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1. Guidelines for authors

Checklist to avoid common mistakes

- **Does your paper test the effectiveness of a conservation intervention?**
- **Is the intervention described in detail?**
- **Is there a comparison with a control or previous situation?**
- **Have you checked the evidence for the intervention(s) at www.conservationevidence.com?**
- **Have you presented data as a table if possible?**
- **Does your paper have Summary, Background, Action and Consequences sections?**
- **Are the references presented in our required format?**

The aim of *Conservation Evidence* is to share the global experience of those in the front line of conservation practice on the effectiveness of conservation interventions. We welcome case studies on all aspects of species and habitat management such as habitat creation, habitat restoration, translocations, reintroductions, invasive species control, integrated conservation development programmes, changing attitudes and education. We welcome studies from anywhere around the world.

Examining the consequences of small interventions, such as changing the wording on a sign or comparing different techniques for eradicating an invasive species, is of considerable interest. The changes have to be quantified. There has to be some comparison, such as with the earlier situation or with control sites. We particularly welcome accounts where the outcomes were unexpected and not as desired. Broad programmes, such as a large conservation project with multiple interventions will usually be of less interest. We do not include studies solely reporting monitoring methods, species ecology or threats to biodiversity.

We do not charge for publication and all our papers are open access. This allows the research we publish to be freely and easily available, and exchanged within the practitioner community.

Criteria for publication

- Papers must include a conservation intervention with appropriate monitoring to evaluate the consequences of the intervention. Please do not use terms such as 'success', as this is subjective.
- Papers must be written by, or in partnership with, those who carried out the conservation work. We do not accept commentaries on work carried out by others.
- Papers should be succinct, ideally focused on a single management action and its consequences. Please distinguish clearly between speculation and fact. We are mainly interested in what was done and what happened rather than extensive thoughts on what works and what doesn't.
- The results of the paper must not have been published elsewhere (i.e. in another scientific journal).

- Do any photographs contribute to understanding (for example, by showing the design of a construction or the habitat after management)?
- Check the existing evidence for your intervention at www.conservationevidence.com, ideally before undertaking any management action.
 - If relevant evidence is available then give a sentence summarising this evidence in your introduction e.g. Four out of five previous studies found that increasing temperatures to 30-37 °C for at least 16 h cured amphibians of chytridiomycosis (Smith *et al.* 2017¹).
 - If Conservation Evidence states that it has not found any evidence for the action, please state this.
 - If Conservation Evidence has not yet summarised the evidence for the management action, please search for [individual studies](#) testing the action, and summarise any relevant evidence in a sentence.
 - If Conservation Evidence does not yet cover the topic and no individual studies exist please state this; you may if you wish briefly reference other relevant literature, but this is not essential.

Editorial process

Papers are reviewed by an Editor in Chief and, if considered broadly acceptable, assigned to a member of the Editorial Board. Each paper will thus be reviewed by two conservation biologists who may seek further opinions as necessary. If the paper is considered broadly acceptable for publication, it will be returned to the author with editorial comments and suggested track changes.

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¹ Smith R.K., Meredith H. & Sutherland W.J. (2017) Amphibian Conservation. Pages 9-65 in: W.J. Sutherland, L.V. Dicks, N. Ockendon & R.K. Smith (eds) *What Works in Conservation 2017*. Open Book Publishers, Cambridge, UK.

2. Preparation of the manuscript

a. Standard paper

Manuscript length is normally limited to 8 printed pages and we welcome much shorter pieces (see Short Communications). Please submit the paper as a Word document (text aligned left; single line spacing; font Times New Roman, size 12) and use the following structure: A formatted template article is available to download from the [journal webpage](#).

1. **Title:** Include the type of intervention, the species or habitat involved, the location and country.
2. **Author(s):** Provide the first name followed by initials and surname (e.g. John A. Smith and Jenny B. Jones) and postal addresses of all authors of the paper. Add an e-mail address for the corresponding author.
3. **Organisation(s):** Provide the name of the organisation for each author.
4. **Summary:** Please briefly summarise the main findings of the study in 150-250 words. Conclusions should be included here.
5. **Background:** Give a brief history of the reason for undertaking the work or action. Explain the problem and the focus of your management. Summarise the existing evidence, if any, for the action you have undertaken (by searching www.conservationevidence.com). There is no need for an extensive literature review. Briefly describe the study site.
6. **Action:** Please give full details (with exact dates if possible) of what you did, and when and how the monitoring was undertaken. Be as precise as possible so that others can follow your actions or adapt to fit their specific needs. It may be appropriate to describe the weather, even if typical it may still be useful to say so, or anything unusual that may have influenced the outcome of the management. By providing this information, if there are differences in responses across similar interventions reported in different studies, then it is possible to start considering why. A breakdown of the time taken and cost incurred would also be useful.
7. **Consequences:** This is the results section that describes what happened. Please give full details, including any problems encountered, such as deleterious impacts on other species.
8. **Discussion:** Briefly consider the implications of this work.
9. **Acknowledgements:** As appropriate. Please include the source of funding.
10. **Tables and figures:** We welcome tables and graphs showing results, and appropriate figures and photographs. These should all be included in the document. Tables should be created within Word, not pasted in as a graphic. Please do not use horizontal lines in graphs. Photos should be placed after the text. Include photos that illustrate the management work and/or its outcomes, or photos relevant to the monitoring of effects. Do not include photos solely of the study species.
11. **References:** See below for styles. We do not require an extensive reference list, and suggest a maximum of 10-15 references for a standard manuscript.

