

Instructions for Authors

SCOPE

Acta Herpetologica (AH) is the official journal of the *Societas Herpetologica Italica (SHI)*.

The journal is published by Firenze University Press that adheres to the "[Publication Ethics and publication malpractice statement](#)" downloadable from the journal web page. Please read carefully this document before submitting to the journal.

AH publishes Reviews, Full Papers, Short Notes, and Book Reviews dealing with the biology, palaeobiology, morphology, and diversity of amphibians and reptiles. Manuscripts should be original and should not be submitted to other journals. *AH* is a peer-reviewed journal adopting a double-blind review procedure.

AH does not publish papers in which the amphibians and/or the reptiles are treated as simple study models. Papers dealing with captivity and terrarium aspects are accepted only if the welfare of treated animals is clearly respected, and if the results have a general interest. Handling and capture permits should always be clearly reported in the "Acknowledgements" section. If no permits are needed, a sentence explicitly stating this should be added in the same section.

If a new taxon is described, the institution where the type material is deposited must be clearly indicated, together with all the details of its registration. The description of new taxa on types deposited in personal collections will not be accepted.

MANUSCRIPT CATEGORIES

Reviews are usually invited by the Editors. Those who wish to submit Reviews should consult the Editors in advance.

Full Papers are reports usually longer than nine manuscript pages (double spaced) and should not exceed 12000 words (including abstract and references).

Short Notes are more limited in scope and shorter than 3000 words (including abstract and references), with no more than four tables and/or figures. Short Notes include an abstract and keywords, but are not structured with headings and subheadings. We encourage notes regarding innovative techniques and procedures for the field and laboratory studies concerning amphibians and reptiles.

Full Papers and Short Notes (including Natural History Notes) should not be merely descriptive (i.e., range extensions will be rejected). Information on structure and formatting for full papers and reviews are reported below.

Manuscripts may be moved from one category to another at the discretion of the Associate Editor.

English (either British or American, but used consistently throughout the manuscript and associated files) is the requested language for Reviews and Full Papers, while Short Notes can be submitted both in English and in Italian.

CONSERVATION EVIDENCE

AH adheres to the **Conservation Evidence** project (www.conservationevidence.com).

If your paper deals with conservation actions, check the existing evidence for any intervention at Conservation Evidence. If relevant evidence is available provide at least a sentence summarizing this in the 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., 2017”). If Conservation Evidence indicates there is yet no evidence for the action, please state this. If Conservation Evidence has not yet summarized the evidence for the management action, please search for studies testing the action, and summarize any relevant evidence for similar actions. If Conservation Evidence does not yet cover the topic and no individual study exists, please state this.

MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION

Submissions of papers from both members and non-members of the SHI are welcome. **Electronic submission** through the journal website is the only admitted submission way. Manuscripts should be sent as Microsoft Word files. Figures should be provided as individual .tiff, .eps, or .jpg files at least at acceptance. Authors can submit a single Word file with embedded images and retain the original figures until the manuscript is accepted for publication. Tables should be included within the manuscript file. Other file types (e.g. Excel spreadsheets for large datasets, video file for videos...) are accepted as Supplementary Materials. Submission of a cover letter is not requested.

For any potential issue with manuscript preparation (manuscript text, figures, etc.) and/or any request for alternative formatting that may be needed, please get in contact with the Editor-in-Chief or the Associate Editor managing the submission

Submitted manuscripts are preliminary checked by the Editor in Chief and one Associate Editor. If they are deemed suitable for consideration to be published in the journal, contributions are sent out for review, usually to at least two reviewers. The peer review process adopts a double-blind formula.

MANUSCRIPT FORMAT

General

Authors wishing to submit manuscripts to AH **should carefully consult recent issues** of the journal and **instructions given here** for the manuscript format. Manuscripts do not need to completely adhere to the herein-provided format and style at first submission, but author(s) will be requested to comply with the present instructions at the time of acceptance. It is requested, however, to carefully respect the instructions regarding the Cover Page and the Abstract Page format, in order to make the review process smoother and faster.

