

DESCRIPTION

ACTA BIOLÓGICA COLOMBIANA (ABC) is an open access publication. Revision, management, production, printing, and online hosting are financed entirely by the National University of Colombia. The authors and readers are not charged any fees to publish in or access the publication. This journal is published quarterly and shares original and unpublished results of basic and applied research on biological topics, with a special interest in presenting results on Neotropical issues. The manuscripts can be research articles, reviews, reflection papers, or short notes. ABC has scientific and editorial committees composed of national and international researchers whose work is recognized in their areas of specialty.

The first review phase involves the verification that manuscripts meet the journal's publication requirements. If so, each manuscript is assigned to a specialized section editor, who evaluates the scientific merit of the manuscript and determines whether it can be sent for review by academic peers. The reviewers will remain anonymous during the process. If the article is accepted, it will first appear in a pre-printing format on the web. It will later appear in the final online (ISSN 1900-1649) and print (ISSN 0120-548X) versions.

TYPES OF ARTICLES:

Reviews. The majority of reviews will be requested by the editorial committee based on the expertise of the authors on the topic. This type of article relays the current state of knowledge on a particular topic in which the author has an established expertise. The maximum length is 30 pages, double spaced, in the Word file format. Reviews should have at least 50 relevant bibliographical citations, preferably from only the past decade.

Research articles. Research articles are scientific manuscripts that should include a summary, an introduction, materials and methods, results, a discussion, acknowledgements, and a bibliography. A maximum of five figures and/or tables and a maximum of 50 recent and relevant bibliographical citations are allowed.

Reflection paper. Reflection papers are writings in which the authors present a specific position on a particular topic, basing their argument on their own work and the relevant consulted literature. Reflections should contain between 30 and 50 bibliographical references.

Brief notes. Short notes are concise and critical commentaries regarding an original result in a topic, with a maximum of five pages. The text is written as one section, without divisions into introduction, materials and methods, etc. When it is strictly necessary, a maximum of two figures or tables may be included per paper. Short notes contain a maximum of 30 bibliographical citations.

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION

Manuscripts submitted to *Acta Biológica Colombiana* for possible publication should be unpublished (not submitted simultaneously to any other print or digital publication). The authors are responsible for the opinions and ideas declared in the manuscript. The accuracy of the information included in the manuscripts, including figures, tables, and bibliographical citations, is the full responsibility of the author or authors.

For the manuscript to be considered, it must be submitted through the electronic **Submission Form** and fit the topic and formatting instructions of the journal. The submission procedure is performed only through the OJS platform of the journal.

Format. The document should be *A4 letter* sized (8.5" x 11"), double spaced, with 3 cm margins on all four sides and in Times New Roman 12 points font.

Language. Manuscripts are accepted in Spanish and English; the title, summary, and keywords should be provided in both English and Spanish. To increase the dissemination and visibility of results, it is suggested that manuscripts be presented in English.

The title page should include the following:

Title. The title should be concise but informative and not exceed 120 characters including spaces. For scientific names, write the taxonomic family in parenthesis after the name of the species. Do not add species author or year in the title.

Author(s). To maintain a blinded review process, the **Word manuscript should not** have any information about the authors. Author information will only be added in STEP 3 when the online submission takes place. (See **ONLINE SUBMISSION PREPARATION** in this document).

Abstract. The summary includes the main objective of the study, basic procedures (selection of study subjects and methods of observation and analysis), the most important findings (providing specific information or data and statistical significance whenever possible), and main conclusions. The most novel and most relevant observations and aspects should be highlighted. The maximum size is 250 words, and the summary should always be provided in both Spanish and English.

Keywords. A maximum of five key words, which should follow internationally accepted standards used for the purpose of compiling, should be provided. Do not include the title of the study (common and scientific names, concepts, etc.) Keywords should always be given in both English and Spanish and should be arranged alphabetically.

We recommend consulting the following: <http://decses.bvsalud.org/E/homepagee.htm>

For words in Spanish, consult the Scielo database

http://decs.bvs.br/E/DocumentosDeCS_e.htm

For keywords in English, you may consult the National Medicine Library of the United States or similar.