b. Short communications

Manuscript length must be a maximum of one page (including figure/table/photo, references etc). This means fewer than 1,000 words (including title, authors, addresses, references) - a figure/table/photo will take the space of a few paragraphs and so words will need to be reduced accordingly (to fit on one page). For example, with a typical size figure the word limit would be about 700. Please submit the paper as a Word document (text aligned left; single line spacing; font Times New Roman, size 10) and use the following structure:

1. **Title:** Include the type of intervention, the species or habitat involved, the location and country.
2. **Author(s):** Provide the first name followed by initials and surname (e.g. John A. Smith and Jenny B. Jones) and postal addresses of all authors of the paper. Add an e-mail address for the corresponding author.
3. **Organisation(s):** Provide the name of the organisation for each author.
4. **Summary:** Please summarise the intervention and main findings of the study in one sentence. Text should follow on directly from heading, i.e.:
Summary: A study in 2013 of
5. **Background:** Give a brief history of the reason for undertaking the work or action including the problem and the focus of your management. Briefly describe the study site. Text should follow on directly from heading. Summarise the existing evidence, if any, for the action you have undertaken (by searching www.conservationevidence.com).
6. **Action:** Please give full details (with exact dates if possible) of what you did, and when and how the monitoring was undertaken. Be as precise as possible so that others can follow your actions or adapt to fit their specific needs. It may be appropriate to describe the weather or anything unusual that may have influenced the outcome of the management. By providing this information, if there are differences in responses across similar interventions reported in different studies, then it is possible to start considering why. A breakdown of the time taken and cost incurred would also be useful. Text should follow on directly from heading.
7. **Consequences & discussion:** This is the results section that describes what happened. Please give full details, including any problems encountered, such as deleterious impacts on other species. Then briefly consider the implications of this work. Text should follow on directly from heading.
8. **Acknowledgements:** Optional. If included please state the source of funding.
9. **Tables and figures:** A table or graph showing results, or an appropriate figure or photograph can be included (within the one page limit). These can be full page or ideally column width (8.5 cm). These should be included in the document. Tables should be created within Word, not pasted in as a graphic. Please do not use horizontal lines in graphs. Include photos that illustrate the management work and/or its outcomes, or photos relevant to the monitoring of effects. Do not include photos solely of the study species.
10. **References:** Optional. See below for styles.

3. Reference styles for Conservation Evidence

Journal article (volume numbers in **bold**)

Pykala J. (2005) Plant species responses to cattle grazing in mesic semi-natural grassland. *Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment*, **108**, 109-117.

Ortiz-Catedral L. & Brunton D. H. (2009) Nesting sites and nesting success of reintroduced red-crowned parakeets (*Cyanoramphus novaezelandiae*) on Tiritiri Matangi Island, New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Zoology*, **36**, 1-10.

Martínez-Ávalos J.G., Golubov J., Mandujano M.C. & Jurado E. (2007) Causes of individual mortality in the endangered star cactus *Astrophytum asterias* (Cactaceae): the effect of herbivores and disease in Mexican populations. *Journal of Arid Environments*, **71**, 250-258.

Report

Pywell R., Hulmes L., Meek W. & Nowakowski M. (2008) *Creation and Management of Pollen and Nectar Habitats on Farmland: Annual report 2007/8*. NERC report 6443.

PhD thesis

Smith D.W. (2006) Managing agri-environment grass fields and margins for Orthoptera and farmland birds. PhD thesis. University of Reading.

Book

Astuti R. (1995) *People of the Sea: Identity and Descent among the Vevo of Madagascar*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Book chapter

Pilgrim E.S., Potts S.G., Vickery J., Parkinson A.E., Woodcock B.A., Holt C., Gundrey A.L., Ramsay A.J., Atkinson P., Fuller R. & Tallwin J.R.B. (2007) Enhancing wildlife in the margins of intensively managed grass fields. Pages 293-296 in: J. J. Hopkins, A. J. Duncan, D. I. McCracken, S. Peel & J. R. B. Tallwin (eds.) *High Value Grassland: Providing Biodiversity, a Clean Environment and Premium Products*. British Grassland Society Occasional Symposium No.38, British Grassland Society (BGS), Reading.

Citation of an internet link

Forest Agency (2010) Managed woodland data and calculations. <http://www.internetaddresshere.com> (accessed 21 March 2013).

NB. Date only required for pages on which contents change.

In-text citation

Do not use commas between author and year. Use ampersand (&) for multiple authors, and *et al.* if three or more. Order list chronologically, oldest citation first.

