

# Publication Ethics and Guidelines for Australian Field Ornithology

## DEFINITIONS:

THE JOURNAL: Australian Field Ornithology (AFO)

CHAIR: The Chair of the AFO Editorial Board

EDITOR: One of the professional ornithologists who act in the role of journal editor

AUTHOR(S): Any person who contributes to the writing and submission of a paper for publication and meet the criteria outlines in advice to authors guidelines

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR(S): Author(s) responsible for correspondence with The Journal, responsible for corrections, questions and final approval of the manuscript. See Guidelines for Authors policy.

JOURNAL PUBLISHER: BirdLife Australia

PUBLISHER REPRESENTATIVE: BirdLife Australia Staff member who sits on the Editorial Board.

## Peer review process

All original research contributions are peer reviewed by at least two external experts and reviewed by the handling editor.

## Initial screening

After an article is submitted to a journal, a journal editor screens the manuscript and decides whether or not to send it for full peer review. Only after clearing the initial screening is the article sent to one or more peer reviewers. Editors will consider the following aspects:

- Is the manuscript good enough quality to be sent for peer review?
- Does it conform to the aims and scope of the journal and has it followed the style guidelines and instructions for authors?
- Does it make a significant contribution to the existing literature?

Unsuitable articles may be rejected without peer review at the editor's discretion. If the article passes these initial checks, it will be sent for peer review.

AFO uses 'single-blind review' process. This means the reviewers can see the author of the article, but the identities of the reviewers are anonymous, unless the reviewer/s choose to make their identity known to the author/s.

The details of the comments as well as the overall recommendations by peer reviewers will be considered by the Editor when making a decision, but **ultimate responsibility for acceptance or rejection lies with the Editor.**

In accordance with [COPE recommendations on ethical editing for new Editors](#), Editors will assign any submissions they cannot handle (e.g. if they are the author of an article submitted to their own journal) to another editor or a member of the Editorial Board.

## **Policies on Misconduct, Conflict of Interest and Plagiarism**

The following section outlines various policies aimed at identifying, managing and resolving potential academic misconduct.

### **Allegations of Misconduct that impact the Journal:**

All allegations of misconduct relating to AFO or its articles, regardless of how they are reported, are to be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated. This may be misconduct by contributing authors, editors, editorial board members or peer reviewers. It may also include misconduct by the Journal Publisher.

In the first instance the Chair or the Publisher Representative should be notified (unless clear conflict of interest in doing so. In this instance any board member can be notified). The Chair and Owner Representative will determine what the next best step is, for example if further Board Members should be brought into the discussion, if internal HR advice is required from the Journal Owner, if external legal advice is required. In instances where neither the Chair or Owner Representative can be brought in then the Editorial Board as a whole will review the allegations and determine the best steps for resolution. This may involve notifying the Journal Owner CEO, involving the BirdLife Australia Research and Conservation Committee (RACC) of the Owner Organization or the Governing Board of the Owner Organisation.

If misconduct is substantiated by any party all papers impacted will be withdrawn from the platform and thoroughly reviewed to determine if the work can in good conscience be left in the public domain. Where work(s) are withdrawn a public notice will be made acknowledging the reasons for withdrawal.

If misconduct allegations are found to be substantiated against Editors/Editorial Board members their involvement with the publication will be paused whilst investigations are ongoing. Any papers that editors worked on that may be impacted by the allegations will be reviewed to determine if they can be left in the public domain.

If allegations of misconduct against a Peer Reviewer are substantiated, the paper will be reviewed internally to determine if this misconduct has implications for the papers of concern.

Allegations of misconduct against the Journal Owner should be submitted to the Chair. These are to be taken to the full Editorial Board for discussion, investigation and resolution. The Board may decide to nominate one of two members to pursue the allegations, reporting back to the full board.

### **Conflict of Interest (CoI)**

A conflict of interest occurs **when an individual's personal interests – family, friendships, financial, or social factors – could compromise his or her judgment, decisions, or actions**. These could be actual or perceived. Authors are required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest at the time of submitting work for publication. If unsure if a conflict exist this should be disclosed. The nominated editor will be responsible for assessing the disclosed CoI and determining how best to manage it. This may require a small disclosure statement at the beginning of the document.

Editors are required to disclose any potential conflict of interest to the Editorial Board Chair when approached by contributing Authors. The Chair will assess potential conflicts and determine if the Editor is the appropriate publications editor to work with the contributing author or if the paper should be allocated to a different editor. If the Editor is supervisor or has a personal relationship with one of the submitting authors, the paper will automatically be allocated to another editor to handle the paper.

Peer Reviewers: Any potential conflict of interest between Peer Reviewers and authors are to be identified at the time of reviewer engagement. This may be, but not limited to: previous professional or personal relationships, previous research/academic relationship, e.g. student and supervisor, historic conflict in the research space/funding space.

### **Perceived Conflict of Interest and Complaints Process**

Should a perceived conflict of interest be raised the complainant should present this in writing to the Chair outlining issues with supporting evidence. The Chair will then be responsible for how this is resolved. The Chair may determine they are in a position to make a judgement on the complaint and resolve the issue, or they may take the complaint to the full editorial board for resolution. Should the complaint/perceived conflict of interest be with the Chair, the complainant should take this issue to the Owner Representative on the Editorial Board. This member may determine the resolution or take the complaint to the full editorial board (minus the Chair) for resolution.

### **Plagiarism**

Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) defines plagiarism as:

"When somebody presents the work of others (data, words or theories) as if they were his/her own and without proper acknowledgment." Plagiarism is not acceptable for articles in *Australian Field Ornithology*.

