

## GENERAL PAPER

Write in Times New Roman, 12pt for all text, including Figure and Table captions and all text within Figures and Tables.

Figures and Tables should fit in 8.5" x 11" page in either portrait or landscape without having to “stretch” or “compress” them. Less than 12pt is permissible, as long as everything is legible.

Small figures and table should fit in a single column on a page. See recent issues of NABB for dimensions.

Color figures may be submitted, but realize they will be printed in B&W. Test print colored figures in B&W to make sure they meet your expectations. NABB will print in color but at the expense of the author(s). Discuss this with lead editor, Bob Pantle.

## TAXONOMY

NABB follows the current taxonomy of AOU/AOS for common and scientific names. Common names of birds (only) are capitalized, and scientific names are italicized. Scientific names should be noted when first used in abstracts and in text; thereafter, common names will suffice. Scientific names are not necessary for association Notes and News sections, and are **not** included in titles.

*Check for up-to-date taxonomy. Often, one problem is that the BBL is not in lock step with AOU/AOS names, sometimes taking years to change taxonomy, although it is getting better.*

Common names of other animals and plants are not capitalized, but scientific names should be included.

When two species' names are used together, do not capitalize group name (as in Blue and Evening grosbeak).

Genus species are italicized (*Passer domesticus*). Note parentheses are not italicized. When the species name is not known, the “sp.” is not italicized (*Anser* sp.).

When two species names are not known, the “spp.” is not italicized (*Setophaga* spp.)

The same applies for subspecies (*Melospiza melodia* ssp.)

When a second member of a genus is mentioned, the generic name can be abbreviated, as long as there is no confusion with another genus with the same first letter.

E.g. *Catharus guttatus* was seen, and so was *C. minimus*.

E.g. *Passer domesticus* and *Passerella iliaca* is **not** *P. domesticus* and *P. iliaca*.

## MEASUREMENTS

**Metric (or metric equivalent provided) always. There is generally no need to include English equivalents.**

When providing measurements, insert one space. “12 g” **NOT** 12g

It is not necessary to add “s” to plurals, 12 cm, not 12 cms.

a. **Abbreviations.** Most are straight forward.

- Yes to a space. No period. “5 g” **NOT** “5g.” or “5 g.”  
 Mass: kg, g, mg Not “gm”  
 Linear: mm, cm, m, km  
 Area: ha, km<sup>2</sup>, cm<sup>2</sup>  
 Volume: cc, L, ml  
 Temperature: °C Use degree symbol.
- b. **Time:** Second = “s”, Minute = “min”, Hour = “hr”, Day = “da”, Month = “mo”, Year = “yr”
- c. **Clock:** 24-hour clock 02:45 Do not include “hr” or “AM/PM”
- d. **Date:** Use continental date method. 23 Aug 2018, Aug 2018, 23 Aug  
 No Roman numeral for month.  
 Standard three-letter abbreviations for month and day.  
 When month or day is used alone, spell out.  
 “We band on the first Saturday of each month.”  
 “We did not band in August.”
- e. **Latitude-Longitude:** Degree-minute-second OR decimal degree.  
 34° 12' 45" N, 117° 34' 10" W 34.21250° N, 117.56944° W  
*Note space between degrees, minutes, seconds, and direction.*  
*Degree symbol is available on WordPerfect and Word.*  
 Lat.Long. should be given for **all** banding sites, and should be as precise as required by the BBL.
- f. **Special units:** those that are somewhat unique to NABB  
 one net-hour (nh) = one 12-m mist-net open for one hour  
 birds per 100 net-hours = b/100nh
- g. **Alpha Codes:** Although they are standard and well-known to our readership, it is not known outside the U.S. (Latin America use a six-letter code). But this is an U.S. journal.  
 Do not use alpha codes in all text (articles, notes, station reports) , but suitable for tables and figures. Define when first used.
- h. **Other Abbreviations:** Standard US Postal Service abbreviations for State and Provinces. Others include St, Ave, Blvd, Cir, Hwy  
**Spell out states/provinces in Featured Articles. Abbreviations are ok otherwise.**
- i. **Acronyms** should be defined when first used.  
 Acronyms should not be used, if it is used only once. It should be spelled out.

## NUMBERS

Use numbers when they precede standard units of measure. 2 g, 19 mm, 300 kg.  
 Use numbers when used in dates, times, page number, %, statistics, decimal quantity,  
 Insert comma for numbers >999. E.g. 12,845

Otherwise, use words for numbers one to nine, & numerals for larger numbers (11, 204).

