

# AHN

INSTRUCTIONS TO  
AUTHORS

## AFRICAN HERP NEWS

publishes manuscripts in four categories, namely Articles, Herpetological Surveys, Natural History Notes, and Geographical Distributions.

**CONTRIBUTIONS SUBMITTED IN AN INCORRECT STYLE  
(SEE GUIDELINES BELOW) WILL BE RETURNED TO THE AUTHORS**

The type of submission (e.g., Article, Natural History Note, Geographical Distributions) should be clearly indicated in the file name. As a general note, always use the latest available issue of AHN for instructions.

All submissions should be typewritten in English (UK spelling), set in 10 pt Calibri. Words should not be divided at the right-hand margin. Use the active voice in the first person where possible (except for submissions for *Tomorrow's Herpetologists Today*). Formatting should be achieved with paragraph settings rather than tabs or spaces. Authors should consult the *Council of Biology Editors Style Manual*, 5th edition (1994) for style and abbreviations. Sentences should be separated by a single space (character). Genus and species names must be italicised. Centre major headings in small caps. Subheadings are in bold and left justified (*also in title case*). Footnotes are not accepted. The International System of Units (Système Internationale; SI) should be followed. Use decimal points rather than commas. Measures should be in mm, m or km rather than cm or dm. Integers less than 10 should be spelled, while those greater than 10 (including 10) should be given numerically. Group integers of thousands together with a space and do not use a comma (e.g. 10 500 and 1 230). All statistical symbols should be italicised. Follow the Fourth Edition (1999) of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature. Every word in English common names should start with a capital letter (e.g., Namaqua Dwarf Adder). Appendices, Material Examined, Tables, legends to Figures, and Figures must follow the References.

### ARTICLES

African Herp News publishes longer contributions of general interest that would not be presented as either Natural History Notes or Geographical Distributions. A standard format is to be used, as follows:

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**TITLE** (bold, centred, upper case);

**AUTHOR(S)** (initials and surname, bold, centred)

**HEADINGS** (bold, centred, upper case)

**Subheading 1** (bold, aligned left, lower case except first letter of first word) as required

**Subheading 2** (bold, italics, aligned left, lower case except first letter of first word) as required

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** (bold, centred)

**REFERENCES** (bold, centred), following the standardised formats described below.

**SUBMITTED BY:** (bold, aligned left), following the standardised format described below

### HERPETOLOGICAL SURVEYS

African Herp News publishes succinctly annotated species lists resulting from local surveys of amphibians and reptiles on the African continent and adjacent regions, including the Arabian Peninsula, Madagascar, and other islands in the Indian Ocean. The area surveyed may be of any size but should be defined as a geographic unit of special relevance to the herpetological community. For example, surveys should address declared or proposed conservation reserves, poorly explored areas, biogeographically important localities or administrative zones. The relevance of survey results should be judged by the extent that these records fill distributional gaps or synthesise current knowledge. As far as possible, survey records should be based on accessible and verifiable evidence (specimens deposited in public collections, photos submitted illustrating diagnostic features, call recordings and sonograms, or DNA sequences accessioned into international databases).

Survey results should be presented in the same format as used for Articles (described above), and must additionally include:

**SYSTEMATIC ACCOUNT** (bold, aligned left): comprises Scientific name (including author citation), location and habitat, evidence (including registration numbers and location of vouchers), and comments (where required).

### NATURAL HISTORY NOTES

Brief notes concerning the biology of the herpetofauna of the African continent and adjacent regions, including the Arabian Peninsula, Madagascar, and other islands in the Indian Ocean. A standard format is to be used, as follows:

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**FAMILY** (bold, centred, uppercase)

***Scientific name*** (bold, italicised, centred)

Author citation (centred)

English Common Name (centred, all words starting with a capital letter)

**KEYWORD** (bold, centred)

**AUTHOR(S)** (initials and surname, bold, centred)

[Original text] (left aligned)

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** (bold, centred), if applicable

**REFERENCES** (bold, centred), following the standardised formats described below

**SUBMITTED BY:** (bold, aligned left), following the standardised format described below

The Keyword should be one or two words best describing the topic of the note (e.g., Reproduction, Avian predation, etc.).

The body of the note should include information describing the locality (Country; Province; quarter-degree locus; location; latitude and longitude in D° M' S" format; elevation above sea level), providing the date (day, month, year), naming the collector(s), and stating the place of deposition and museum accession number or describing the fate of the animal.

### GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTIONS

Brief notes of new geographical distributions of amphibians and reptiles on the African continent and adjacent regions, including the Arabian Peninsula, Madagascar, and other islands in the Indian Ocean. Records submitted should be based on specimens deposited in a recognised collection. A standard format is to be used, as follows:

**FAMILY** (bold, centred, uppercase)

***Scientific name*** (bold, italicised, centred)

Author citation (centred)

English Common Name (centred, all words starting with a capital letter)

**AUTHOR(S)** (initials and surname, bold, centred)

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## INSTRUCTIONS TO *Authors*

Original text (left aligned)

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** (bold, centred), if applicable

**REFERENCES** (bold, centred), following the standardised formats described below

**SUBMITTED BY:** (bold, aligned left), following the standardised format described below

English common name (using Bill Branch's Field Guide to Snakes and Other Reptiles of Southern Africa, third edition, 1998, for reptiles; and Du Preez and Carruthers' A Complete Guide to the Frogs of Southern Africa, 2009, for amphibians as far as possible).

