

GUIDANCE FOR AUTHORS

Selection criteria

The criteria for selection are scientific excellence, originality and interest across disciplines within biology. Papers are assessed by the Editorial Board for suitability before full peer-review. Their recommendations are passed to the Editor. The Editor is responsible for all editorial decisions and he makes these decisions based on the reports received from the referees and the Editorial Board.

Publishing format

Biology Letters are published regularly online and in bimonthly print issues. Along with all Royal Society journals, we are committed to archiving and providing perpetual access. Although the printed version of *Biology Letters* is limited to 2500 words, there is the facility for Electronic Supplementary Material (ESM). Contents of the ESM might include details of methods, derivations of equations, large tables of data, DNA sequences and computer programs. However, the printed version must include enough detail to satisfy most non-specialist readers. Supplementary data up to 10Mb is placed on the Society's website free of charge. Larger datasets must be deposited in recognised public domain databases by the author.

Conditions of publication

Articles must not have been published previously, nor be under consideration for publication elsewhere. The main findings of the article should not have been reported in the mass media. Like many journals *Biology Letters* employs a strict embargo policy where the reporting of a scientific article by the media is embargoed until a specific time. The Editor has final authority in all matters relating to publication.

Categories

Papers published in *Biology Letters* will be categorised by subject, which include

- animal behaviour
- biomechanics
- community ecology
- conservation biology
- evolutionary biology
- evolutionary developmental biology
- genome biology
- global change biology
- marine biology
- molecular evolution
- neurobiology
- palaeontology
- pathogen biology
- phylogeny
- physiology
- population ecology
- population genetics

Electronic Submission details

The Royal Society's electronic-submission and peer-review service provides *Biology Letters* authors with the facility to submit their papers online. The service allows you to upload files in a reliable and user-friendly way, using a Web-based system. When your paper is received, an immediate acknowledgement is sent that details how you can track your contribution online.

For full submission guidelines, further details about the journal and access to all journal content please visit the *Biology Letters* website at rsbl.royalsocietypublishing.org.

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- influence policymaking with the best scientific advice,
- invigorate science and mathematics education,
- increase access to the best science internationally, and
- inspire an interest in the joy, wonder and excitement of scientific discovery.

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Cover image: The brilliant colours of this Rainbow Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) are the product of pigments synthesized by the parrot. In addition to their probable role as signals the pigments also harden the feathers against bacterial degradation. (See pages 214–216; image courtesy of Pam Y. Burtt.)