

Category	Insufficient (<60)	Major Revisions (60-75)	Minor Revisions (75-85)	Meets Expectations (85-90)	Exemplary (90+)	Score
Introduction (45)	Background is missing literature or not appropriately cited. Content is confusing and does not follow a logical progression. Writing displays a lack of direction or understanding. (0 – 26)	Background is present but cited studies are not relevant. Some information may be slightly inaccurate or not well described. Detail is lacking overall. (27 – 34)	The introduction is lacking in some small aspect. Literature may be present yet not well placed or in context. Funnel structure is wobbly. Hypotheses do not clearly come from background. (34 – 38)	The introduction utilizes 3+ published studies to have background. Major ecological concepts are briefly discussed then transitioned to study specifics. Some inconsistencies may be present. (38 – 40)	The introduction incorporates a comprehensive review of major hypotheses utilizing literature to establish state of knowledge on topic. Introduces study system and narrowly focuses into hypotheses (41 – 45)	
Hypotheses (PART OF THE INTRODUCTION) (30)	Several potential issues: Only predictions are listed, hypotheses are incoherent, Writing is unclear to the point of complete confusion (0 – 18)	Hypotheses may be present but predictions are lacking or unclear. Hypotheses are clearly untestable. other major issues with study ideas. (18 – 22)	Hypotheses and predictions are listed, although they may be lacking a small component. There may be some mismatch between hypotheses & predictions (22 – 25)	Hypotheses are clearly stated with predictions. Predictions are testable and match study design (25 – 27)	Hypotheses are clearly stated and logical extensions from background. Hypotheses have direct predictions which can be logically derived from them into a testable study. (27 – 30)	
Methods (15)	Methods are not well thought-out and clearly do not relate to hypotheses or context of study. (0 – 26)	Methods describe collection and analyses but have a fundamental flaw which compromises the study design. Or massively	Methods have data collection and analysis described. There may be some unclear sections. Study design may have some potential flaws with analyses.	Methods are described with data collection and analysis well described. Some detail may be missing about exactly why/how a procedure	The methods are well thought-out. Described data collection and analyses methods are consistent with a goal of directly testing the hypotheses. A clear,	

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		unclear how data may be connected to the study. (27 – 34)	(34 – 38)	was/will be done. (38 – 40)	comprehensive understanding of data is displayed (41 – 45)	
Figures (37.5)	Figures do not accurately show the data. There is a clear issue with how information is presented.  (0 – 28)	Figures are missing major elements. Or figure does not have an appropriate use of showing data. Confusing or unrelated to the project  (22 – 28)	Data are well summarized however some minor element may be missing. Figures are still coherent.  (28 – 32)	Data are well summarized, all captions, axes titles, etc are present. Figures are able to be interpreted without context  There are at least 2 figures or tables which appropriately fit the data  (32 – 34)	Figures are clear, creative, and aesthetically thoughtful. Data are well summarized, all captions, axes titles, etc are present.  There are a sufficient number of figures to clearly communicate the data  (34 – 37.5)	
Results Statements	Results statement is incorrect in its description of data  (0 – 22)	Several potential issues may have occurred: Results do not utilize correct analyses Results do not correctly reference figures Results are not detailed enough in the description of data Results have too much or irrelevant detail which distracts from	Results list key findings and statistics however, may be lacking in a complete description or missing minor elements.  (28 – 32)	Results correctly utilize statistics and figures. Statistics are reported using appropriate metrics and effect sizes. Statements are clear and correct.  There is at least one statistical analysis  (32 – 34)	Results are brief, yet informative. Statistics are correctly utilized and described well in statements. Results is an easy to follow narrative format and highlights key findings accurately.  There are multiple statistical analyses to explore the data from many angles	

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		an overall message (22 – 28)			(34 – 37.5)	
Discussion Statements (45)	results are incorrectly interpreted. Outside studies are not utilized or utilized incorrectly. Overall discussion is severely limited (0 - 27).	Hypotheses are evaluated, yet there is a major disconnect between results and discussion or lacking in key areas. (27 – 34)	Discussion meets minimum requirements of hypothesis evaluation and connection to other studies. Yet is limited in the overall discussion of ideas. (34 – 38)	Discussion evaluates results & original hypotheses. Makes some connections to other studies and other potential ideas. (38 – 41)	The discussion is a comprehensive evaluation of the results from this study. Makes clear connections to other studies both the place results in context but also evaluate alternative trends/ideas. (41 – 45)	
References (30)	No references (0)	References are used but lacking either correct publication quality (not peer-reviewed) or content (not relevant) (18 – 22)	There are at least two correctly utilized references. OR some references are incorrectly utilized in a minor way (22 – 25)	There are at least 3 peer-reviewed reference. The references are correctly utilized in the context of the discussion and introduction (25 – 28)	There are multiple references which display the paper has a solid understanding of the ecological literature (28 – 30)	
General Quality (30)	Demonstrates a lack of effort, or confusing at multiple points to the stage of difficult to understand. (0 – 18)	Confusing in some sections. Writing is choppy or does not follow scientific standards (18 – 22)	Writing is clear generally but in some sections lacking or inconsistent. (22 – 25)	Writing is clear, may be constrained at points but consistently accurate throughout. (25 – 28)	Writing is quality and scientific. It is natural to read, clear, and demonstrates a thorough understanding of ideas. (28 – 30)	
Total (300)						