
OSTRICH: Journal of African Ornithology

Instructions to Authors

The journal will publish refereed scientific papers and short communications (<2 000 words) containing the results of original work and review articles within the general field of ornithology in Africa and its islands. Extended taxonomic reviews will not be considered unless they include relevant discussion of behavioural or ecological criteria; if in doubt, please consult the Scientific Editor. Reviews of relevant books will also be published. All communications, with the exception of book reviews, will be scrutinised by referees.

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Layout: A recent issue of *Ostrich* should be consulted for general layout and style.

Manuscript format: All pages must be numbered consecutively, including those containing the references, tables and figures. Authors must also insert line numbering. Text should be divided into the following sections and appear in this order:

- (1) Abstract (not exceeding 200 words)
- (2) Introduction
- (3) Materials and methods
- (4) Results
- (5) Discussion
- (6) Acknowledgements
- (7) References
- (8) Tables
- (9) Appendices
- (10) Figure legends
- (11) Figures

References — References to literature within an article must be arranged chronologically in the following forms: Swart (1972); Swart (1972a, 1972b); Swart and White (1973); Swart (1972, 1973); (Swart 1970, Smith 1971). For more than two authors, use the first author's name followed by et al. (e.g. Urban et al. 1997). At the end of the manuscript list references alphabetically and then chronologically, using full journal titles, and adhere to the following formats (refer to www.nisc.co.za for more examples):

Payne RB, Payne LL. 1997. Field observations, experimental design, and the time and place of learning in bird songs. In: Snowdon C, Hausberger M (eds), *Social influences on vocal development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp 57–84.

Urban EK, Fry CH, Keith S (eds). 1997. *The birds of Africa*, vol. 5. London: Academic Press.

Vergara P, Aguirre JI, Fernández-Cruz M. 2007. Arrival date, age and breeding success in White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*. *Journal of Avian Biology* 38: 573–579.

Roberts Birds of Southern Africa (and other such edited regional works): Please note that when referencing a single species account, the author of that account should be cited, for example:

du Plessis MA. 2005. Green Woodhoopoe. In: Hockey PAR, Dean WRJ, Ryan PG (eds), *Roberts birds of southern Africa* (7th edn). Cape Town: Trustees of the John Voelcker Bird Book Fund. pp 162–164.

However, when referencing multiple accounts (e.g. extracting clutch-size data) the entire volume should be cited:

Hockey PAR, Dean WRJ, Ryan PG (eds). 2005. *Roberts birds of southern Africa* (7th edn). Cape Town: Trustees of the John Voelcker Bird Book Fund.

Tables — Each table, numbered with Arabic numerals in the order in which they are to appear, must be on a separate page with the table number and an appropriate stand-alone caption. Tables may include up to five horizontal lines but no vertical lines.

Figures — Ensure figures conform to the journal style. Refer to www.nisc.co.za for figure format and style conventions, and exemplars. Costs of redrawing figures may be charged. Plan figure size for a maximum width of either single (84 mm) or double (176 mm) column, and a maximum page length of 230 mm. For lettering use Arial font, 9 pt (6–8 pt inside figures is acceptable). Thickness of lines (including boxes) should be 0.5 pt (vary for contrast if necessary). Contrast between grey shades/patterns must be distinct. Graphs and histograms should preferably be two-dimensional with scale marks turning inwards. Submit illustrations, including all graphs and chemical formulae, as separate files in TIFF, EPS, JPG or PDF format (using the 'save as' or 'export' commands of the graphics program). MS Office files (Word, Powerpoint, Excel) are acceptable, provided the embedded files are the correct resolution. For bitmap images, such as scanned images and digital photographs, the minimum resolution is 300 dpi for colour or greyscale artwork and 600 dpi for black line drawings. For vector graphics, such as graphs, embed fonts and ensure any bitmap images incorporated in the graphics are at an appropriate resolution. Colour pages can be printed at a cost of R2000 (US\$300) per page. Authors who do not benefit from institutional or other research support and consequently are unable to pay the colour page charge may apply to the Scientific Editor for a waiver of this fee.

Conventions: The English name of a species is capitalised (e.g. Southern Brown-throated Weaver) but not the name of a group of species (e.g. robins, weavers). Scientific names of genera and species—but not family names—and foreign words should be italicised. Trinomials may be used only when accurately known and essential to the results and discussion. Both the English and scientific names must be cited when a species is first mentioned but thereafter only one need be used. The English and scientific names of a species recorded from southern Africa should be those used in *Roberts Birds of Southern Africa*, 7th edn (2005). For other regions, English and scientific names should be taken from *The Birds of Africa* (1982 onwards) or an authoritative regional checklist. Metric symbols and their international symbols are used throughout as is the decimal point and the 24-hour clock (e.g. 08:00, 17:25). Dates should be written as 13 July 1973. Ranges should have an en dash (3–5 km). There should be a space before unit terms (23 °C, 5 kg, 5 kg d⁻¹ etc.) except for percentages (5%). Use 'mass' instead of 'weight'. The UK spelling convention should be followed. There should be a single space between sentences. The period (.) must be used as the decimal indicator, and spaces must appear before the third digit to the left of the decimal point (e.g. 1 234.56 g). Thousands/millions should be marked with a space and not a comma. The significance of statistical tests should be written in the form $p < 0.001$, and use ns for not significant.

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