(<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/http://regional.bvsalud.org/php/decsws.php>).

Text.

1. Section titles (ABSTRACT, INTRODUCTION, etc.) must be centered, in all capitals, and bolded. The primary and secondary subtitles should be left-justified and in bold; primary subheadings should be written in all caps, and secondary subheadings should be written with only the first letter capitalized.
2. Statistical terms should always be defined, as should abbreviations and symbols. For units of measure, use the decimal metric system, except in cited texts, and do not use periods after any abbreviation (e.g., mm, m, km, ha, l, etc.). When numbers are not followed by units, whole numbers up to ten should be written out (one, two, ten), and numbers greater than ten should be given as numerals (11, 12, 102). When numbers are used, they should be followed by a symbol, and a space should be left between the two (100 m, 50 mL). Lower case is recommended for symbols and abbreviations; some exceptions include: K for the Kelvin unit of temperature; the A for ampere, units of electric current; M for molar concentration; and the L for liter. No symbol should be expressed in plural; all symbols will be singular (km, m, etc.). For “p” values of statistical significance, the letter *p* should be used in lower case and italics.
3. If your study includes geographical coordinates, they are to be written according to the following abbreviated format: (4°46' N and 75°24' W). To express altitude, the abbreviation m.a.s.l. should be used.
4. **In Spanish language manuscripts, the decimal points will be separated with a comma (,), and in English, a period (.) should be used.**
5. **Scientific names:** Scientific names for taxa must be written in italics. Nomenclature must conform to the rules and recommendations of the pertinent international nomenclature code. The author and year of each taxon will only appear the first time it is mentioned in the manuscript text.

Scientific names are to be written out completely the first time they are used in the text. Subsequently, the genus name should be abbreviated, except when it appears at the beginning of a sentence.

Do not use any type of special lettering within the text. Abbreviations such as sp., nov. sp., spp. should not be italicized. Note that in Spanish, the word “taxón” is written with an accent (plural, taxones); in Latin, the corresponding terms are taxón and taxa.

6. Cite each figure and table in the text according to the order in which it appears using the following format: (Fig. 4) or (Figs. 4 and 5) or (Fig. 3A-3F) or (Table 1.).
7. **Descriptions for new species.** These must be presented in the following order: Species name (according to the stipulations of the pertinent International Nomenclature Code), type of specimen (holotype) with the number of the collection where it is deposited, name of collection, and exact location. Site of collection or capture (country, department/state/province), exact town, latitude, longitude, altitude, date, etc.; isotypes, allotypes, and paratypes (if they exist) along with collection data and location where they are deposited. Name etymology; data regarding its distribution and ecology; comments on its taxonomic neighbors, uses, or other pertinent observations.

INTRODUCTION

This section should state the purpose of the study and summarize the logical grounds used to perform it. Only the most relevant references should be given, and it should not include data or conclusions of the study being published.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Precisely identify all reagents and equipment used (include the name of the manufacturer and the country in parentheses). Describe the procedures used in sufficient detail to allow other professionals to reproduce the study. Include methodology and statistical method references. Provide references and a brief description of methods that are already published but may not be well known. Describe new methods or those that have been substantially changed, and provide reasons for their use while evaluating their limitations.

Authors submitting the revised article should write a short, structured description of the methods used to identify, select, extract, and synthesize the information. When applicable, the authors should describe statistical methods with sufficient detail to allow readers to access original information and verify results. Whenever possible, findings with the appropriate margin of error or reliability (for example, confidence intervals) should be quantified and presented. Avoid relying only on statistical hypothesis tests, such as the use of “p” values, given that these omit important quantitative and qualitative information. Justify the selection of individuals participating in the study, detailing randomization, information about the possible complications of the intervention, number of observations made, and loss of individuals (such as losses in a clinical trial). Whenever possible, references for research design and statistical methods should be from existing studies, rather than from original studies where they were first described. If software was used, indicate and provide reference to the origin and permission for its use.

