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**SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR TAXONOMIC PAPERS**

**Taxonomic papers**
All manuscripts should adhere to the last edition and subsequent amendments of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (hereafter, the Code), which can be accessed online (http://www.nhm.ac.uk/hosted-sites/iczn/code/). However, taxonomic papers should follow particular rules that are outlined below (manuscripts will be considered 'taxonomic papers' when new taxa are erected, when amended diagnoses of taxa are provided, or when the main aim of the paper is taxonomic at the Editor's discretion).

**Structure of the paper**
A separate section entitled Systematics (for extant taxa) or Systematic paleontology (for extinct taxa) is mandatory. This section may substitute the standard Results section; if not, then the latter must be placed immediately after the systematic section. This section primary heading should be followed by successive taxonomic subheadings in round type that do not adhere to the style of secondary or tertiary headings of the journal, and which must include rank (but see below), taxon name, and taxonomic authorships and/or specifications about the novelty of taxa (see abbreviations below), without dot at the end. For example:

**Systematic paleontology**

Order Primates Linnaeus, 1758

Infraorder Catarrhini . Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, 1812

Superfamily Cercopithecoida Gray, 1821

Family Cercopithecidae Gray, 1821

Subfamily Colobinae Blyth, 1863

Genus Mesopithecus Wagner, 1839

Mesopithecus pentelicus Wagner, 1839

Studied specimens Text follows here in the same line, with the heading underlined and not followed by a dot. When necessary, such as when describing new taxa, tertiary headings of Holotype, Type locality, Diagnosis, Distribution, Etymology, etc., can be provided here.

**Description**

Text begins here, indented, and with the heading in italics on the previous line. Tertiary headings can be added below to separate the description of different anatomical parts. Additional secondary headings (in italics) may be added below, as required (Comparisons, Remarks, etc.).

The use of taxon ranks is mandatory when ruled by the Code (i.e., family-, genus- or species-group taxa), and optional for higher-level ranks not ruled by the Code (e.g., class, order). New taxa must be explicitly denoted as such after taxon name (e.g., sp. nov.), whereas new rank must be explicitly specified after taxonomic authorship. A taxonomic subheading can be followed, on next line, by another taxonomic subheading (of lower rank), a synonyms list, or one or more secondary or tertiary headings (in accordance to the journal style), depending on the case. Tertiary headings will be used except for longer sub-sections of 'Description', 'Comparisons' or 'Remarks', which must be under secondary headings and may be alternatively placed within a separate Results section (if any). The erection of new family- and genus-group taxa must be accompanied at least by a designation of the type genus or species, respectively, whereas the erection of new species-group taxa must obligatorily include a succinct diagnosis (without references, and preceded by a tertiary heading), which must be differential unless a separate differential diagnosis is provided.

**Synonyms**

If applicable, systematic headings of species-group taxa may be followed by a synonyms list with references. References cited within the synonyms list(s) must be included in the references list of the paper, but their citation does not adhere to the standard citation style of the journal. Only relevant synonyms must be included (e.g., original description, new rank, genus transfer, etc.). Each synonym must be placed on a text line of its own, flushed to the left, beginning with year, followed by colon, taxon name, authorship without year, semicolon plus citation (if different from authorship), colon, plates and/or figures and comma (if applicable), and page range.

**Taxonomic authorities**
Taxonomic authorities (or authorships) should be provided following a taxon name (especially for ranks of the genus-and species-groups) when it is first mentioned in the text, as well as within systematic headings within a formal Systematics or Systematic paleontology section. References for taxonomic authorships used in the text must be included in the references list following the same style as other references. Within the text, taxonomic authorships should follow the recommendations of the Code if they go against the journal’s citation style. Therefore, the name of author(s) must be separated from year of original description with a comma, but parentheses can only be used for species-group names when they were originally erected within a different genus from that currently used. For authors, only surnames will be used, unless initials are required to distinguish different authors. For two authors, names must be separated by 'and' (instead of ampersand); for three or more authors, the name of first author followed by 'et al.' should be used as long as the full list of authors can be unambiguously identified in the references list.

