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Biology Letters

Aims and Scope

Launched as an independent journal in 2005, Biology Letters is a primarily online, peer-reviewed journal that publishes short, high-quality articles from across the biological sciences. The scope of Biology Letters is vast: publishing high-quality research articles and opinion pieces in any area of the biological sciences. However, we have particular strengths in the biology, evolution and ecology of whole organisms. Articles submitted to Biology Letters benefit from its broad scope and readership, dedicated media promotion and an average turnaround time of 4 weeks for editorial decisions. This journal is particularly suitable to research that requires high visibility due to its cross-disciplinary nature or novel findings.

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 main 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.

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

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Cover image: Sea of the dragon lizard Pogona vitticeps from Australia is determined by the interaction of genotype and temperature. (See pages 443-448; image courtesy of Arthur Georges.)