The body of the note should include information describing the locality (country; province; quarter-degree locus; location; latitude and longitude in D° M' S" format; elevation above sea level), providing the date (day, month, year), naming the collector(s), and stating the place of deposition and museum accession number, or fate of the animal. The body should also include information on the size, colour and taxonomic characters (e.g., scalation, webbing) used to identify the specimen, as well as the distance to the nearest published locality.

### HERPS MAKING HEADLINES

This section features the latest research and news relating to African herpetology, with the intent of making the AHN readership more aware of some of the cutting-edge research, discoveries and on-the-ground work being done both locally and abroad on African herps.

A standard format is to be used, as follows:

**TITLE** (bold, centred, upper case)

**AUTHOR(S)** (initials and surname, bold, centred)

Original text [left aligned]

*Study citation* (italics), if applicable

### TOMORROW'S HERPETOLOGISTS TODAY

This is a popular style article showcasing the work and/or research of young, upcoming herpetologists across the African continent. Unlike any of the other submissions, this style should be written in the third person. It could feature work already published or ongoing work. Photographs to accompany the article are highly encouraged. These may include

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study specimens, study area, and/or researchers.

A general format should be followed:

Author name ([in full], centred, upper case)

**TITLE** (bold, centred, upper case)

Original text (aligned left)

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Acknowledgements should be brief and should not list titles and institutions, but should include the first name and surname in full. Institutions should only be listed where individuals are cited as pers. comm. in the text. Authors must acknowledge collecting permits and animal care protocols together with which author they were granted. Any mention of authors should refer to them by initials only (e.g. GJA for Graham J. Alexander). It is recommended that authors acknowledge reviewers by name if they waive anonymity. This is not a requirement, but would be greatly appreciated.

### REFERENCES

Reference formatting is similar to African Journal of Herpetology. As of 2019, extensive changes have been made to simplify its appearance. However, as always, references should be listed in alphabetical order and should refer only to publications cited in the text. Abbreviate journal names in the References in the standard way. Standard abbreviations can be found at various web sites such as: [www.bioscience.org/atlas/jourabbr/list.htm](http://www.bioscience.org/atlas/jourabbr/list.htm) or [home.ncifcrf.gov/research/bja/](http://home.ncifcrf.gov/research/bja/)

References should be in the following format:

**African Herp Newsletter:** Bates MF, Nuttall R. 2013. Article: A case of death-feigning in the striped grass snake *Psammophylax tritaeniatus* (Gunther), with a review on the occurrence of this phenomenon in southern and eastern African snakes. African Herp News 60: 5–9.

Bates MF, Boshoff D. 2018. Natural History Note: Death-feigning: *Psammophis crucifer*. African Herp News 67: 19.

Broadley DG, Farooq HOM. 2013. Geographical Distributions: *Thelotornis usambaricus* Broadley, 2001. African Herp News 59: 50.

**Article:** Branch WR. 2007. A new species of tortoise of the genus *Homopus* (Chelonia: Testudinidae) from southern Namibia. Afr. J. Herpetol. 56: 1–21.

**Book:** Spawls S, Howell K, Drewes R, Ashe J. 2002. A field guide to the reptiles of East Africa. London: Academic Press.

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**Chapter in a collection:** Bruford MW, Hanotte O, Brookweld JFY, Burke T. 1992. Singlelocus and multilocus DNA Fingerprinting. In: Hoezel AR, editor. The South American Herpetofauna: Its Origin, Evolution, and Dispersal. Molecular Genetic Analysis in Conservation. Oxford: IRL Press.

**Thesis:** Russell AP. 1972. The foot of gekkonid lizards: a study in comparative and functional anatomy. [PhD thesis]. London: University of London.

**Website:** Wilgenbusch JC, Warren DL, Swofford DL. 2004. AWTY: a system for graphical exploration of MCMC convergence in Bayesian phylogenetic inference. [accessed 15 April 2011]. <http://ceb.csit.fsu.edu/awty>.

In text citations should be in chronological order: (Jacobs 1952, 1966; Edwards and Holmes 1965; Rosen et al. 1990). When a paper with more than two authors is cited, only the first appears in the text (Taylor et al. 1993). If a paper has more than ten authors, only the first five should appear in the references followed by et al. Cite unpublished data as e.g. Alexander (in press), which then appears in the list of references, or as G. J. Alexander (pers. comm.), in which case Graham J. Alexander's name and institutional affiliation should appear under Acknowledgements. Unpublished reports are cited as personal communications.

### AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS

Authors' full names and affiliations should be provided at the end of the submission, as follows:

**SUBMITTED BY:** [for each author] **AUTHOR'S NAME** (bold, upper case), address or affiliation.

E-mail: example@gmail.com (hard return)

### TABLES

Tables should be in Arabic numerals, double spaced and on separate pages with a legend at the top. Lines should only be used to separate headings. Table formatting is most convenient when 'table commands' are used to separate columns. Do not use vertical lines. All tables must be mentioned in the text and numbered consecutively (Arabic numerals).

### FIGURES AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Figures must be restricted to the minimum needed to clarify the text. The same data should not be presented in both graph and table form. Photographs and figures should be provided at high resolution (minimum of 600 dpi for colour images). Lower resolutions are not acceptable. Files should be saved and submitted as one of the following file formats: TIFF (Tagged Image File Format; preferred), PostScript or EPS (Encapsulated PostScript). Please submit line art as a scalable vector diagram (EPS). Labelling in figures should be in lower