### **Allegations of Plagiarism**

Any concerns or allegations of plagiarism should be submitted to the Chair in writing with appropriate evidence. The Chair can choose to resolve these issues, or submit the concerns to the full Editorial Board for review. If an author is found to have plagiarised another's work, the paper will be withdrawn from publication and a statement provided *in lieu* of the work outlining the reason for the withdrawal.

### **Replication of other published work**

AFO will not accept papers where content has previously been peer reviewed and published. In the instance of grey literature – for example project reports, reporting not previously published in peer reviewed literature, AFO will accept this content in the appropriate format for peer review and publication if the peer reviews are favourable (see advice to authors for submission information). Full disclosure of funding sources, project partners and wider project context need to be included in these instances.

## **Policies on Intellectual Property, Copyright and Licensing**

### **Intellectual Property (IP) and Copyright**

The author retains all IP and copyright to the content as per standard laws. Copyright in a work does not last forever. The exact duration of copyright depends on the type of work and can vary between countries. However, for a literary work such as an academic article, the duration is usually the life of the author plus 70 years.

At publication, papers are published as Open Access. Open access (OA) is the process of making published academic articles freely and permanently available online. Anyone, anywhere can read and build upon this research. Articles are published under a Creative Commons license:

#### **Attribution-NonCommercial-No Derivatives (CC BY-NC-ND)**

**Articles can be shared as long as they are referenced correctly, and are not to be changed in any way or use them commercially.**

Should external requests to replicate work come to the journal (for example images or maps), the relevant author(s) will be contacted to gain permission. If authors are deceased then decision will fall to the Editorial Board Chair.

#### **AFO does not seek fees from contributing authors. Policies on Animal Ethics and Significant Areas**

### **Research and Publication**

Not all of AFO's content will require animal ethics or permitting. Where experimental research has been undertaken, the necessary ethics and permits must have been obtained. For banding studies in Australia the appropriate Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme (ABBBS) license is required. For banding studies outside of Australia, the relevant banding permits are required. Permits relating to research in relevant land use types (e.g. national parks) and/or relevant species should be obtained.

Authors must include a statement within the manuscript to provide details of the name of the ethics committee(s) which approved the study (where approval was required) and include the permit or animal license numbers where available (for studies requiring such permits or licenses).

### **Ethical Policies for Authors**

#### **Definition of Authorship**

An author and co-authors will be defined as those people who:

1. Made a significant contribution to the work reported, whether in the conception, study design, observations, execution, acquisition of data, analysis and interpretation, or in all these areas.
2. Have contributed to drafting or writing, or adding substantially to the article (external to the publication editorial team or peer reviewers).

Authors will:

1. Review and agreed on all versions of the article before submission, during revision, the final version accepted for publication, and changes introduced at the proofing stage.
2. Agree to take responsibility and be accountable for the contents of the article including the shared responsibility to resolve any questions raised about the accuracy or integrity of the published work.
3. Where a group of authors submit a paper for publication, a single author may be nominated by the group as the corresponding author, and they take on responsibility for correspondences, reviews and accountability (where appropriate).

#### **Acknowledgement of non-authors/other contributors:**

Any significant contribution to work reported should be appropriately credited according to our authorship criteria. If any parts of the work have been outsourced this should be clearly stated within the manuscript with an explanation of the role. Authors are responsible for retaining all of the original data related to their work and should be prepared to share it with the journal editorial office if requested. Contributors not included in the authorship should be included in an 'Acknowledgments' section with an explanation of their role.

Acknowledgements need to include individuals who have contributed to the article (e.g. technical assistance, formatting-related writing assistance, translators, scholarly discussions which significantly contributed to developing the article, etc.), but who do not meet the criteria for authorship. These people should be listed by name (and affiliation if appropriate) where they are agreeable.

#### **Affiliations:**

Authors and co-authors must list all relevant affiliations to attribute where the research or scholarly work was approved and/or supported and/or conducted.

If the author has moved to a different institution before the article has been published, they should list the affiliation where the work was conducted, and include a note to state their current affiliation. If not affiliated with an institute, current postal address can be provided.

#### **Author disputes**

The following policies are in place for resolving potential Author disputes.

#### **Between contributing authors:**

In cases where disputes arise between authors during the publication process the active AFO Editor will be asked to mediate between authors for a resolution. However, Editors are not obligated to provide this role. Disputes may include (but are not limited to) acceptance/rejection of editor comment, changes to the interpretation of results with further exploration of data prior to final publication, authorship/contribution to paper. The editor will remain unbiased and judge all arguments on their merit. If after mediation disputes remain and no resolution is reached between authors, then the paper will be withdrawn from publication.

**Between contributing author(s) and editor:**

If disputes arise between the author(s) and the allocated editor, authors may request that a new editor consider the paper. Requests are to be submitted in writing with supporting evidence to the Chair of the Editorial Board. The request will be assessed by the Chair of the Editorial Board. If the issue remains unresolved, the board can be called in to help resolve the issue, with input from other board members as required. If authors are not happy with the final resolution at the board level the paper will be withdrawn from the journal. Should the Chair of the Editorial Board be the editor in question, the author request will move to the BirdLife Australia representative on the Board for review.

**Appeals and Complaints**

Appeals and complaints are to be submitted in writing with evidence to support the complaint. These should be submitted to the Editorial Board through the Chair. The full Editorial Board will then consider the issue and develop a resolution. This may involve written correspondences for further information, online or in person meetings to discuss the issues.

**Request for Name Change:**

There are many reasons why an author may request a change to their name on a publication throughout their professional career. Upon request AFO will change names on PDF versions of online papers. Authors need to provide a list of relevant papers (including doi), the original author name and the corrected author name. This correction can be made with or without a publicly made correction at the authors discretion.