

Tell us what inspires you



Journal Club articles offer early-career researchers the chance to tell the wider community about an article that they find especially influential.

Early-career researchers who are just beginning to develop their scientific ideas often read widely and deeply in search of the spark of an idea for a research topic. These sparks, and the scientific progress that emerges from them, are the subject of the Journal Club format that *Nature Reviews Biodiversity* is publishing for the first time in this issue.

In Journal Club articles, an early-career scientist discusses a published article – from any year and from any journal – that has influenced the development of their own incipient research plans or that they feel has had a strong influence on their discipline more generally. These short pieces (of fewer than 500 words) quickly get to the heart of why the highlighted paper is influential. In some cases, the original paper either offered something surprising that fuelled further inquiry or resolved an outstanding issue in a compelling way. For example, in this issue, Hechler [describes](#) how a paper that used environmental DNA data and sophisticated modelling techniques made progress on one of the thorniest challenges in ecology: inferring which species are interacting the wild. Liang [discusses](#) the relief and motivation he felt after reading that a relationship between plant diversity and productivity, commonly found in his controlled experiments, was ‘validated’ in a large-scale field study.

Journal Club pieces can also speak to the more personal benefits of reading an important scientific paper. A single article can change how an early-career researcher thinks about a topic. Wohlleben [shares](#) how one paper helped her to better teach the challenging evolutionary concept

of evolutionary arms races, and inspired experimental designs used in her own research. Krasnow [describes](#) how the stress she felt as a marine ecologist taking an advanced mathematics class was alleviated when she read a particularly clear and effective paper about the use of partial differential equations in ecology.

Each Journal Club article is drafted by the early-career researcher and then revised after feedback from one of our journal’s editors. Our edit aims to provide the writing support and guidance that we offer to authors of our other formats, while remaining flexible in a way that allows the author’s unique voice to shine through.

Our sister journal, *Nature Reviews Psychology*, previously articulated the value of this format in showing other scientists the impact that their work can have on the next generation of researchers¹. It is our hope that these Journal Club articles will support the mission of the journal to reduce geographic biases by having authors from a wide range of locations and by highlighting papers published by diverse scientists.

If you are a graduate student or postdoctoral researcher who is interested in writing a Journal Club article, please contact us by email (nrbiodiv@nature.com). In the email, provide your name, career stage, affiliation, the paper you would like to write about and a few sentences about how the paper has influenced you or your field. On a rolling basis, we will invite full submissions from this pool of inquiries; unfortunately, we will not be able to invite all ideas that are suggested.

Published online: 17 February 2025

References

1. A platform for early-career voices. *Nat. Rev. Psychol.* **1**, 65 (2022).

“[These pieces] quickly get to the heart of why the highlighted paper is influential”