

# **PROPOSED STYLE GUIDELINES**

## **for the KARST AWARENEES and EDUCATION SERIES**

### **of the TEXAS SPELEOLOGICAL SURVEY**

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The Karst Awareness and Education Series (KAES) of the Texas Speleological Survey (TSS) is different in focus and purpose from the other TSS publications: its intent is to educate and increase awareness of Texas karst resources amongst both cavers and the general public. In order to achieve its mission, KAES must appeal to a broader audience with an emphasis on “educational” learnings, “informative” text, and “engaging” layout and graphics while still adhering to technical excellence and thematic message(s). Accordingly, it will have different stylistic guidelines from the more technically-oriented TSS County Report and Monograph series.

Given the emphases noted above, the guidelines for this type of publication will necessarily be general in nature as a rigid adherence to stylistic protocols would severely limit the creative muses necessary to successfully write and edit a KAES publication. I suggest that all those interested in editing a KAES publication read *Living With Karst* (2001), *Colorado Caves – Hidden Worlds Beneath the Peaks* (2001), and *Living on Karst* (2003) to get a feeling for the type of general audience, style, and tone that the TSS is trying to achieve in this series. These are all excellent general audience that convey thematic messages and while maintaining technical professionalism.

The following are guidelines that set basic boundaries for consideration.

#### **Manuscript Preparation and Submission**

1. All manuscripts should be submitted electronically.
2. Files may be saved in .rtf or .doc or .docx (Microsoft Word) formats (plain ASCII text (.txt) files lose punctuation, for example italics).
3. No detailed formatting is necessary (fonts, font sizes, indents, bold type in headings, page breaks, etc.) These will be added during final layout with input from the author. Some formatting such as italics and other punctuation that is not implicit in the text should be retained to instruct the Editor.
4. Overall, manuscripts being submitted for KAES publication by the TSS should include a color cover photo (and possible back cover photo), a Table of Contents, Introduction, Glossary of technical terms, Endnotes/Cited Literature and/or Further Readings, and Index. KAES documents should be graphic intensive.

#### **Punctuation and Style**

1. Use only a single space after periods at the end of sentences, and after colons and semicolons.
2. Use a comma before the “and” in a series, as in “the cave was visited by Bob, Carol, Ted, and Alice” (aka the “Oxford comma”). Do NOT use commas between verbs joined by “and/or/but” (e.g., He saw the people, and called them. WRONG). DO separate full sentences joined by “and/or/but” by a comma (e.g., He saw the people,

and he called them. RIGHT). Remember that semicolons (;) are the grammatical equivalent of “and,” and, if used often, can lead to run-on sentences.

3. Quotations:

- Quotation marks (use “smart quotes”) should be OUTSIDE periods and commas (“title one,” “title two”), but INSIDE colons and semicolons (see next entry).
- When text is deleted within a quotation, that omission should be marked by three dots surrounded by square brackets (an extended ellipsis) like this: [ . . . ]. This distinguishes the present writer’s deletions from those of the original source.
- Quotations from sources that are over 5 lines long should be set off as indented text, starting on its own line (and check citation styles); the text leading into these quotations should either follow grammatically into it, or end with a colon (like this: ) with the quotation starting on a new line).

4. Italics — Italicize all publication names (i.e., *The Texas Caver*). Italicize genus and species of organisms. Italicize foreign words, but not foreign proper nouns (names, places).

5. Measurements — All measurements are to be given in metric as the international standard followed by English units in parentheses. Do not use abbreviations for units of measure as this may add to confusion for a general audience. If measurements need to be converted from their original source, adhere to the proper significant digits. Example:

*The 5-meter-wide (16 feet) entrance is at the base of a 30-meter-deep (100 feet) sink.*

6. Abbreviations — One word: don’t. The exception is English units (see above). Acronyms may be used if spelled out originally, as in Bat Conservation International (BCI), Texas Speleological Survey (TSS), etc, but not states.

7. Sentences and paragraphing: shorter is better. Multi-clause and run-on sentences (often joined by ;) are to be avoided; passive voice is to be avoided. Make shorter paragraphs (NOTE: this is an example of why passive should be replaced by active verbs), since reading on the web has accustomed people to shorter text units. Avoid chains of nouns where using a verb makes the sentence clearer (not “the finding of an accumulation of dirt is to be noted there” but “we found that dirt accumulates there”).

8. Figures – all figures (photos, maps, line graphics, etc.) must be referenced in the text of the publication as “(Fig. 1)” to guide the reader as to their direct association. Associated figure captions must begin with “Fig. 1. Typical speleothems in Cave X.”

9. Layout Formatting – contributors need not worry about formal layout design as these will be determined by the editor at the time of publication formatting. These include:

- a) Columns and margins
- b) Fonts and sizes
- c) Sidebars that emphasize specific learnings / messages.

11. Remember that the KAES are not scientific publications composed of technical articles. The TSS is targeting the general public with this series and needs to appeal to an audience that will generally not be interested in technical jargon, scientific methodology, or tedious explanation. State what is known and what is conjecture or hypothesis in simple but succinct language. For every group of facts given in a paragraph of section, state why it is important for the reader to know this. Have a message in mind while writing a section and adhere to it in the text. Do not burden

the reader with unnecessary information that does not contribute to the overall message. Most important is to never impart a patronizing or condescending tone to your writing. Never impart political opinions within the manuscript. Text should be written to reach the broadest audience.

