

Guidelines for authors

Irish Birds publishes papers, short notes, and forum articles on all aspects of birds in Ireland, and contributions are welcome from both professional and amateur ornithologists. Contributions are subject to review by the editor and at least one other independent referee. The following guidelines are intended to assist you in the preparation of your manuscript. Consulting a recent edition of *Irish Birds* will also help, and the editor will be happy to provide further advice on the style of presentation if required.

Submission of manuscripts Manuscripts should be sent to the editor at the e-mail address shown inside the front cover. The submission deadline for the current issue will be given in the editorial of the previous issue and posted on the *Irish Birds* twitter account (<https://twitter.com/IrishBirds>). All capitals or uppercase only should not be used for paper titles or element headers. Submissions should be in Microsoft Word. Graphs (figures) can be produced in Microsoft Excel, or other appropriate software.

Structure of papers Where appropriate, papers should follow the standard scientific format of Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion, although other formats may be more suitable for certain types of contributions. Papers should be submitted with page numbers and line numbers.

Short notes Short contributions (less than three pages) should generally be submitted as notes rather than full papers. A note differs from a full paper in having no abstract, and generally a simplified structure with few or no section headings. The difference is not necessarily simply one of length; full papers generally report the results of scientific studies or systematic surveys, whereas notes may report casual observations.

Forum articles Suitable topics for forum articles can include syntheses of current research, discussion of general ornithological issues, and reviews of bird distribution patterns and population trends. The focus of forum articles should be on issues relevant to Irish ornithology, but research from outside Ireland can be discussed if it informs the article. Authors considering submission of a forum article are welcome to contact the editor to discuss its suitability for *Irish Birds*.

Abstract The abstract or summary should not exceed 250 words. This is one of the most important elements of a paper, and must be written with great care. The abstract should summarise the object of the study, the methods used, the results obtained and the conclusions reached. The abstract should give precise, quantified information, and should be able to stand on its own as a record of the study.

Scientific and English names English-language names should be used for birds, with the scientific name given in the title, if the species name is mentioned, and also when the species is first mentioned in the text (but not in the abstract). The same system should be followed for other animals and plants with well-established names in English; otherwise use only the scientific name. Use initial capitals for English-language species names but not for names of higher groups: Herring Gull and Scots Pine, but gulls and pines. Scientific names of species and genera should be in italics (or underlined in the typescript), but names of families and higher groups should be in roman script and generally in parentheses. The format is: Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*; Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*; gulls (Laridae). Authors are advised to follow the sequence and scientific nomenclature of *Handbook of the Birds of the World* and BirdLife International digital checklist of the birds of the world: Version 7 (December 2022). A condensed version of this, listing all Irish species and alternative common names, can be found on the publications page of the BirdWatch Ireland website.

Spelling Spelling should conform to the preferred spelling given in *Chambers 20th Century Dictionary*. Use -ise rather than -ize throughout.

Locations Study site, locations of sightings of birds, etc. should include co-ordinates or a Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey of Ireland. These should be given in the format: Grid Ref. O323626, though 2- and 4-figure references can be used to identify 10 km and 1 km squares respectively rather than an exact site. Locations should include the County name when first mentioned. Do not use Co. for County.

Units, measurements, abbreviations and symbols All units should be metric, with abbreviations as follows: length = mm, cm, m, km; area = ha, km²; volume = mm, l; mass = mg, g, kg; time = s, min, h, day, month, year. Measurements should be written with a space between the number and the unit, e.g. '100 m' not '100m'. Time

of day should be given in the form 12.30 hours. In Ireland, use GMT throughout the year, and specify that it is GMT if there is any possibility of ambiguity. Dates should appear in the form 25 December 1997. Numbers up to and including ten should generally be spelt out, except when used as a scientific unit, but there is no absolute rule about this. If a sequence of quantities includes both large and small numbers, consistent treatment of all numbers in the series is helpful: 'three, seven and thirteen'; '5, 23 and 46'. If two series of quantities appear together, it may be useful to distinguish them by using words for one series and numerals for the other: 'the seven woodland plots contained a mean of 16 pairs, whereas the thirteen farmland plots contained 6 pairs'. Do not start a sentence with a numeral. Insert a comma between thousands and hundreds. Do not use capital O for zero or lower-case i for one. Statistical terms should be given in the conventional manner: χ^2 , t, r, etc.; degrees of freedom as 'df ='; standard deviation, standard error and probability as sd, se and P. Other common abbreviations include ca (not c.) for circa; e.g. and i.e. with two full-stops, sp. and spp. for species singular and plural respectively. Any non-standard abbreviation used in a paper should be explained the first time it is used. Use single quotation marks. However, double quotation marks can be used when quoting verbatim from a published piece of work.

References References in the text follow the author-date system: 'Rutledge (1966) states that...' or '...as has been stated before (Rutledge 1966, Hutchinson 1989)'. Where more than one reference is cited, they should be listed in date order. Where there are two authors both names should appear: 'Rutledge & Ogilvie (1979)'. With three or more authors the format is 'Andrews *et al.* (1996)', unless there is more than one work cited with the same first author and date, when enough information should be given to identify the work. Note that there is no comma between author and date, and that '*et al.*' is in italics. The reference list should be in alphabetical order, using the following format:

Andrews, D.J., Mathers, R.G. & Rainey, E. 1996. Brent Geese feeding on agricultural land around Strangford Lough, County Down. *Irish Birds* 5: 407-412.
del Hoyo, J., Elliott, A. & Sargatal, J. (eds). 1992. *Handbook of the birds of the world*. Volume 1. Lynx, Barcelona.
Delany, S. 1996. *Irish Brent Goose survey, October 1996*. Unpublished report, BirdWatch Ireland, Dublin.
Stowe, T.J. 1993. Cormorack. In Gibbons, D.W., Reid, J.B. & Chapman, R.A. (eds). *The new atlas of breeding birds in Britain and Ireland: 1988-1991*. pp 150-151. Poyser, London.

Note that journal titles should be given in full. References 'in press' are acceptable, but you should not list any material not yet accepted for publication. Information that has been communicated to you personally should not appear in the reference list, but should be referred to in the text as (for example) 'R.F. Rutledge, pers. comm.' but is discouraged.

Tables and figures Tables and figures should be numbered in the sequence in which they are referred to in the text, using Arabic numerals: Table 1, Figure 1, etc. Do not abbreviate Figure as 'Fig.' Type each table on a separate page, with the title at the top and any explanatory notes below. Use 0 for a zero reading and - for a missing value. Figure captions appear below the graph or map. Consider the shape and size of a page in the journal when designing tables and figures. Please present tables in portrait rather than landscape on the page. The titles of tables and figures should be brief, but should aim to provide a full explanation of the data presented, without the need to refer the text of the paper. The species, the location and the date(s) should all generally be specified.

Ethics Papers involving the manipulation or disturbance of birds (or other animal and plant life) will be accepted by *Irish Birds* only if the work described conforms to the relevant legal requirements. Authors may be required to submit copies of licenses and/or ethical clearance documentation under which work was carried out. In addition, ethical statements will be required for publication where appropriate.

Proofs Proofs will be sent to the author shortly before publication, and must be returned promptly. These are usually in electronic (pdf) format. The purpose of checking the proofs is to correct any errors that have occurred, not to rewrite the text or add new data. Senior authors of main papers will receive a complimentary copy of the issue and a final pdf of their article. Authors of notes receive only the pdf.

Finally, in all instances, All-Capitals (e.g. ALL CAPITALS) should never be used, either in headings or main text.