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Selection criteria
The criteria for selection are scientific excellence, originality and interest across disciplines within biology. The Editors are responsible for all editorial decisions and they make these decisions based on the reports received from the referees and/or Editorial Board members.

Many more good manuscripts are submitted to us than we have space to print, and we give preference to those that present significant advances of broad interest. Submission of preliminary reports, of articles that merely confirm previous findings, and of articles that are likely to interest only small groups of specialists, is not encouraged. All articles are sent to Editorial Board members for an initial assessment of their suitability, and may be returned to authors without in-depth peer review if this assessment makes it seem unlikely that they will be accepted.

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Aims and scope
Research papers. Proc. R. Soc. B articles welcome papers of high quality in all aspects of biology. Contributions, in particular, are strong in ecology in the widest sense, and behavioural and evolutionary biology. Proc. R. Soc. B has also published significant numbers of papers in epidemiology, human biology, neuroscience, palaeontology and biomechanics. Authors are encouraged to submit articles not only in these fields, but also in all areas of biology. The criteria for selection are scientific excellence, originality and potential interest to a wide scientific audience. Review papers. The journal also publishes topical reviews in emerging areas of biological science that will be of interest to non-specialists, or whose reviewers were commissioned but unsolicited submissions were considered.

Concurrent papers. Short addenda to, or criticisms of, papers already published in this journal will also be considered. At the discretion of the editors, the authors of the original paper may be invited to reply. Concurrent papers should be short, interesting and conform to the rules of good manners.

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The Royal Society's strategic priorities are to:
- invest in future scientific leaders and in innovation,
- influence policymaking with the best scientific advice,
- invigorate science and mathematics education, increase access to the best science internationally, and
- inspire an interest in the joy, wonder and excitement of scientific discovery.

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However, the printed version must include enough detail to satisfy most non-specialist readers. Supplementary data up to 10Mb is placed on the Society’s website free of charge. Larger datasets must be deposited in recognised public domain databases by the author.

Conditions of publication
Articles must not have been published previously, nor be under consideration for publication elsewhere. The main findings of the article should not have been reported in the mass media. Like many journals, Proc. R. Soc. B employs a strict embargo policy where the reporting of a scientific article by the media is embargoed until a specific time. The Editor-in-Chief has final authority in all matters relating to publication.

Electronic submission details
The Royal Society's electronic-submission and peer-review service provides Proc. R. Soc. B authors with the facility to submit their papers online. The service allows you to upload files in a reliable and user-friendly way, using a Web-based system. When your paper is received, an immediate acknowledgement is sent that details how you can track your contribution online.

For submission guidelines and access to all journal content please visit the Proc. R. Soc. B website, for further details see rspb.royalsocietypublishing.org.

Cover image: Rytidosperma pulchrum, a relative of the Australian wattle grays, is one of the New Zealand grass species with the peculiar and iconic grey-colored body. This rare feature is more common in New Zealand’s animals. Antill et al. (see pages 695–701) propose that the historical absence of grazing animals in New Zealand allowed this feature to evolve, whereas on other continents and in the presence of grazers, it has been disadvantageous due to the loss of biomass it causes. (Image courtesy of Aelys M. Humphreys.)