

***Ringling & Migration***  
**Journal of the British Trust for Ornithology Ringing Scheme**

**Guidelines for Authors**

**General.** *Ringling & Migration* concentrates on birds that occur in the Western Palearctic but welcomes papers from any part of the world that are relevant to ringing and migration studies of Western Palearctic birds. Papers are accepted on the understanding that they are not being offered for publication elsewhere. All manuscripts and associated material must be submitted electronically.

*Ringling & Migration* publishes the following types of articles:

Original research papers

Short original research papers (around 1500 words in length)

Scientific reviews

Forum articles covering general ornithological issues, including non-scientific ones, short feedback articles that make scientific criticisms of papers published recently in the Journal

Critical book reviews.

**Preparation of manuscripts for Ringling & Migration**

Manuscripts can be single or double-spaced, formatted electronically for A4-sized paper. Number all the pages consecutively; line numbers are optional. Arrange the material in the following sequence, starting each item on a separate page:

Title page

Summary

Text (Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion)

Acknowledgements

References

Appendices

Tables

Legends to Figures

Figures

Only generic and specific scientific names and *et al* should be in italic font.

Papers of around 1,500 words should be prepared as Short Reports with (usually) no sectional headings. They may have up to two figures/tables, or one of each. The final length of Short Reports will be less than 3 printed pages in the journal.

**Nomenclature.** Vernacular names as given in the British Ornithologists Union Checklist (Dudley, S. *et al* 2006) should be used for birds, with the scientific

name also given, but not in parentheses, when the species is first mentioned. If a species name appears in the title, abstract and text, the scientific name should be given once in each place. The same practice should be followed for other animals and plants for which there are well-established vernacular names, otherwise use scientific names throughout. Vernacular names of species but not of higher taxa should be capitalized, eg Blue Tit and Wych Elm, but tits and elms. For those species covered by them, the following should be used as sources of scientific names (most recent takes priority):

**Dudley, S. et al.** 2006. The British List: A checklist of the birds of Britain (7th Edition). *Ibis* 148: 526-563. (available as a free download from <http://www.bou.org.uk>)

**BirdLife International Data Zone**, <http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/index.html>

**Voous, K.H.** (1973-77) List of recent Holarctic bird species. *Ibis*, **115**, 612-638; **199**, 223-250, 376-406

**Corbet, G.B. & Southern, H.N.** (1991) *The Handbook of British Mammals*. 3rd edn. Blackwell Science, Oxford.

**Stace, C.A.** (1997) *New Flora of the British Isles*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, or **Stace, C.** (1999) *Field Flora of the British Isles*, both Cambridge University Press.

Units, symbols, quantities. Use metric units, with the following abbreviations - length: mm, m, km, etc; mass: mg, g, kg; time: s, min, h, day, month, year. Time of day should be given in the form of 0630 h. The time system used should be the zonal time closest to solar time (ie GMT, not BST, in Britain). Dates should be given in the form 17 November 2000. Statistical terms should be given in the conventional manner:  $c^2$ ,  $t$ ,  $r$ , etc.; degrees of freedom as 'df = ' or as a subscript, ' $t_{12}$ '; standard deviation, standard error and probability as sd, se,  $P$ . Numbers greater than nine should be given in the text as numerals, not spelled out, except at the beginning of a sentence or where numerals would look absurd. Numbers larger than 999 should be divided into groups of three figures with a comma between each group; eg 12,592. Use a full stop (.) as the decimal separator; eg 3.14.

**Title page.** This must contain, in order, the title (bold font), the authors' names (capitalized) and addresses (italic font; use superscript numbers to associate authors with addresses) and the short title. The corresponding author should be indicated with the symbol \* after their name (if more than one author on the manuscript) and their email address given on the title page. The title should be brief but informative. The short title will appear at the top of the right-hand pages in the published text and must not contain more than 30 characters.

**Summary.** This should not exceed 5% of the length of the text and will be structured to describe the object of the study or hypothesis to be tested, the method used, the results obtained and the conclusions. These can be regarded as virtual subheadings to help with preparing the summary.

**Introduction.** This should introduce the broad area of study and give the background to the key concepts. The end of the introduction should summarize the hypothesis to be tested and outline the strategy of the study.

**Methods.** This should be subdivided into subheadings appropriate to the range of methods used. For example: study site (location and coordinates/ characteristics/ method of capture), biometric methods, data analysis. The data analysis section should contain full details of the statistical methods and software packages used together with appropriate justification. Statistics are essential for proper interpretation of quantitative data and authors who are doubtful about their statistical analysis are invited to consult the editor.

