

MAMMALOGY LAB REPORT GUIDELINES

Development and Squirrel lab reports are to be written in the form of a formal scientific paper with introduction, methods, results, discussion and literature cited sections. ***There should be NO SPELLING OR GRAMMAR ERRORS!!!***

INTRODUCTION

The *Introduction* should include the following points:

- Discussion of previous related research. This means you will need to find articles in scientific journals that discuss research related to your topic.
- Definitions of all relevant technical terms, e.g. precocial and altricial.
- A clear statement of your objective.
- A clear statement of your hypotheses.

METHODS

The *Methods* section is intended to convey information about how you conducted your research. Do not include any *Results* in this section! This is a frequent mistake and is easily avoided. You should:

- Describe the experimental subjects used, including *Scientific names* (properly capitalized and italicized), ages, sexes, and any other information pertinent to the subjects used.
- Describe all experimental equipment and devices used with a reasonable amount of detail.
- Describe the methods employed with sufficient detail that anyone could replicate your experiment(s) ***exactly***.
- Describe how the data were analyzed, i.e. statistical methods.

RESULTS

The *Results* section is intended to convey what you found through your experiments without analysis or comment. It should be a written summary. While graphs and figures are included in this section they can not substitute for your written summary! Another frequent mistake is to include *Discussion* with your results. Keep them separate! This section should:

- Include all of your results. For example, what were the averages, maxima, and minima for your measured values?
- Include tables and figures (graphs) in this section.
- Be sure to reference your tables and figures in the text of your report.

DISCUSSION

The *Discussion* section is intended to convey your interpretation of your results. It should not be a simple statement of findings; that is reserved for the *Results* section. It should:

- Summarize your results in a few statements.
- Discuss whether or not your results support your hypothesis.
- Discuss whether or not your findings agree with the work of previous researchers.
- Suggest improvements to your methods or future research questions that might further illuminate or better test your hypotheses.

LITERATURE CITED

This section is where you give the **complete** information for the references you used. You should:

- Follow scientific journal format (e.g. follow the format used in *The Journal of Mammalogy*).
- Use scientific journals and texts. Web sites, encyclopedias, and dictionaries are not acceptable sources!