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Text pages should be numbered serially, with the title and abstract on the first. Genus and species names should be italicised and should be followed by the authority when first used in the main text or in diagnoses. SI (metric) units must be used other than in specimen citations where appropriate. Authors are advised not to return loan material of new taxa until papers have been reviewed. Refer to volume 63 onwards to see how nomenclatural details, typification and specimens seen should be formatted.

The title page should include the title, the name(s) and address(es) of the author(s), the abstract, a short running title and a few important keywords. Titles do not normally include authors of scientific names. It will be assumed that correspondence will be addressed to the first author unless otherwise indicated.

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References in the text should be cited by author and publication date: (Smith, 2009) or ‘as stated by Stenlake (2009)’. Multiple references should be arranged chronologically. For three or more authors use et al. In the reference list, references should be in alphabetical order and should appear in the following style: ZHU, R.-L. & CHENG, X. F. (2008). The status of Amblyolejeunea (Lejeuneaceae) from Ecuador and Guadeloupe. Syst. Bot. 33: 617–620.

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The cover illustration, drawn by Mary Mendum, is of the diminutive alpine plant *Sibbaldia procumbens*, named in honour of one of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh’s founders Robert Sibbald. This plant is used, in a stylised form, as the Garden’s official logo.