



Looking to publish your zoo research paper?

It can be a challenge to decide on the right type of paper for publishing zoo-based research, many avenues for publishing can appear closed for zoo research based on wider attitudes around sample size, repeated measures or limited wider application and readership. However, case studies are relevant to other, similar, organisations and if you select appropriate statistical analyses (coding in R is your friend!) then repeated measures can be incorporated into your data analysis and evaluated in your discussion. Don't be put off by aiming high and pitching to a journal that you feel could be the right fit for your article. To move evidence-based practices forward, to provide evidence to counterpart the criticism of zoos and to showcase their positive impacts on animals and society more widely, we need to keep up the efforts of publishing research outputs. Without evidence, the modern zoo will not meet its research, education, and conservation goals. So as tough and challenging as it can be to submit papers and deal with rejections and reviewer or editor critiques, keep on writing and use the skills and expertise of the BIAZA Research Committee to help support and develop your aspirations and ideas for your zoo-focussed research papers.

This article contains information on:

- How to choose the right journal
- How to use keywords effectively
- How to structure your paper to convince an editor to send it out for review
- The types of academic journals open to zoo-focussed science and research papers.

It is important to consider who is going to read the paper and therefore use the findings from your research. This can be more important than impact factor or other such academic metrics. Remember, science is only as good as the audience that it reaches, so think about who you want to read your paper and consider that as the basis for journal choice. Our new world of evidence-based practice means that ensuring wide readership by zoo personnel maybe the most important consideration when selecting where to publish in.

Look for indexing and abstracting information as this will tell you what other databases or academic search engines link to the papers published by a specific title. The more external databases a journal indexes to, the more the chances of someone finding it when they do a search for your topic.

Remember to select strong keywords. These are not just a filler at the end of your abstract but help direct potential viewers to your article. Try to choose keywords that do not appear in your title (as the words in your title will also direct potential readers if they appear as search terms). For example, if your paper is "An evaluation of three different enrichment practices to reduce stereotypic behaviours in captive lions" perhaps state keywords that are big cats, abnormal repetitive behaviours, animal welfare, environmental enrichment, husbandry change. Keywords that link to the title, and broad, but do not repeat the same phrases.

Review the author information and scope and aims of the journal from their homepage when considering where to publish. Some journals can be full open access (free for all to read) with no cost to the authors based on transformative agreements with the institutions of a corresponding author. Buddy up and collaborate with friendly academics at universities or colleges that may have easier or more available access to open access publication offers or fee waivers.

Ultimately, even a case study on a small sample population can make for a sound scientific paper with impact, if pitched in the right way so a journal's editor can see that it will garner readership and

appeal to an audience. Try to step into the editor's shoes when writing your paper. Would you, if you were the editor, want the paper that you are writing in journal that you have chosen? Is s/he likely to understand why you have decided to go for publishing in their journal? Many journals receive many more papers than they have space to publish, so it's important to state your case clearly in an easy-to-follow and succinct manner.

To help zoo-based research get sent for reviewer and therefore standing a chance of being accepted into peer reviewed papers, consider:

- Stating your aims and predictions clearly so the reader can understand the rationale and motivation behind the research project. Your introduction needs to support the aims and research hypotheses.
- Identifying the gap in knowledge or practice (e.g. animal husbandry or zoo operations) that your research fills? Your paper's introduction should provide the reader with the evidence for this.
- Selecting good quality examples from the published literature to support your arguments and discussion points. Citations are your best friend when it comes to being a valid and objective scientist.
- Selecting primary sources (e.g. original research papers) as the key supporting evidence for your paper, rather than review articles or second-hand commentary of the subject area. A review of the empirical research literature shows that you have read widely and can see how your work fits into the body of available evidence.
- Thinking of your research paper in the shape of an egg timer. Start broad by introducing wider, supporting concepts, go narrow when you describe the specifics of your methods and what your results show, and then broaden out your evaluation, appraisal, and conclusions to the wider world.
- Keeping your methods repeatable and full of relevant detail.
- Clearly explaining the ethical review process. Even for purely observational studies. Always explain how the methods were scrutinised by others.
- Stating the chosen data analysis testing by aim or prediction.
- Laying out your results in the same order as you explain your data analysis, so the reader can see what you have analysed and how it has been used.
- Likewise, structuring your discussion to evaluate your results in the order then appeared in the result section. This gives a clear narrative that flows from your methods through to your conclusion.
- Reading over your paper as you go to ensure that you tell a story. Not in a fictional sense, but the story of what your research question was, how you collected data to answer it, and therefore what you found out and why these results matter.

Once you've got your paper sorted, proofed, and approved by all authors (and, importantly, by your organisation), it is time to send it off to a journal's editor. It is good practice to think about the potential choice of paper before you start writing, as you can tailor the paper to the journal's scope.

The list below is by no means exhaustive but identifies some of the peer-reviewed publications that are i) zoo specific or ii) have a track record of accepting zoo research articles. Happy publishing!

Zoo Biology <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10982361>

Journal of Zoo & Aquarium Research www.jzar.org



Applied Animal Behaviour Science <https://www.journals.elsevier.com/applied-animal-behaviour-science>

Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science <https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/haaw20>

Behavioural Processes <https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/behavioural-processes>

Ethology <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/14390310>

Animal Behaviour <https://www.journals.elsevier.com/animal-behaviour>

Journal of Zoo & Botanical Gardens <https://www.mdpi.com/journal/jzbg>

Animals <https://www.mdpi.com/journal/animals>

Birds <https://www.mdpi.com/journal/birds>

PLOS One <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/>

PeerJ <https://peerj.com/>

Proceedings of the Royal Society B <https://royalsocietypublishing.org/journal/rspb>

Behavioral Ecology & Sociobiology <https://www.springer.com/journal/265>

Animal Welfare <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/animal-welfare>

Journal of Veterinary Behavior <https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-veterinary-behavior>

Frontiers in Veterinary Science <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/veterinary-science>

Frontiers in Psychology <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology>

Frontiers in Bird Science <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/bird-science>

Journal of Zoo & Wildlife Medicine <https://bioone.org/journals/journal-of-zoo-and-wildlife-medicine>

Primates <https://www.springer.com/journal/10329>

American Journal of Primatology <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10982345>

Anthrozoos <https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/rfan20>

The Journal of Environmental Education <https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/vjee20>

Conservation Biology <https://conbio.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/15231739>

Environmental Education Research <https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/ceer20>

Visitor Studies <https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/uvst20>

Journal of Sustainable Tourism <https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/rsus20>

Palgrave Communications <https://www.nature.com/palcomms/>

Nature Scientific Reports <https://www.nature.com/srep/>