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Book Review

Heard, S.B. 2016. *The Scientist's Guide to Writing: How to Write More Easily and Effectively throughout Your Scientific Career* - 306 pp., Princeton University Press, Princeton, ISBN: 978-0-69117-022-0 Paperback - 21.95 US \$

As science worldwide has turned into an "industry", there is increasing demand to provide essential guides for and effective scientific writing. If we browse for the phrase "scientific writing" in the Google search engine, this rather unspecified search retains an approximate 22 500 000 (!) hits. It is not a big surprise that plenty of guidebooks have been written to improve the scientific writing and publishing skills of many, mostly early-career scientists.

Effective writing and publishing has also become very important in vegetation science, as was recently noted in one of the field's leading journals (Pärtel et al. 2016).

At first glance, the recently published book "**The Scientist's Guide to Writing**" appears to be just another book on scientific writing. However, on closer inspection we can see that the author does not just tell a story about effective scientific writing, but tries to train us to improve our skills in it.

The book contains 28 chapters and at the end of each chapter is a short summary, which provides a short overview of the essential information provided in the chapter. Each chapter is also supplemented with exercises with which you can practice or test your skills and abilities linked to the chapter contents.

The first, really short part of the book explains what is writing and why is it necessary to improve the writing skills of the potential authors. The second part explains how to manage our writing behaviour to reach an optimum. In the third and one of the largest parts of the book the author introduces the contents and structure of a scientific paper and how can we effectively accomplish the task by producing a scientific paper. The fourth part of the book provides guidelines for an effective writing style of paragraphs, sentences and the use of the right words.

After we have completed a manuscript the pain is not over, because the prepared manuscript must be published somewhere. Thus, we will receive some reviews or opinions from the side of the editors and reviewers, which we should address. The fifth part of the book provide guidelines how to treat reviewer comments, thereby increasing the chances of success in getting the paper published.

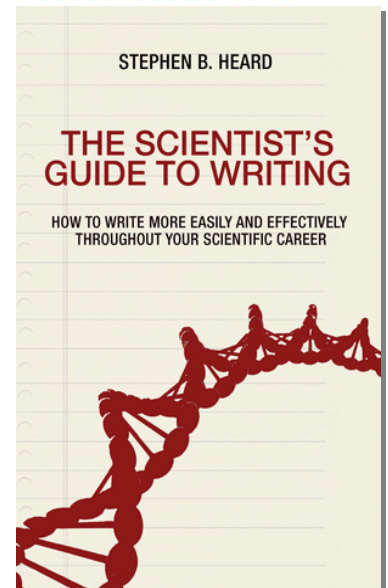
In the sixth part, the author introduces three other related and important questions: (i) How to manage other types of scientific writing, i.e. book chapters, grant applications or reviews? (ii) How to most effectively work together with co-authors? and (iii) How to write effectively as a non-native speakers?

In the last part of the book the author tries to summarise the essence of scientific writing and gives his personal opinion on the writing process and the product, concluding that the most important thing in scientific writing is its clarity.

All in all, the book is very useful guideline for scientists in all career stages. The book captures the essence of scientific writing in a very amusing way, and makes even the difficult aspects of scientific communication really enjoyable to read.

References

Pärtel, M., Chiarucci, A., Chytrý, M. & Pillar, V.D. 2016. How to publish a good journal in plant community ecology? *Journal of Vegetation Science* 27: 1-3.



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