Manuscripts, typed in **Times New Roman** font size 12, should be A4 in size (29×21 cm). Typing should be double spaced with about 2.5 cm margins on all sides. Words should not be interrupted at the end of a line. Each of the following sections should begin on a separate page: cover page, abstract, main text, references, each table, and figure captions. Except for the cover page, all pages should be consecutively numbered. **The main text of the manuscript should have all rows consecutively numbered.**

Cover page

The cover page should include the title, the name(s), affiliation(s), address(es) of the author(s) in order, and a suggested short running title. The title should be brief and informative. It should appear left justified on the top of this page, in bold. Indicate the Type of Manuscript: full article (ART), short note (SHN), review (REW), book review (BRE). Author(s) name(s) should be left justified, in Small Capital letters and with the family name underlined, followed by apex numbers indicating the related affiliations and an asterisk highlighting the corresponding author. Second and supplementary names must be simply given as capital initials. Affiliation(s) and address(es) of the author(s) should follow the names, left justified and all in Italics. Please indicate the ORCID for all authors. See the following example as a reference for formatting the cover page:

Informative title

Type of Manuscript:

AUTHOR ONE^{1,*}, AUTHOR TWO^{2,1}, AUTHOR THREE³

1 Affiliation 1, address, postcode – City, Country.

2 Affiliation 2, address, postcode – City, Country.

3 Affiliation 3, address, postcode – City, Country.

Author One: ORCID

Author Two: ORCID

Author Three: ORCID

The name, postal address, and e-mail address of the corresponding author to whom communications regarding the manuscript should be directed must be also reported in the

cover page. Additionally, this page should also show the date of submission, the numbers of pages counting the main text and the figure legends, and the numbers of figures and tables.

To ensure the double-blind peer-review process followed by AH, acknowledgements and authorizations should be also included in the cover page. Contributors are referred to the Main text section below for format instructions for these.

Abstract page

The abstract page should repeat the full title of the contribution (bold, left justified), and it must contain an **abstract** consisting of a maximum of **250 words**, followed by one blank line and by the keywords. The abstract should state the major points of the paper as clearly and concisely as possible without the need for reference to the text and without citation of references. The word "**Abstract**" must be written in bold, followed by a full stop and by the abstract text. The term "**Keywords**" must be written in bold, followed by a point and then by **three to eight** keywords identifying the major aspects of the contribution, separated by commas.

Main text

Manuscripts are usually arranged in: **Introduction, Material and Methods, Results, Discussion, Acknowledgements, and References**. Italics should be used only for scientific names of genera, species, and subspecies. Commonly used words of non- English origins should not be italicized (e.g. et al., taxon, taxa).

Up to three sets of headings are allowed. The first order heading, all capitalized, should be centered. The second order heading should be set at the left margin and *italicized*, with only the first letter of the first word capitalized. After the first and second order headings, the text should start on the following line. Third order headings are also *italicized* and left aligned, but they are followed by a full stop and the related text on the same line. In an original article, the main sections (i.e. Introduction, Material and Methods, Results, Discussion, Acknowledgements, and References) should be given as first order headings. **Headings must be avoided in Short Notes.**

See the following example as a reference:

FIRST ORDER HEADING

Second order heading

Third order heading. Following text

References

The reference section follows the rest of the main text and should begin with a first order heading, as "REFERENCES". It must list **all and only** the publications cited in the manuscript in **alphabetical order** according to the first author surname. When there are several papers by the same first author with different coauthors, they must be listed in alphabetical order by second and subsequent authors, regardless of the number of authors. When there are several papers of the same author(s), they have to be arranged chronologically. The title of scientific journals should be abbreviated according to ISI standards. No space must be inserted between the initials of the first names. No empty lines must be inserted between references. Volume numbers are written in bold. The two last authors or editors in a citation are separated only by a comma. Abstracts of conferences should not be listed in the reference list, but cited in the text as unpublished data or personal observation.

The following are **examples for the format of references**.

Articles in journals:

Delaugerre, M-J. (2013): Going out tonight? When insular *Hierophis viridiflavus* breaks the Whip Snake rules. Acta Herpetol. **8**: 47-52.