**Taxon names**

Genus- and species-group names must be italicized (including tables and figures), whereas taxon names from higher ranks must be in round type and with the first word capitalized. Using the English version of formal family-group (or higher-level rank) taxon names is allowed except in systematic headings, but they must be clearly denoted as such by not being capitalized and by transforming the formal Latin ending of each rank into its standard English version (e.g., -ids instead of -idae for families, -oids instead of -oidea for superfamilies, etc.). Authors should be aware that species names are binomina composed by a genus name and a species epithet, so that the use of isolated species epithets is not warranted; the same applies to subspecies trinomina. Genus names within species binomina must not be abbreviated when they are first mentioned in the text (even if implicit), at the beginning of a sentence, or within a heading (systematic or otherwise). The same applies to species epithets in subspecies trinomina when first mentioned in the text. Genus names must be abbreviated (when necessary) preferentially by using the first (uppercase) letter of the genus name (in italics) followed by a dot. However, different abbreviations must be used for different genera within a paper, so that additional (lowercase) letters must be employed to distinguish abbreviations of genus names beginning with the same letter. For example, genus Australopithecus will be only abbreviated as 'Au.' if Ardipithecus is abbreviated in the same paper as 'A.', although they might be alternatively abbreviated as 'A.' and 'Ar.', respectively. The use of subgenus names (with uppercase first letter) and names of superspecies or groups of species (with lowercase first letter) is optional, but when used, they must be obligatorily within parentheses before the species epithets; only these taxon names, not the parentheses, must be in italics.

**Standard abbreviations and open nomenclature**

When new taxa are erected, their name must be followed by an expression that unambiguously denotes that they are new (e.g., 'sp. nov.', 'gen. nov.', 'gen. et sp. nov.', 'fam. nov.', etc.) in the title, the abstract, the systematics section, and the first time they are mentioned in the text. Expressions 'sp. nov.' and 'gen. nov.' will be used instead of other equivalents, such as 'n. sp.' and 'n. g.', respectively. Authors are encouraged to use open nomenclature modifiers to express doubts in taxonomic assignments. Indeterminate species must be denoted by 'sp.' after genus name, indeterminate subspecies by 'subsp.' after species name, and 'indet.' for after the family-group taxon name in the remaining instances. When a taxon may be assigned to two different species, separate the two binomina by 'vel' (meaning 'or') or slash, not the species epithets by a slash or an hyphen (e.g., Homo erectus vel Homo ergaster or Homo erectus/H. ergaster, instead of Homo erectus/ergaster or Homo erectus-ergaster). Other standard abbreviations are 's.l.' (sensu lato, in broad sense), 's.s.' (sensu stricto, in strict sense), 'cf.' (confer, compare with), 'aff.' (affinis, closely related to) and '?' (question mark). The latter three conventions should must not be mistaken with one another: 'cf.' means that a particular specimen is likely to belong to the taxon, but the assignment cannot be confidently confirmed due to the lack of enough data; 'aff.' means that a particular specimen appears most closely related to that taxon but probably represents a different one (likely to be new); the question mark indicates that the taxonomic (not nomenclatural) validity of a particular taxon is doubtful. These conventions must precede the relevant taxonomic rank, separated by space in the case of 'cf.' and 'aff.', and without space in the case of question marks. Therefore, uncertainly at the species rank should be denoted by putting these modifiers before the species epithet without repeating the genus name (e.g., Australopithecus cf. afarensis, not Australopithecus cf. A. afarensis); if taxonomic uncertainty applies to the genus rank as well, then the modifier must be written only
once (e.g., cf. Australopithecus afarensis). When the inclusion of a particular species within a genus is questioned but there is no better alternative, then the genus name must be written within simple (not double) quotation marks, which should not be italicized (e.g., 'Sivapithecus' occidentalis). All the taxonomic abbreviations and symbols mentioned above are standard in taxonomy; hence, they should not be italicized, and their meaning should not be further specified anywhere in the manuscript. The same applies to other taxonomic terms, such as 'nomen nudum', 'nomen dubium', 'nomen oblitum', etc.

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