Three birds, nine gulls, 10 sparrows, 10,000 geese

**Ordinal numbers** are treated like cardinal numbers.

E.g. Second, third, 99<sup>th</sup>, 250<sup>th</sup>      Use superscript.

Do not use lots of “zeros.”      E.g. 1.6 million (not 1,600,000)

E.g. 23 µg (0.000 023 g)

**Note that oddball symbols are available on WordPerfect and Word.**

**When numbers begin a sentence, the number must be spelled out.**

Twenty-five sparrow were seen.      **NOT** “25 sparrow were seen.”

Eighteen fifty-three was a good year.      **NOT** “1853 was a good year.”

It is best to reword the sentence to avoid this issue.

Much simpler to rewrite to say “There were 25 sparrows seen.”

**Superscript and subscript** are available in WordPerfect and Word

## STATISTICS

When statistical packages are used, they should be named.

When statistics outside the basic ones are used, they should be named.

- a.      **Average** - Use “**mean**.”  
Mean values should include standard deviation and sample size (n= ), unless sample size is obvious
- b.      **Standard deviation** = SD; **standard error** = SE.
- c.      **Probability** values should be presented as “P = 0.05 “.
- d.      **Degrees of freedom** = df.
- e.      F = for **F test**; t for **t-test**, X<sup>2</sup> for Chi Square  
Greek Chi is available in Word and WordPerfect.
- f.      **Coefficient of correlation** = r.
- g.      **Percent**: Use %. 22 %. Spell out when used without a number.

**Do not say two things are “significantly different,” unless it is significantly different statistically, and the author provides the statistics.**

## ENGLISH

**Punctuations:**

- a.      **Periods and colons** are followed by **two** spaces?  
*I realize that the internet has changed this to one space.*
- b.      **Commas and semicolons** are followed by **one** space.
- c.      **Parenthetical expressions** should be set off by commas.

*That said, I was taught to avoid them at all cost. I try to eliminate as many as I can when I review a MS.*

- d. **Dashes and hyphens:** I think these are the most mis-used characters in NABB. A dash or hyphen is **not** a punctuation in English to be used like a comma. It almost should never be used.

*That said, I read that dashes are acceptable, when the ‘pause’ of a comma is insufficient, whatever that means. This may be acceptable in prose, but scientific writing should not go into hyperbole.*

Hyphen usage:

1. Between compound last names, e.g. Smith-Jones
2. Between value and units, e.g. 6-mm, *when used as an adjective*
3. In a word continuing on next line, e.g.          measure-          ment
4. When describing a range, e.g. 75-79 mm
5. Specifics:          net-hour, mist-net

- e. **Exclamation marks** should be avoided.

*Again, scientific writing should avoid hyperbole.*

- f. **Hyperbole should be avoided.** This also applies to the usage of words like “spectacular, outstanding, incredible, skyrocketing,”

- g. **Quotation marks** are only used for direct quotes.

*That said, one should almost never use quotations in scientific writing. Paraphrase. I was told quotes should only be used if the words of the author(source) are so profound that no one could have said it better.*

- h. **Comma: In a series,** “red, white, and blue”

Comma between two independent clauses in a compound sentence.

### **Contractions:**

Never to use contractions in formal writing (articles, notes, etc.)

Spell out.    Is not, do not                                **NOT** isn’t, don’t

### **Capitalization:**

- a. All **proper nouns** (cities, specific geographic locations) are capitalized. But be careful. E.g., in CA, “Southern California” is incorrect, as it is not a specific location. It is “southern California.”
- b. **Alpha codes.** BBL and IBP website list and update them.
- c. USA and Canada do not need to be included in addresses or locations. Other **foreign countries** should be noted.
- d. When used generically, “sparrows” or “warblers” are **not** capitalized.

### **Italics:**

- a. Genus species                    *Falco sparverius*
- b. Journal names in Literature Cited section
- c. Titles of book, journal, or other published work mentioned in text. *Although in general, such mention is not necessary.*

- d. The Abstract is italicized, but genus species is not.
- e. Foreign (especially Latin) words. Now, this is a tricky one as many such words are no longer italicized (et al., in vitro, in vivo, in situ, a priori, i.e., e.g., etc.)
- f. **Etc.** is an abbreviation for “Et Cetera.” It means “and the rest.”  
**In writing, I was taught to avoid using “etc.”, as it means ‘you can not think of any more examples.’ It is best to simply insert “and” between your two examples.**
- g. Bird calls. The Olive-sided Flycatcher gave its distinctive *quick-three-beer* call.

