

The field of natural product science is developing fast and a diverse range of exciting research is now being published. However, not all topics will be of interest and relevance to the audience of *Phytochemistry Letters*. We are privileged to receive far more manuscripts than we can publish. The following points provide some clear criteria defining the minimal requirements for publishing in *Phytochemistry Letters*.

Before you submit your manuscript, you must ensure that your manuscript meets the following criteria:

-Does your manuscript have context and significance and clearly describe why the research was undertaken and why it is important? Novel chemistry must be clearly related to the context of the research.

- Is the research of interest to a wider international audience?

- Is the novel chemistry of substantial significance? *Phytochemistry Letters* currently receives many manuscripts that describe the structural elucidation of only one new compound, which may be a simple derivative of a known example. Whilst this may not preclude review, a compelling case for novelty and interest to the readership must be made. For example, its' pertinent biological activity or chemotaxonomic significance must be highlighted.

- Is the study fragmented and part of a series of small papers? *Phytochemistry Letters* does not review manuscripts that detail the isolation of minor components which are part of previously published research by the authors on the title organism.

-If the manuscript details a biological evaluation of natural products, are the bioassays robust, relevant, non-trivial and carried out with appropriate controls? Are the levels of activity significant? Statements detailing the 'potential of compounds as drug leads' must be realistic and substantiated by levels of activity, and where appropriate, pharmacokinetic or bioavailability data at the target tissue.

-The source organism must be authenticated by an expert, include reference to appropriate voucher specimens and must be validated taxonomically (for example <http://www.ipni.org/> or <http://www.theplantlist.org/> for higher plants).

The structural elucidation of new compounds must be described comprehensively using high-resolution mass spectral data and extensive 2-D NMR spectral interpretation as a minimum, and chiroptical data where appropriate

-Phytochemistry Letters does not normally send manuscripts out for review that detail the isolation of known compounds or their pharmacology unless there is a high degree of novelty, significance and interest associated with the work.

-Manuscripts detailing evaluation of mixtures of natural products must have adequate profiling, fingerprinting and standardization by a high resolution technique as a prerequisite.

In the context of Phytochemistry Letters taxonomic issues need to be addressed in a variety of ways.

- It is general practice that voucher specimens should be deposited in a recognized herbarium. These voucher specimens need to be fully cited within the article (with collector, collector number and herbarium). In the case of lesser known plants, we encourage authors to include electronic scans of the specimens as part of their supplementary data.
- As an essential step, authors will have to check the taxonomic validity of the plant names using one of the international databases, and preferably www.theplantlist.org
- In future, such a check will be built into the submission and review process and authors will only be able to submit manuscripts, after the validation of the species' taxonomy.
- A particular problem are complex preparations, especially those containing plant extracts. Here detailed evidence on the authentication during the production needs to be ascertained. In addition fingerprints of the preparations tested are advisable.
- Very commonly these questions have been ignored in clinical studies of herbal preparations. The following two papers make it clear that a correct taxonomic nomenclature is an essential requirement in such studies:

Heinrich and Verpoorte, J. Ethnopharmacol. 2014, doi.org/10.1016/j.jep.2014.01.016 and Rivera et al J. Ethnopharmacol. 2014 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jep.2013.12.022>