RESULTS

Results shall be presented in logical order and should highlight or summarize only the most important observations. The information contained in the text should not be repeated in tables and figures.

DISCUSSION

New and relevant aspects of the study should be highlighted. Authors should avoid giving detailed information and other material already provided in the Introduction or Results sections. New hypotheses should be established when clearly justified. When possible, recommendations on the topic studied should be included.

CONCLUSIONS

At least one conclusion paragraph should appear linked with study objectives, and unqualified statements should be avoided unless they are clearly supported by the data. Avoid using lists or loose phrases.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mention financial sources of research projects and/or support received for performing the study (grants, equipment, reagents, etc.). You may name those people who have given intellectual support to the study but whose contributions did not justify co-authorship, and the contribution they provided will be described. For example, “scientific advisement,” “critical review of the research study,” or “data collection.”

REFERENCES

Only use citations that are strictly necessary. Before submitting the manuscript online, **please check that all citations appearing in the text match those presented in this section and that they are correctly entered throughout the manuscript.**

Avoid citing reviews presented at conferences and other meetings. References to studies accepted for publication but not yet published should be shown as “in press,” indicating the name of the journal; the authors should obtain written permission to cite these studies and also have proof that they are accepted for publication. When it is absolutely necessary, unpublished information should appear as “unpublished observations” and always include written consent from those responsible for the information.

To the extent possible, avoid using expressions such as “personal communication” unless the citation provides essential information that cannot be obtained from published sources. In this case, the name of the person and the date of the communication should be listed in parentheses within the text.

In-line citations should be listed as follows:

Surname and initials of the first name of all authors. Order the bibliography alphabetically, beginning with the name of the first author.

One author: Lozano (1995) or (Lozano, 1995)

Two authors: Lozano and Barrera (1994) or (Lozano and Barrera, 1994). To connect the surnames in the case of two authors, use “y” for articles in Spanish and “and” in English. The “&” symbol should not be used.

More than two authors: Lozano *et al.*, (1993) or (Lozano *et al.*, 1993). Place only the surname of the primary author, followed by “*et al.*” (use italics for *et al.*).

Accepted but unpublished articles:

Jones and Smith (in press) or (Jones and Smith, in press).

When several citations are used for the same concept, the citations should be arranged chronologically, and each citation should be separated by a semicolon. When several references in the text are used, they should be cited in chronological order (from the oldest to the newest).

EXAMPLE:

(Clement and Grant, 1990a; Clement and Grant, 1990b; Wang and Morales, 2007; Wang and Morales, 2009; Mena-Segovia *et al.*, 2009; Barroso-Chinea *et al.*, 2011).

REFERENCE FORMAT

References should be organized alphabetically according to the paternal last name of the first author and in chronological order.

Journals

The surname and initials of the first name of all authors should be used and separated by commas (verify that they are correct and in the proper order, as they appear in the original publication). Following the authors names, the format should be as follows: the article title, the journal (abbreviated without periods), the year; volume (number or issue): pages. (NO SPACES).

If a publication has a digital object identifier (DOI), the respective DOI should be included in the reference.

-All authors are included if there are fewer than six total.

Nilsson S, Arup V, Baranowski R, Ekmons S. Tree-Dependent Lichens and Beetles as Indicators in Conservation Forest. *Conserv Biol.* 1994;9(5):1208-1215. Doi:

-For more than six authors: include up to six primary authors and then write *et al.*

Journal abbreviation titles should be written according to the style used by the NCBI journal database: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?CMD=search&DB=journals>

Abbreviated titles for scientific journals are also available at: ISI Journal Title Abbreviations, Web of Science Help, and Journal Title Abbreviations Caltech Library.

SAMPLES:

ACTA BOTANICA MEXICANA is abbreviated Acta Bot Mex. (period only at the end)

JOURNAL OF TROPICAL ECOLOGY is abbreviated J Trop Ecol.

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN OIL CHEMISTS SOCIETY is abbreviated J Am Oil Chem Soc.