**Other English-related:** Do not begin a sentence with an abbreviated genus: **Not** “*P. domesticus* was very common.” Yes to “*Passer domesticus* was very common.” Or simply flip the sentence.

**Aside: I see too many basic English errors... subject-predicate agreement, singular- plural agreement, sentence fragments, run-on sentences, misplaced modifiers,**

#### AVIAN TERMINOLOGY

- a. **Bird longevity:** Longevity calculations should follow methodology described in BBL web site. Ages of birds are given as 9yr03mo and 12yr00mo.
- b. **Ageing birds:** Should follow terminology described in Pyle (1997, 2022). Standard protocol: spell out full name once and use abbreviations subsequent After Hatching Year (AHY); then AHY.
- c. **Bird Topography:** Authors should cite which terminology they are following (e.g., Pyle 1997). *There are differences between source (e.g. s7-9 vs t1-3).* Spell out terms the first time, and use abbreviations subsequently.
- d. **Plumage of birds:** Should follow terminology described in Humphrey and Parkes (1959), Pyle (1997, 2022), Wolfe, Ryder, and Pyle (2010). Authors should state which format they are following.
- e. **Molts of birds:** Authors should cite which format they are using. Spell out terminology first time used; then use abbreviation (e.g., Pre-basic molt... then PB molt).

#### GRAPH, TABLES, and FIGURES

All need to fit in landscape or portrait on the page. Smaller ones can fit in a single column. Text must be in Times New Roman, 12 pt.

#### CITATIONS:

**Single author**, e.g. “...found in Darwin’s finches (Lack 1954)”  
 or “Lack (1954) reported ...”  
 Include just last name and year of publication.

No comma between author and year.

**Two authors**, e.g., (Humphrey and Parks 1954) or “Humphrey and Parks (1954)...”

Do not use “&”.

**Three or more authors**, e.g., (Jones et al. 1987) or “Jones et al. (1987) reported...”

Note period after “al”

But include all author names in Literature Cited.

Use a comma to separate multiple citations, e.g., (Ralph 2001, Lowther 2002)

## LITERATURE CITED

Include complete citation, with no ditto marks or lines, and no abbreviations.

Capitalize words in title as done in original source.

Otherwise, just capitalize proper names.

“Catching resident birds in Sapsucker Woods” (not Catching Resident Birds in Sapsucker Woods).

Often, sources (e.g. Birds of the World) provide a preferred citation method. Use it.

Humphrey, P.S. and K.C. Parkes. 1959. An approach to the study of molt and plumages. *Auk* 76:1-31.

- a. For the first author, last name first, followed by initial(s).
- b. For subsequent author(s), initials first, followed by last name.
- c. There is **no** space between first and middle initials.
- d. If one paper uses both initials, and a second paper uses only first initials, do not insert middle initial in second paper.
- e. In the Literature cited section, the names of all authors are included. Do not use “et al.” here.
- f. Full journal name (no abbreviations) in italics, e.g. not *JFO*, rather *Journal of Field Ornithology*
- g. Give volume and page numbers separated by a colon, with no space between. *No issue number.*
- h. Note locations of periods.
- i. In the title, capitalize as in the original source.

Pyle, P. 1977. Identification Guide to North American Birds, Part I. Slate Creek Press, Bolinas, CA.

- a. For books, author(s) format is the same.
- b. For books, title is not italicize.  
Capitalize words identical to title, or as noted above.
- c. Include publisher with City and State (Province). Add country, if not Canada or U.S.
- d. No page numbers for books.

For citations accessed through the internet.

- a. The URL should be given.

- b. The date when the citation was most recently accessed should be given.

### **OTHER THINGS**

- a. Misused words      affect vs effect, acute vs chronic, e.g. vs i.e., immigration  
vs emigration, its vs it's,
- b. Do not say “significantly different” unless it is statistically so.
- c. singular/plural      bacterium vs bacteria, criterion vs criteria

### **SUGGESTED REFERENCES** to provide especially to newer or first time authors.

Scientific Style and Format: The CBE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers (CBE Style Manual) 8th Edition

I cut my teeth using this as my mentor, but it is a bit expensive (\$75 on Amazon).

Strunk, Jr., W. and E.B. White. 2000. The Elements of Style, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Pearson Educational Company, Needham Heights, MA

It looks like there is a 2018 edition with just Strunk as the author, and it is < \$10.