**Results.** All the new results of the study should be described in this section. The results should be described with sufficient narrative to ensure that the reader can follow the reasoning behind each stage of the data collection and analysis. Subheadings may be used if appropriate. Parameter estimates should be given together with 95% confidence limits (or standard errors) and sample size. The results of statistical tests should be presented in ways that do not obtrude on the text, such as at the end of a sentence or paragraph, in the legends to tables or figures, or as an appendix. They should be given in the form: (test statistic<sub>df</sub> = result,  $P < 0.00##$ ). Using ANOVA as an example: (1-way ANOVA,  $F_{df1,df2} = ##.##$ ,  $P < 0.00##$ ) where  $df1$  and  $df2$  are the factor and error degrees of freedom, respectively. Non-significant results of statistical tests are also important and informative  $P$  values or  $P$ -value ranges should be given (eg.  $P = 0.65$  or  $P = 0.06$ ; do NOT use  $P > 0.05$ ).

**Discussion.** It is often useful to start the discussion with a summary of the main results- each point can then be expanded on as a paragraph or paragraphs of text. At the end of the discussion, a statement of the main conclusions in a wider ornithological context and an indication of where to go next is a useful way to sign off.

**Acknowledgements.** These should be as brief as is consistent with courtesy

**References.** References should appear in the text thus: ‘...confirming earlier work (Brown & Smith 2002) or ‘Brown & Smith (2002) state that...’. Citations of papers with more than two authors should use the format: (Brown *et al* 2004). Multiple citations should be separated with commas.

The reference list should be in alphabetical order in the following format:

**Bennett, P. & Owens, I.P.F.** (2002) *Evolutionary Ecology of Birds: Life Histories, Mating Systems and Extinction*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

**Cowley, E.** (2001) June broods are of greatest benefit to Sand Martins *Riparia riparia*. *Ringing & Migration* **20**, 202-208.

**Peach, W.J.** (1993) Combining mark-recapture data sets for small passerines. In *Marked individuals in the study of bird populations* (eds Lebreton, J.D. & North, P.M.), pp 107-122. Birkhauser Verlag, Basel.

**Journal titles should be given in full.** The titles of papers should be given in the original language, unless this uses a non-Roman alphabet, in which case an English translation of the title should be used, in square parentheses.

Information that has been communicated to you personally should be referred to in the text as, eg 'A.B. Smith, pers comm' and must not be listed in the references.

**Tables.** Start each table on a new page, with the title at the top and any explanatory notes below. Minimise the use of lines. Use 0 for a zero reading, - for a missing value. For detailed instructions see the separate document: 'Table Guidelines: Bird Study and Ringing & Migration'.

**Illustrations.** All material must be supplied electronically. Maps and diagrams should be supplied as high-quality TIFF (.tif) files. Maps and diagrams should be in four sided boxes and can have tick marks all round if coordinates are to be illustrated but there should be no horizontal or vertical gridlines. A site map should not be included in the manuscript unless it is of particular relevance to the study (the co-ordinates of the study site should be given in the Methods section). Photographs may be used as necessary to illustrate papers. Note that it will only be possible to reproduce high quality images. All illustrations will be published in black & white or greyscale in the print version but can appear in colour in the online pdf version.

Ideally, all graphs should be submitted as 'Sigmaplot' files. However, if this is not possible, graphs should be drawn using an available software package but the data used to draw the graph(s) must also be submitted as an Excel spreadsheet (or similar); graphs will be prepared to the *Ringing & Migration* format at BTO HQ if the manuscript is accepted for publication.

The style guidelines for graphs are as follows: graphs should all be in a four-sided box. Axis tick marks should be only on the left side and along the bottom axis of the graph. All tick marks should be external to the box. There should be no horizontal or vertical gridlines on graphs. If a key is required it should be outside the box but it should preferably be incorporated into the figure title. Words lettering the axes should be in sentence style. Any units should be given in round brackets. On the y-axis the words should read from bottom to top and on the x-axis the words should read from left to right. If a graph needs to be labelled

eg a, b, c, then this should be in lower case in the top left corner and should be bracketed on the right only eg a). The corresponding letter in the figure title should also be bracketed. The priority order for symbols on graphs and maps is filled circles, open circles, filled squares, open squares, filled triangles, open triangles, filled diamonds, open diamonds. Lines should preferably be solid. If there is more than one line present, then the priority order is solid line, continuous dash, continuous dots, dash dot. Bars on bar charts should not be filled unless distinguishing two types. If there are two types then they should be white and black, if a third style is required then it should be filled with one set of diagonal lines.

Careful thought should be give to the type of graph used to illustrate data. In general, biometric data should be presented as points representing mean values with error bars for 95% confidence intervals; bar graphs should be used to represent quantities (as is the case with frequency histograms).