum of Natural History (OXFUM), and Hunterian Museum (GLAHM).')

If you are unsure what the relevant MDA code is, the complete list for UK institutions is available here: <http://collectionstrust.org.uk/mdacodes/>.

Images and figures

Images should be submitted as separate files (not embedded within the text), in .tif or .jpg format. Files must be of a suitable resolution for print (300dpi/ppi), and named in the following format:

[Surname][year][Figure number] (e.g. 'Smith2017Fig1.jpg').

Captions should be included in the text, to indicate where the figure should be placed. Tables, graphs, and charts can be embedded within the text. Captions should be written in the following style:

Figure 1. Brief sentence describing figure.

Table 1. Brief sentence describing contents of table.

The *Journal* is printed in black and white. All figures should be easily viewable in this format. A full-colour PDF version will be made available online.

Large files can be sent to the Editor using a file-sharing application such as Dropbox, or via Google Drive.

Please also see the [Copyright](#) section for information on attribution of images and figures.

Submitting your manuscript

Manuscripts can be submitted at any time, as *Notes & Comments* is published throughout the year.

All manuscripts should be submitted as Microsoft Word-compatible files (.doc, .docx, or similar) via email (editor@natsca.org).

The manuscript will be proof-read by the editorial team, and edited for clarity and conciseness if necessary. The Editor will make the final decision on whether to publish the article, and might ask the author to make revisions or suggest that the manuscript is better suited to one of [our other publications](#).

Accepted articles will be laid out in house style using professional typesetting software. A proof copy of the final article will be sent to the corresponding author for approval, prior to publication. All authors must proof-read the article and return any comments/corrections by the given deadline.

Please note that NatSCA does not charge manuscript processing fees, and cannot offer payment for submissions.

Authorship

The list of authors should include anyone who meets the following criteria (based on the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) [guidelines](#)):

1. Substantial contributions to design, collection of data, or analysis and interpretation of data.
2. Drafting or revising the article critically.
3. Final approval of the version to be published.
4. Accountability for accuracy and integrity of all aspects of the work.

Contributors who do not meet all four criteria should be included in the Acknowledgements section and not identified as an author.

If changes to the author list are required, or if improper conduct regarding authorship is suspected, please contact the Editor (editor@natsca.org), who will follow the [appropriate procedure](#).

Conflicts of interest and funding

Conflicts of interest may occur when an author, their employer, institution, or an affiliated person:

- a) has interests in the publication of a manuscript that could cause them to gain or lose financially.
- b) has personal relationships that could influence or bias the authors' opinions.

Any conflicting or financial interests must be declared in Acknowledgements.

Any sources of funding that have contributed to the research/project, or production of the manuscript, must also be declared in Acknowledgements.

If anyone suspects that an undeclared conflict of interest exists, they should contact the Editor (editor@natsca.org), who will investigate using the [appropriate procedure](#).

Plagiarism

Authors must ensure that all sources of information used in the preparation of their manuscript are fully disclosed and properly referenced. All work submitted to *NatSCA Notes & Comments* must be original. Authors must not copy, in whole or in part, the work of any other person (published or unpublished).

Duplicate publication (publication of multiple papers using the same content) is not allowed. It is also unethical to submit the same article to a second journal while it is under consideration by another (parallel submission).

If any person suspects that a published article contains plagiarised material, please contact the Editor (editor@natsca.org), who will investigate following the [appropriate procedure](#).

Corrections and retractions

The Editor will issue a correction if a small portion of a publication is found to contain misleading information/data (especially if this is the result of an honest error), or if the author list is incorrect/incomplete.

The Editor will consider retracting a publication if:

- there is evidence that the data or main findings are unreliable or seriously flawed,
- material has been duplicated from an article already published elsewhere, without proper referencing or permission (redundant publishing),

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- it contains plagiarised material, or
- it reports research or practices that are unethical.

If errors, misconduct, plagiarism, or unethical practices are suspected, please contact the Editor (editor@natsca.org), who will investigate using these [guidelines](#). If necessary, a correction or retraction will be made. Retractions can be made by the author(s) or the Editor.

Appeals and complaints

Appeals

If an author feels that a decision made regarding their submission was unfair, they should appeal to the Editor (editor@natsca.org) as soon as possible.

The Editor will review the appeal and all related documentation. They may consult the Editorial Board, and/or refer the manuscript to new reviewers. The Editor's decision is final.

Complaints

Complaints about the policies and procedures of *Notes & Comments* or conduct of the editorial team should be made to the Editor (editor@natsca.org). All complaints will be acknowledged and addressed as quickly as possible.

Complaints about a member of the editorial team will be referred to the Editorial Board, and the editorial team will not be involved.