

Scientific Abstract Writing:

a color-coded guide to

OJISH

What is an abstract?

- Summarizes a study & grabs readers' attention
- Concise [200-300 words] & comprehensive
- An essential skill in science writing

Outline problem

- What problems exist in field of interest?
- 1-2 sentences, present tense to highlight a current issue

Justify question

- What current gaps in knowledge are there?
- 1-2 sentences, present tense to compliment current issue with current question

Introduce purpose

- What were the goals of the study?
- 1-2 sentences, past tense since the study happened in the past

Summarize method

- What procedures were done for the study?
- 2-3 sentences, past tense since data collection happened in the past

Highlight findings

- What are the results and implications?
- 2-4 sentences, present tense to apply data to what is currently known

Intertidal gastropods such as the Sitka periwinkle (*Littorina sitkana*) remain a poorly ecologically understood species in respect to specific habitat preference. Learning more about the Sitka periwinkle's most frequent distribution amongst different substrate types may reveal yet unknown features of the species' role in its community. This study tested periwinkle distribution differences between algae, barnacle or mussel, and open sand plots. Two transects, one at high and one at low tide, were sampled for periwinkle population density at an intertidal beach prominent in all three treatment levels in Juneau, Alaska. Data was first analyzed by a two-way factorial ANOVA excluding sand substrate to determine if tide height or substrate type affected periwinkle population density, and if one factor impacted the other. Next, a one-way ANOVA was applied to low tide substrate alone to examine if substrate affected population density. Neither tide level nor substrate have a significant effect on population density in Sitka periwinkles, and there was no interaction between the two variables. The one-way ANOVA confirms no significant differences between substrate types at the low tide level. Sitka periwinkles appear to be ecologically dependent not only on algae, but also on barnacles and mussels. Further research is recommended to explore Sitka periwinkle interactions with barnacles and mussels in particular, as well as potential reproductive hierarchies along different tide levels.

...and there's your abstract! Need more help? Visit the Writing Center [Egan 105] or our website [www.uas.alaska.edu/juneau/writing-center].