Leviton, A.E., Gibbs, R.H. Jr. (1988): Standards in herpetology and ichthyology. Standard symbolic codes for institution resource collections in herpetology and ichthyology. Supplement no. 1: additions and corrections. Copeia **1988**: 280-282.

Macaluso, L., Mannion, P.D., Evans, S.E., Carnevale, G., Monti, S., Marchitelli, D., Delfino, M. (2022): Biogeographic history of Palearctic caudates revealed by a critical appraisal of their fossil record quality and spatio-temporal distribution. R. Soc. Open Sci. **9**: 220935.

Book chapters:

Arntzen, J.W. (1999): *Chioglossa lusitanica* Bocage, 1864 - Goldstreifensalamander. In: Handbuch der Reptilien und Amphibien Europas, Bd.4/1, Schwanzlurche (Urodela) I, pp. 301-321. Grossenbacher, K., Thiesmeier, B., Eds, Wiesbaden, Aula-Verlag.

Books:

Boulenger, G.A. (1889): Catalogue of the chelonians, rhynchocephalians, and crocodiles in the British Museum (Natural History). London, British Museum.

Theses/Dissertations:

Moody, S.M. (1980): Phylogenetic and historical biogeographical relationships of the genera in the family Agamidae (Reptilia: Lacertilia). Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Examples of in-text references are as follows:

Arntzen, 1999

Leviton and Gibbs, 1988

Macaluso et al., 2022

Strings of references should be placed in chronological order. When there are two or more references published in the same year, they should be arranged in alphabetical order. When two or more references share the same first author (for papers by one or more than two authors) or the same two authors (for two-authored papers) and the same year of publication, the year should be followed by a space and lower-case letters to differentiate them: e.g. Rossi et al., 1992 a, b. The order of the letters should reflect the order of the references in the reference list, and not the order of appearance in the main text.

Reference to specific figures, tables, or pages within a publication must be cited in lower case (as e.g. Macaluso et al., 2022: fig. 1, Delaugerre, 2013: table 1, or Leviton and Gibbs, 1988: p. 281). Direct quotations should be accompanied by the mention of the specific

page(s) where the text can be encountered in the original work. When quoting non- English sentences, an English translation should be provided, together with the original text; please, credit the translator, when not one of the authors. For Short Notes in Italian, an Italian translation can be provided instead of the English one. Reference titles and quotations in non-Latin alphabets should be transliterated.

For references that are in the course of publication (i.e. already accepted for publication, but not published yet), cite "in press" (or "in stampa" in the case of short notes in Italian) in the place of publication year and do not add the page numbers. References of unpublished master theses and unpublished doctoral dissertations are not encouraged, but are allowed when their citations are definitely needed. Other manuscripts that are neither "in press" nor published should not be cited either in the text or in the References section. Personal references or unpublished data could be included in the text, with the abbreviation "pers. comm." (for English papers), or with "com. pers." (for Italian papers).

The use of bibliographic software is recommended to format the references correctly. Independently of using such software, all references must be carefully checked one by one according to our guidelines.

A style file compatible with most reference managers is downloadable from: <http://www-9.unipv.it/webshi/images/files/Acta%20Herpetologica.zip>

Tables

Each table should be typed, double-spaced, on a **separate page** in the main manuscript file, after the Reference section. The table caption should precede the table itself, on the same page, and it should indicate the table number in bold: e.g. **Table 1**. Measurements of specimens of *Salamandrina terdigitata*.

Within the table, only the initial letter of the first word should be capitalised (e.g. "Adult males"). Ruled lines within the table main body should be avoided (see a recent issue as example). Footnotes (indicated by symbols *, or, 1, 2, 3, etc.) may follow a table when detailed information is needed. References to tables within the text should not be abbreviated, and should be written with the first letter capitalised.

Figures

Figures can be embedded within the main manuscript file at first submission and during the review process, but they must be provided as separated **.tiff, .eps, or .jpg files** when the contribution is accepted. Figure files should be named as to indicate their number and the width for which they are planned (one or two columns): e.g. Author et al_Fig1_one column.

White background should be favoured against a black one. When several drawings or photographs are to be reproduced as parts of one single figure, they should be mounted in the desired arrangement and each of them should be lettered (A, B, C, etc.). Font style and size should be consistent throughout the manuscript, making sure that labelling is of sufficient size and contrast to be readable when printed.

