

South African Journal of Botany

Instructions to Authors

Editorial policy: The Journal will publish the following types of articles in the field of Botany: *Research articles:* All contributions must be based on original research, must not be under consideration for publication elsewhere, and should constitute a definite advance in knowledge in that field. The manuscript should usually (a) state a problem or hypothesis, (b) describe how reproducible data was obtained to answer the problem or test the hypothesis, and (c) come to a conclusion. (The fact that nobody has ever looked at an aspect such as the chemical composition or morphology or species composition or any other aspect of a plant or group of plants will not qualify a manuscript on that topic for publication unless it leads to a significant advance in our scientific knowledge.) *Short communications:* The same requirements as for research articles apply, but short research articles should contain new and meaningful results which warrant urgent publication and which may appear in a more comprehensive article at a later stage. *Review articles:* These will be accepted if the reviewer summarizes and critically evaluates the data of other workers and (a) comes to new conclusions regarding the problems investigated or (b) indicates a gap in our knowledge, which requires additional research. Contributors are advised to send the Scientific Editor an outline before writing a review paper. *Book reviews:* Concise objective evaluation of books which have recently been published will be solicited by the Scientific Editor. *Letters to the Editor:* Criticism or comments on any articles that have recently appeared in the *S. Afr. J. Bot.* will be published at the discretion of the Scientific Editor.

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All papers will be critically reviewed by two or more referees on whose advice the Editorial Committee will accept or reject contributions. All refereeing is strictly confidential.

Authors should quote manuscript numbers in all correspondence and should note that, due to storage problems, the manuscript may be destroyed 12 months after the article has been published. If authors want their original drawings back they should indicate this in a letter accompanying the final manuscript or contact the Copy-Editor directly not later than six months after publication.

Presentation: Contributions must be written in English. Manuscripts must be typed on A4 paper, using one-and-a-half or double spacing, with a 30-mm margin on the left side. Care should be taken that a type is used where letters do not touch each other, as final manuscripts are read by an optical scanner. Underlining that touches the letters should also be avoided – words should rather be typed in italics. Four clear copies must be submitted. *If the article was originated on a computer, please also supply a copy of the diskette when the final revision is submitted. The program used should be indicated on the diskette itself, together with the manuscript number of the article.* Photographs must be submitted in quadruplicate. In the case of line drawings the original plus three clear photocopies will suffice. The original set should be marked as such.

The lay-out should conform to the following sequence: Title page with title, author's name(s), address(es), both abstracts, keywords, and then, beginning on a new page, Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Acknowledgements and References. Tables (each on a separate page), captions for figures (grouped together) and the figures should then follow. In the case of a short communication, no headings other than Acknowledgements and References should be used. All pages must be numbered consecutively, including the title page and those containing references, tables and captions for figures.

Title: This should be as concise as possible and appropriately informative for retrieval by modern searching techniques. Except in the case of certain taxonomic papers, the names of taxa should be used without author citations.

Author(s): Names should be preceded by initials only, but in some cases one first name may be given. The initials should then be given at the bottom of the page, to be used in the contents list. Should an author's address have changed since the research was carried out, the new address must be given as a footnote.

Abstracts: All articles must contain an abstract which should be a concise summary of the article in not more than 200 words. The title should not be repeated. Abstracts should only contain information appearing in the paper. Names of taxa together with their author citation should appear in the abstract unless there are too many in which case only the important taxa should be mentioned.

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Introduction: The introduction should outline the problem in general and make clear the object of the work reported. References to previous work are permissible only if they bear directly on the subject of the article or point to the need for further investigation. A detailed and extensive review of the literature is usually inappropriate.

Procedures or Methods: These should be described briefly but in sufficient detail to allow repetition of the work. It is frequently important to mention the source of materials used, especially of living organisms. Accepted nomenclature and abbreviations may be used for standard methods, chemical compounds, hormones, enzymes, etc. A reference is sufficient for a previously described method unless the principle involved is not self-evident, in which case it should be indicated.

Results: The main results should be stated in the text, with references to any tables, diagrams or illustrations where the supporting evidence is to be found. The same applies to any special features or incidental results considered to be of interest. It is not necessary to describe the contents of tables in the text.

Discussion or Conclusions: These headings are sometimes not needed. The

second is appropriate when the conclusions from the work can be conveyed in a few sentences. Under the first heading, the principal results should be critically discussed in logical order and the conclusions from them should be stated; results that suggest new lines of study should be pointed out; attention may be drawn to the implications of the results and to agreements or disagreements with previous work. The Discussion should not consist merely of a repetition in a different order of the contents of preceding sections.

Acknowledgements: Acknowledgements should be kept to the minimum compatible with the requirements of courtesy.

References: References in the text should be cited as follows 'Jones and Mitchell (1974) stated ...' or '... (Jones & Mitchell 1974)', when giving a reference simply as authority for a statement. Use the name of the first author followed by *et al.* when the complete citation involves more than two authors. A list of publications to which reference has been made in the text must be presented alphabetically according to authors' names and chronologically under each author, with a, b, c, etc. when more than one reference per year from the same author(s) is involved. A personal communication must be confined to the text and not be included in the list of references. In the list, authors' names should be typed in capitals as indicated below. Only the abbreviated titles of journals following the latest edition of the *World List of Scientific Periodicals*, written in italics, must be given. Latin names should also be given in italics. Examples:

CODD, L.E. 1975. *Plectranthus* (Labiatae) and allied genera in southern Africa. *Bothalia* 11: 371–442.

JONES, E.P., SMITH, P. & MASTERS, Q. 1974. Methods in photosynthesis. In: *Methods in plant physiology*, ed. J.P. Sykes, 2nd edn, Vol. II, Ch. 8, pp. 335–339. Longman, London.

VILJOEN, P.J.C. 1953. The embryology of some weed species. M.Sc. thesis, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.

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General: The complete scientific name (genus, species, authors) must be cited for every organism at the first mention in the text and if at all possible, authors (including those reporting on experimental results) should refer to a voucher herbarium specimen of the plant(s) concerned in a registered herbarium. The generic name may thereafter be abbreviated to the initial except where intervening references to other genera with the same initial could cause confusion. Scientific names of genera, species and subspecific categories should be typed in italics. Names of taxa above generic level are not italicized. Only S.I. metric units with their multiples and submultiples may be used, as well as those units generally used together with the S.I. units (e.g. l, ml, h, min). Footnotes should be avoided as far as possible by using parentheses in the main text.

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