## **Graphics**

1. No tables or graphics should be embedded in the text file, but rather saved as separate files with placeholders in the text, such as “insert figure 1 here”.
2. Photos and color graphics should be 300 DPI TIFF files, but JPEG is acceptable for photos. Strictly B&W graphics (no grays or colors) such as line art or maps should be 600 DPI TIFF format. JPEG files are not recommended due to progressive resolution loss during reformatting and/or production processing.
3. If using Photoshop or similar graphics software, do not submit graphics at less than 700 PPI (pixels per inch) as they will be too small and/or will lose resolution if enlarged to an acceptable size during layout.
4. Original photos and art can be submitted as hard copy to be scanned by the Editor, but this will likely increase production time.
5. Graphics submitted in other formats, such as PowerPoint, must be reformatted to be useable and so may suffer a potential loss of quality. They are therefore not recommended.
6. Tables can either be in tab-delimited text format, or in Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. Tables should ideally be designed to display across a page in portrait orientation but may be formatted for landscape orientation at the Editor’s discretion. Wide tables may be reduced to fit the layout, with resulting loss of readability, so keep this in mind when designing your table. Tables should be submitted as separate documents, like all other figures (table formatting does not transfer well to typesetting format). The Editor will most likely reformat the table(s) to fit layout and style guidelines with input from the author.

## **Figure Captions**

A separate text file should be attached to the main manuscript with figure captions and/or credits, organizing them by accompanying graphic file names. Figures include all graphics to be incorporated into the manuscript (*e.g.* photos, maps, line graphics, etc.) For example, if there are three photos with file names of “figure1.tif”, “figure2.tif”, and “figure3.tif”, then there should be a file called “photo\_captions” that consists of text along the lines of:

Figure 1. Entrance to Pigsty Cave. Photo by Carl Kunath, May 1963.

Figure 2. Joe Caver rappelling into the Big Bottomless Sinkhole after the 1978 NSS Convention. Photo by Orion Knox, July 1978.

Figure 3. A close-up of the unusual fungus covering the walls of Respiratory Distress Cave, Wheeler County. Photo by James Jasek, August 1966.

Photo captions and/or credits may be included at the back of the publication, and not necessarily placed with the photos or graphics in the text, at the discretion of the Editor and with input from the author.

## **Citations and References**

Footnotes and/or scientific/technical citations within the body of the text are to be avoided in order to preserve readability. Endnotes may be included if necessary depending on the specific publication, but it is preferable to include a Cited Literature or Further Readings section at the end of the text. Endnote references should generally follow those of the NSS News submission and Style Guidelines found at <http://www.caves.org/pub/nssnews/style.html>. Examples of endnote references:

- Reddell, J. R. and Smith, A. R. 1966. A revised checklist of Texas caves. Texas Speleological Survey, 2(8), 37 pp.
- Taylor, A.J.. 1982. The mammalian fauna from the mid-Irvingtonian Fyllan Cave local fauna, Travis County, Texas. M.S. thesis, University of Texas at Austin, ix + 106 pp.
- Watt, F. H. 1956. Two Coryell County burials. Central Texas Archeologist, 7:111.
- Cobb, C. 2010. Endangered species survived drought. The Herald-Zeitung, 15 April 2010, <http://herald-zeitung.com/story.lasso?ewcd=a4a6bcc17e0c155c> [accessed 15 April 2010].

## **Glossary**

A glossary of technical terms used in the publication should be included at the end of the text. Entries should combine proper technical language and enough restatement so that the average reader will comprehend the concept (see Wikipedia entries on geological terminology for examples).

## **Table of Contents**

The author should include a draft table of contents that includes the titles of all manuscript sections (including formal divisions of the text into Parts, acknowledgments and introduction, and chapters, as well as backmatter) and chapter subsections. The editor will adjust the TOC to series style and to reflect page numbering after final layout.

## **Index**

An index keyed to the main sections, topics, and specific karst resources of the publication should be included at the end of the text.

## **Commonly Misused and Misspelled Words and Terms**

- ridgeway, borehole, crawlway, stoopway, duckunder (one word, no hyphens)
- Convention (capitalized when used to denote a specific event such as the TSA Spring Convention)
- grottos are cave clubs (caver plural); grottoes are shelter caves (standard plural)
- rappel, rappelled, rappelling (commonly misspelled)
- led (past tense and past participle of the verb “to lead”)
- climb-up, climb-down, down-climb, pull-down trip, through-trip
- handhold, foothold (single words)
- archeology, note that the TSS prefers no “ae” as in “archaeology”
- wetsuit, moonmilk, underground (single words)

- downstream, upstream (single words)
- freshwater, saltwater (single words as adjectives)
- prusik
- helictite
- riverbed, riverbank, streambed, etc.
- “formations” are rock layers, “speleothems” are the pretty things in caves
- The three statewide caving events in Texas are the TSA Winter Business Meeting, the TSA Spring Convention, and the Texas Cavers Reunion
- The TSA magazine for Texas cavers is *The Texas Caver*. Note use of the preceding “The.”