Each figure should be carefully planned to accommodate reduction to a final width of one (8 cm) or two columns (16 cm) in *AH*, as well as to occupy at best all the available space. Include a scale of distance or dimension when appropriate. Figures should be either **8** or **16 cm wide**, and **at least 300 dpi (or, preferably, higher)**.

Figure captions must be listed at the end of the main manuscript file, following a page break after the references and the tables (if present). They should be double spaced and separated by one line of spaceblank line between them. Each caption begins with Fig. and a consecutive number, all in **bold type** and followed by a full stop: e.g. **Fig.**

1. Dorsal (A) and lateral (B) views of holotype of...

References to figures within the text should be also abbreviated: e.g. Fig. 1; Fig. 1A-B; Figs 1-3; Figs 1-2, 3B,D.

Colour figures will be published free of charge in the online version of the journal. Authors are invited to consider using colourblind accessible colour palettes, if applicable. Authors will be asked to pay if they wish to publish colour figures in the printed version (send inquiries to the Editor in Chief).

Supplementary material

Relevant additional information (such as e.g. examined specimens, additional figures, videos showing investigated behaviours) may be included as separate Supplementary material files. All supplementary data must be approved by editors and reviewers. The Supplementary material is posted on the **SHI website** at the following link: <http://www-9.unipv.it/webshi/appendix/index.html>.

Supplementary material files should be formatted according to the same rules as for the main text. Ideally, all supplementary material should be included within **a single Word file**, separated by page breaks. This file must start with a cover page with the article title, name(s) and affiliation(s) of the author(s). The second page should start with the first order heading SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL. Second and third order headings may be used within the Supplementary material file. If the author(s) would like to upload other file types (e.g. large Excel spreadsheets, video files, NEXUS files for phylogenetic data), a Word or

text file with captions/descriptions for such files must be also uploaded (these can be included in the above-mentioned single Word file with other supplementary materials, if present).

Supplementary material must be mentioned prior to the Reference section in the main text, as follows:

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

Supplementary material associated with this article can be found at

<<http://www.unipv.it/webshi/appendix>> Manuscript number XXXXXX.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The supplementary material is not edited by the journal. Great care should therefore be taken by the author(s) in preparing the file and following these instructions. In particular, author(s) should ensure: 1) all supplementary material is labelled correctly and cited in the main text (e.g. Supplementary Data 1, Table S1, Fig. S2); 2) all legends/captions are informative; 3) the data presented are accurate; 4) the text is grammatically correct; 5) the journal style is followed, including additional references. There will be no opportunity to edit your Supplementary material once published online; thus, the last version supplied will be the one published. No changes at all can be made after this.

The upload of relevant data in **online data repositories** is favoured and strongly encouraged, to ensure enduring availability and easy access to them. Examples of pertinent online resources are: 1) MorphoSource (for 3D models and CT data); 2) MorphoBank (for phylogenetic matrices and related data); 3) Dryad (for general research datasets); 4) Zenodo (for general research and datasets). Data used in the contributed article that is uploaded to any of these or other online data repositories should be **properly referenced** in the main text.

MANUSCRIPT STYLE

Numerals and statistics

Numbers from zero to nine should always be spelled out unless they precede units of measurement (e.g., 5 mm), are designators (e.g., experiment 3), or are separated by a hyphen (e.g., 5-7 individuals). From 10 onwards, numbers should be typed as Arabic numerals except at the beginning of a sentence. The 24-hour clock is used to indicate times of day (e.g., 19:00 h). Dates should be given by day, month, year in this order (e.g., 5 July 2002). Decimals should not be naked (e.g., 0.5, instead of .5). Mathematical or statistical variables should never be italicised, and the exact probability value of the test (e.g., $P = 0.018$) should be given.