Can be author (year) or (author year) depending on context. For example: Berry yield (Croxtton & Sparks 2002) and species richness of plants (McAdam *et al.* 1994, Marshall *et al.* 2001, Moonen & Marshall 2001) have been shown to increase under hedge management regimes designed to benefit wildlife.

4. Points of style

Acronyms/Abbreviations

Avoid using acronyms and abbreviations.

Time

Use 24 hour clock, add an 'h' e.g. Sampling began at 13:50 h.

Species names

- Include common name first where possible, follow with full Latin name, but not authorities, at the first usage. No need to bracket the Latin name, just place it in the text after the common name without a comma like this: honey bees *Apis mellifera* sting bears *Ursus arctos horribilis*. If you are using the generic name only to denote a group of species, use spp.
- Do not give common names capital letters unless they include a proper noun. For example, the Sichuan wood owl (not Sichuan Wood Owl).
- Use common names for groups or families, and include the Latin name in brackets at the first mention only. Talk about ground beetles (Carabidae), or butterflies and moths (Lepidoptera). Do not use nouns based on Latin, such as carabid, and staphylinid.

Apostrophes

Avoid apostrophes. Use 'did not' rather than 'didn't'.

Capital letters

Titles should have a single capital at the start. Do not use a capital after a colon or semi-colon in the title or in any sentence.

Dates

- Use: 7 August 2003.
- For a range of years, use hyphen and full year for each: 1999-2007.
- Avoid from 1947-50, instead use 'in 1947-50' or 'from 1947 to 1950'.
- Avoid 'between 1961-65', instead use 'in 1961-65', 'between 1961 and 1965' or 'from 1961 to 1965'.
- Use '1993-1994' not '1993/1994', even for the winter of 1993-1994.

Countries

- It's alright to use abbreviations such as 'UK' and 'USA'.
- Use UK rather than individual UK countries i.e. England, Scotland, Wales, N Ireland.

Numbers

- Use commas in four figure or higher numbers e.g. '1,250'.
- Use words for numbers one to nine, and digits for numbers 10 or larger.
- For opening a sentence, always use words not digits: 'Fifty-five samples were taken every 16 weeks for two years'.
- If numbers are preceded by a hyphen, use digits not words e.g. 'a 2-year-old site'.
- If numbers have a unit attached, use digits not words e.g. '2 km'. Leave a space between the digit and the unit.
- Use words not digits where this is needed for clarity. For example, to describe 12 6 x 6 m plots, write 'twelve 6 x 6 m plots'.
- Numbers in brackets follow the same rules, unless single figure digits are part of a quoted result, or have decimal places.

- Where possible, round numbers such as percentages and averages to whole integers, avoiding unwarranted precision. However, if decimal places are required to demonstrate differences of small magnitude, try to stick to one decimal place.
- Refer to 'average' rather than 'mean'.
- When quoting a range of numbers, do not leave spaces around the hyphen. Write '16-25', not '16 - 25'.

Statistics

- Include spaces either side of '<' or '='.
- P values should be denoted with a lowercase 'p'.
- No italics
- Use 'n' for sample size
- For degrees of freedom use 'd.f.'

Units

- Use 'Insects/site' or 'birds/m' not 'insects per site'.
- Put a space between number and unit e.g. The ditch was '15 m long', not '15m long'.

Percentage

- Use '%', not 'per cent', unless opening a sentence.
- Use '5%', not '5 %' i.e. no space after the number.
- If at the start of a sentence, use words, e.g. 'Thirty-five per cent of caterpillars died'.

Temperature

Use '°C' not 'oc'.

Locations

Where possible, use grid references or latitude and longitude e.g. '54°05'N, 0°49'W'.

Compass points

Directions like 'east, southeast, north and northern' do not generally have capital letters, unless they form the name of a well-known region such as South-East Asia.

5. How to write in plain English

- Put the important messages at the start.
- Write short sentences. Average sentence length should be 15-25 words.
- Stick to one sentence one idea.
- Try to vary the rhythm. Consider some very short two-or three-word sentences. It's easy. And it may keep your reader awake.
- Break the text into small chunks. One paragraph should be used for just one idea or concept.
- Avoid making nouns from verbs. This nominalisation makes writing chunky and boring to read (e.g. protection was intensified, rather than there was an intensification of protection).
- Avoid jargon. If you must use a technical or specialised term, explain its meaning the first time you use it.
- Avoid long words. Ask yourself: is it possible to convey the same meaning with words of fewer syllables that are in common usage?
- Do not be afraid of repetition. Don't use a different word, just to avoid repeating one used in the previous sentence.
- Avoid acronyms.
- Cut out redundant words.
- Use the active rather than the passive voice as much as possible. The species depends upon rather than is dependent upon... This brings the language alive, makes it more immediate.
- Always proof-read a printed version, preferably after a break. Use a pencil to point to the text as you read. This will stop your brain from seeing what it wants to see, rather than what is actually there.