Books and other monographs

Book authors

Darnell J, Lodish H, Baltimore D. Biología celular y molecular. 5 ed. Barcelona: Editorial Labor S.A.; 1988. p. 255-256.

Note. **Include the exact number of pages consulted.** If an entire book was consulted, please indicate the total page number.

Sample:

p. 111 (only page 111 was consulted).

p. 106-111 (pages 106 to 111 were consulted)

111 p. (111 pages were consulted, corresponding to the entire book).

Editor(s) and Compiler(s) as authors

Pankhurst C, Doube BM, Gupta VV, editors. Biological Indicators or Soil Health. New York: CAB Internacional; 1997. p. 14-18

Organization as author and editor

FUNDACIÓN NATURA. Comprehensive plan for biological conservation and sustainable development in the municipality of Encino, Santander. Encino: Fundación Natura, Municipal Government of Encino; 2000. p. 26-29.

Authors of a book chapter

Jones C, Mcshea WJ, Conroy MJ, Kunz TH. Capturing Mammals. In: Wilson DE, Cole FR, Nichols JD, Rudran R, Foster MS, editor(s). *Measuring and Monitoring Biological Diversity: Standard Methods for Mammals*. Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press; 1996. p. 53-78.

Note: For book chapters, the publisher and city of publication should always be listed.

Doctoral Dissertation (or similar)

Becerra MT. Influencia del disturbio antrópico sobre las comunidades de pequeños mamíferos de bosque seco tropical [Influence of anthropogenic disturbance on the communities of small mammals of the dry tropical forest] (master's thesis). Bogotá: Biology Department, School of Science, National University of Colombia; 1999. p. 78-96 or 96 p. (according to each case)

Dictionaries and similar reference works

Stedman's Medical Dictionary. 26th ed. Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins; 1995. Apraxia; p. 119-20.

Maps

Life zones or vegetation formations of Colombia, [vegetation map]. Agustín Codazzi Geographical Institute, Agricultural Branch; 1977.

Unpublished material

In press

Leshner AI. Molecular Mechanisms of Cocaine Addiction. *N Engl J Med*. In press. 2014. Doi:

Electronic material

Journal article in electronic format

Morse SS. Factors in the Emergence of Infectious Diseases. *Emerg Infect Dis* [serial online] 1995 Jan-Mar. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/EID/eid.htm>. Cited: 5 Jun 1996.

Computer files

Hemodynamics III: The Ups and Downs of Hemodynamics [computer program]. Version 2.2. Orlando (FL): Computerized Educational Systems; 1993.

TABLES AND FIGURES

All illustrations, including photographs, diagrams, maps, and graphics, are classified as figures. **The total number of figures and tables should not be greater than five (5).** Figures should be used as an alternative to tables; please avoid redundancy in tables, figures, and text. Only the necessary number should be used to explain the argument of the study. **Figures should be located at the end of the Word manuscript and should also be sent separately in one of the two image formats (.jpg or .tiff),** at high quality, with a minimum resolution of 300 dpi and a size of 15 – 20 cm. Normal figures will be reduced to a size of 6 - 12 cm so that the legends are legible after shrinking. Color figures are accepted for the online version at no additional cost. However, an additional black and white version should be submitted for the print publication. The publication of color figures in the print version will be financed by the author(s). Do not send figures in PowerPoint format; if Excel tables or figures have been generated, we prefer to receive those files as Excel files or high-quality PDFs.

Detailed titles and explanations of figures should be included in the captions and not in the figures or tables themselves. Captions should be sufficiently descriptive.

The legend of each table should be placed above the table; avoid using color gradients, shading, excessive lines, different background types, and outlines. Nonstandard explanations and abbreviations should be included in footnotes at the bottom of the table or figure. Measurements of statistical spread such as standard deviation and standard error of the mean must be identified. Distinguish between column titles and data.

If drawings or diagrams are included, they should be presented in a professional manner. Hand drawn or typewritten drawings will not be accepted. Letters, numbers, and symbols should be clear and uniform. Photographs taken via microscope or stereoscope should have internal scale bars, and the scale should be included in the lower left corner of the figure. Symbols, arrows, or letters used in this type of photograph should clearly contrast with the background. The internal scale and identification of the staining used in photomicrographs should be shown in the figure caption.