Abbreviations

Weights and measures follow the International System of Units (SI), and such abbreviations should be used throughout the manuscript. Abbreviations used in *AH* without being defined at first usage include: \bar{x} (mean), n (sample size), N (chromosome number, but see below for the use to refer to "north latitude"), no. (number), yr (year[s]), mo (month[s]), wk (week[s]), h (hour[s]), min (minute[s]), sec (second[s]), P (probability), df (degrees of freedom), SD (standard deviation), SE (standard error), NS (not significant), l (litre), kg (kilogramme), g (gramme), m (metre), cm (centimetre), mm (millimetre), μm (micron), $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (degrees Celsius), a.s.l. (above sea level; given as e.g. 100 m a.s.l.), geohistorical dates (years before present, e.g. ka, Ma), geohistorical duration (e.g. kyr, Myr), geographical coordinates (e.g., $15^{\circ}25'\text{N}$, $121^{\circ}43'\text{E}$). Sexes can be written as extended (male[s], female[s]) or abbreviated (M, MM, F, FF). Please add comma after the abbreviation e.g. and i.e.

If other abbreviations are used in the main text or in the supplementary material, they should be either spelled out completely when first mentioned (in both the main text and supplementary material) or listed in a specific subsection (e.g. an Anatomical abbreviations or Institutional abbreviations subsection in the Material and Methods

section). Abbreviations used in figures should be either explained in the related figure caption(s) or included in the relevant abbreviation subsection, if present. In order to save space, complete spelling of abbreviations in the text should be avoided if they are already listed in a dedicated subsection.

When institutional abbreviations are used, it is recommended, as far as possible, to follow Leviton et al. (1985) or Leviton and Gibbs (1988), with an explicit statement (e.g. in Materials and Methods, or in the Supplementary material file if the abbreviations are only present in the latter). Read carefully the papers referenced hereafter for further details:

- Leviton, A.E., Gibbs, R.H. Jr., Heal, E., Dawson, C.E. (1985): Standards in herpetology and ichthyology: Part I. Standard symbolic codes for institutional resource collections in herpetology and ichthyology. *Copeia*, **1985**: 802-832.
- Leviton, A.E., Gibbs, R.H. Jr. (1988): Standards in herpetology and ichthyology. Standard symbolic codes for institution resource collections in herpetology and ichthyology. Supplement no. 1: additions and corrections. *Copeia* **1988**: 280- 282.

TAXONOMY

Contributions sent to *AH* should comply with the **International Code on Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN)**. Genus, species and subspecies names must be given in *italics*, except when the whole sentence is in italics (then, genus, species and subspecies should be in regular type). The generic name for any species must be written in full at first mention of such species in the main text and at the beginning of a sentence. First mentions of different species within the same genus should be all written in full (e.g. *Rana dalmatina* and *Rana temporaria*, not *Rana dalmatina* and *R. temporaria*).

Authorship should be reported at first mention in the main text for each taxon name, as Author, year after said name (e.g. *Lacerta agilis* Linnaeus, 1758). This does not apply to names reported in tables with extensive species lists and in figures. For species that changed generic attribution, please place original author(s) in round brackets: e.g. *Hierophis viridiflavus* (Lacépède, 1789). All authorship references must be included in the Reference list.

New amphibian and reptilian taxa must be registered in **ZooBank** (<https://zoobank.org/>) when the contribution is accepted (not earlier). Please, provide the definitive Life Science Identifiers (LSIDs) for any new taxon at galley stage (a placeholder may be included at earlier stages: e.g. LSID: XXXXXX). Derivation of name, type material(s), and diagnoses should also be provided for all new taxa. New taxon names are followed by specifiers such

as sp. nov., gen. nov., fam. nov., etc. when first mentioned in the main text, in the title, and in the abstract.

REVISED MANUSCRIPT RESUBMISSION

Revised manuscripts should be submitted within **three** months (Resubmit for review) or **one** month (Revision required) since the Associate Editor decision, otherwise they will be considered as withdrawn. After acceptance, the author(s) will receive the galleys based on the accepted version of the manuscript for final check. These galleys are to be checked within a time of two working days after notification. At this stage, only essential minor changes (such as typos, grammar corrections or similar) are accepted. The galleys are going to be double-checked by the Associate Editor as well and then sent to the Layout Editor for corrections prior to publication. Accepted (in press) articles are listed in the Just Accepted section in the *AH* website: <https://oaj.fupress.net/index.php/ah/just-accepted>.