Avoid using small, isolated figures: group related drawings or photographs in combined figures with letter titles (Fig. 1a, Fig. 3b, etc.). If an article has reproduced tables or figures (as from the same author), it is necessary to declare their origin and to show permission for their use. It is the responsibility of the authors to retain this permission.

Please take the following recommendations into account when making an online submission:

Comments to the editor (end of STEP 1 in online submission). Submit the names and emails for five possible evaluators who have published at least one article in the past two years in other indexed journals on a topic similar to that of the manuscript.

Author(s). In STEP 3, when the online submission is performed, please include information about each of the authors (name, surnames, highest academic degree, affiliation, city, country, and preferred institutional email address). The name and email of the corresponding author should be specified.

Additional files. In STEP 5 of the online submission process, the following forms should be signed: **authorship statement, conflicts of interest statement, and copyright transfer agreement (send these files to racbiocol_fcbo@unal.edu.co)**. The forms are available on the journal website. Tables and figures should also be submitted as additional files.

Conflict of Interests

Acta Biológica Colombiana is committed to guaranteeing that the studies presented are free of all visible bias. The journal and its editors should account for all competing interests during the review process and assure that any related matters be declared in the published article.

The journal defines as a conflict of interest any matter that interferes or that could be reasonably perceived as interfering with complete and objective presentation, peer revision, editorial decisions, or the publication of research articles in the journal. Conflicts of interests can be financial or non-financial in nature, professional or personal, and may arise in relation to an organization or another person.

Thus, *Acta Biológica Colombiana* has the following requirements:

Anyone involved in authorship, financing, review, or writing decisions of the articles shown or readers who wish to comment on published articles must declare any pertinent conflict of interest.

1. Authors must declare all pertinent conflicts of interests during the review process.
2. Editors and reviewers must declare their own conflicts of interests, and if necessary, recuse themselves from participating in the evaluation of a specific manuscript.
3. Any reader commenting on studies published in *Acta Biológica Colombiana* must declare his/her conflicts of interest at the time of publishing his/her comments and/or ratings.

No article sent to *Acta Biológica Colombiana* will be published until conflicts of interest have been disclosed for all authors. Editors may request clarification on the declarations. The role of all financial sources of the study should be described, and the authors should explicitly declare whether the donor was involved in: study design, collection, analysis and interpretation of

results, document writing, and/or the decision to publish. If the donor was involved, the role/contribution should be explicitly described.

Acta Biológica Colombiana may decide to not publish an article if it determines that the conflicts of interest declared by the authors or financial backers may have endangered the objectivity or validity of the study, analysis, or interpretations included in the manuscript. *Acta Biológica Colombiana* does not publish research articles if the editors are aware of any existing conflicts of interest that might introduce bias or a reasonable perception of partiality. Any failure to disclose a conflict of interest may result in the immediate rejection of the manuscript. If a conflict of interest is revealed after publication, ABC will print a formal correction or retraction on a case-by-case basis.

ETHICS

Authors should be aware of how to comply with the best ethical practices of publication, specifically with reference to authorship (for example, avoid ghostwriting or invited authors), the duplication of published results, plagiarism, manipulation of data, conflicts of interests, and following ethical research policies in accordance with the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE): <http://publicationethics.org/>

Research on humans, animals, and plants

Indicate in the Materials and Methods section that you followed ethical guidelines when conducting studies or sampling that required approval from a committee or agency (institutional or regional) responsible for supervising research projects. Do not use proper names, initials, or the clinical identification numbers of patients. When experiments are performed on animals, it should be clearly indicated whether institutional or national research council directives were followed or whether a national law on the care and use of laboratory animals was taken into account. It is preferable to include the date and number of the law or of the relevant resolutions. Authors should be able to show, upon request, a declaration from the research ethics committee, institutional review board, or the corresponding authority showing approval of the study and the name of the institution. Permit numbers should also be included in the manuscript.

Sample declaration of ethics approval: This study was performed in strict accordance with the recommendations of (place name of the guide followed). The protocol was approved by the Animal Experimentation Ethics Committee of the National University of Colombia (Permit number: 27-2956). All possible efforts were made to minimize suffering during individual sacrifices, using the following procedures: (describe the procedures followed).

For manuscripts including results requiring that samples be sent to biological collections, it is necessary to indicate the collection numbers and information about the collector, indicating the location where they were deposited, or where specimens or vouchers were consulted. For frozen tissues deposited in collections and DNA sequences deposited in databases, access

numbers should also be included. Indicate the collection permit number and/or access to genetic material resources when available.

Availability of data

Acta Biológica Colombiana requires authors to provide unrestricted access to the data underlying the findings described in the complete manuscript. Publication is conditional upon the agreement of the authors to place any material or information described in the publication at the free disposal of others who have reasonably requested it (pooled data, metadata, materials, and software).

The journal defines the “minimum data set” as the set of data used to arrive at the conclusions described in the manuscript, the related metadata and methods, and all additional data necessary for fully replicating the findings of the studies reported. Descriptions of data, methods, and basic results of the study should be included within the primary document. ABC does not accept references to “data not shown.” Editors and reviewers may require particular types of data for certain articles. Authors who have data sets that are too large to share via repositories or large files should communicate with the journal for editorial advice.

When submitting a manuscript online, the authors should present a declaration regarding the availability of data describing how ABC policies were met. If the article is accepted for publication, the data availability declaration will be published as part of the final article. Refusing to share data, metadata, and procedures in accordance with this policy will be grounds for rejection.

If new software or a new algorithm is necessary for a document accepted in the *Acta Biológica Colombiana*, authors should confirm that the software meets the definition of open coding and place the contents in an open source file; this information should be included in the manuscript as supporting information.

ACCEPTED ARTICLES

Articles will be published in order according to the dates that each study is received and accepted. When manuscripts are accepted for publication, authors are notified and receive comments from the reviewers and the section editor. These comments indicate and/or suggest major or minor changes to the manuscript that should be made. The corrected version should be submitted in the editor response format (found on the journal website) within the timeframe stipulated by the editor. In the letter of response to the editor, reasons for not following some suggested changes in the new version of the article should be clearly justified, and changes or corrections that were accepted in the new version should be highlighted in the document using track changes mode. If the corrected version is not received by the stipulated date, it is considered a withdrawal, and the manuscript will be removed from the editorial process. Rejected manuscripts may not be resubmitted.

Once the corrected version of an article is conclusively accepted for publication, the manuscript may be modified editorially to meet style requirements of the journal. Editorial changes are performed to improve writing style and to avoid grammatical errors. Editorial changes will be submitted to the corresponding author for approval.

Authors of accepted papers should indicate at least two other authors of the manuscript, with their respective affiliations and emails. A copy of the accepted manuscript will also be sent to them.

Open access agreement

After an article is submitted, authors are asked to indicate that they agree to comply with Creative Commons 3.0 open access. Under the terms of this license, the authors retain ownership of author rights for their articles. Nevertheless, the license allows any user to download, print, extract, reuse, archive, or distribute the article if and only if appropriate credit is given to the authors and the source. The license assures authors that the article will be as widely available as possible and that the article may be included in any scientific archive, and the journal will manage the inclusion and dissemination of the complete text via the institutional repository of the National University of Colombia and all specialized databases that the editor feels are appropriate for indexing and increasing the visibility of the journal.

Changes in authorship

Acta Biológica Colombiana follows COPE guidelines for describing changes in authorship. If modifications to the author list of a manuscript are necessary after initial submission (but before publication), the corresponding author should first communicate with journal staff and provide a clear reason for the change. If the change in the authorship list is appropriate and in agreement with the guidelines mentioned above, the corresponding author will be asked to provide a written confirmation that all remaining authors appearing in the manuscript consent to the change. Any individual asking the corresponding author to be added or removed from the author list will be contacted by the journal.