The Company of Biologists Accessibility Conformance Report

WCAG Edition

(Based on VPAT® Version 2.5Rev)

Name of Product/Version: The Company of Biologists Journals

Report Date: October 2026

Product Description: The Company of Biologists is a not-for-profit publishing organization dedicated to supporting and inspiring the biological community. The organization publishes five specialist peer-reviewed journals: Development, Journal of Cell Science, Journal of Experimental Biology, Disease Models & Mechanisms, and Biology Open. Their website provides access to scientific research articles, journal information, and resources for researchers and the scientific community.

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Evaluation Methods Used: This digital product has been evaluated using the W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 (WCAG 2.2). The evaluation was done using the WCAG 2.2 Success Criteria for Level A and Level AA conformance, and the accessibility standards established in Section 508 of the United States Rehabilitation Act.

The product has been assessed using the following steps:

- Automated testing using SortSite, which flags non-compliant issues in the code via a site-wide scan

- Manual verification via browser interaction, including keyboard-only navigation testing, browser zoom and reflow testing, text spacing testing, and review of the underlying code structure that assistive technology relies on

- Review of PDF documents for document structure, language, title, and image descriptions

- Manual testing of form submission and error handling behavior

Applicable Standards/Guidelines

This report covers the degree of conformance for the following accessibility standard/guidelines:

"Voluntary Product Accessibility Template" and "VPAT" are registered service marks of the Information Technology Industry Council (ITI)

Standard/Guideline	Included In Report
Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2	Level A (Yes) Level AA (Yes) Level AAA (No)

Terms

The terms used in the Conformance Level information are defined as follows:

- **Supports**: The functionality of the product has at least one method that meets the criterion without known defects or meets with equivalent facilitation.
- **Partially Supports**: Some functionality of the product does not meet the criterion.
- **Does Not Support**: The majority of product functionality does not meet the criterion.
- **Not Applicable**: The criterion is not relevant to the product.
- **Not Evaluated**: The product has not been evaluated against the criterion. This can only be used in WCAG Level AAA criteria.

WCAG 2.2 Report

Note: When reporting on conformance with the WCAG 2.2 Success Criteria, they are scoped for full pages, complete processes, and accessibility-supported ways of using technology as documented in the WCAG 2.0 Conformance Requirements.

Table 1: Success Criteria, Level A

Notes:

Criteria	Conformance Level	Remarks and Explanations
1.1.1 Non-text Content (Level A)	Partially Supports	Images on web pages have text alternatives. Some PDF documents contain images without alternative text. See: https://journals.biologists.com/jcs/article-pdf/139/12/jcs264699/3705986/jcs264699_review_history.pdf
1.2.1 Audio-only and Video-only (Prerecorded) (Level A)	Supports	Embedded supplementary movies are video-only. Each movie is accompanied by a text legend describing its content, and related figure legends in the article provide further description.
1.2.2 Captions (Prerecorded) (Level A)	Supports	Prerecorded videos with narration, such as the Fast & Fair videos on the Biology Open homepage and in a promotional pop-up, provide accurate captions. Embedded supplementary movies on article pages are video-only and do not contain audio.
1.2.3 Audio Description or Media Alternative (Prerecorded) (Level A)	Supports	Narrated videos convey all important information through their narration, with visual content supporting what is spoken. Embedded supplementary movies are video-only and are accompanied by text legends.
1.3.1 Info and Relationships (Level A)	Partially Supports	Structure and relationships are conveyed through markup, with some exceptions. These include: 1. Article pages include an empty heading in the Competing interests section. See: https://journals.biologists.com/jeb/article/227/6/jeb2

Criteria	Conformance Level	Remarks and Explanations
		47241/345672/The-influence-of-the-post-hepatic-septum-and 2. An in-page navigation menu on a static page is not marked up as a list. See: https://journals.biologists.com/journals/pages/ai-policies 3. Some PDF documents are not tagged, so their structure is not available to assistive technology. See: https://journals.biologists.com/jcs/article-pdf/139/16/jcs265186/3712736/jcs265186.pdf
1.3.2 Meaningful Sequence (Level A)	Supports	Content is presented in a meaningful reading order, which is preserved when the page is resized.
1.3.3 Sensory Characteristics (Level A)	Supports	Instructions do not rely solely on shape, size, visual location, or sound.
1.4.1 Use of Color (Level A)	Supports	Links within text are underlined, and required form fields are indicated with an asterisk and a text legend, so color is not the only visual means of conveying information.
1.4.2 Audio Control (Level A)	Not Applicable	The site does not contain audio that plays automatically.
2.1.1 Keyboard (Level A)	Supports	Navigation menus, article tools, dialogs, and links are operable with a keyboard.
2.1.2 No Keyboard Trap (Level A)	Supports	Keyboard focus can be moved into and out of all components, including dialogs, which close with the Escape key.

Criteria	Conformance Level	Remarks and Explanations
2.1.4 Character Key Shortcuts (Level A 2.1 and 2.2)	Supports	The site does not use single-character keyboard shortcuts.
2.2.1 Timing Adjustable (Level A)	Supports	The only time limit identified is the verification step on the sign-in and registration forms, which warns the user before it expires and provides a control to refresh the verification.
2.2.2 Pause, Stop, Hide (Level A)	Not Applicable	The site does not contain moving, blinking, scrolling, or auto-updating content. Videos play only when started by the user.
2.3.1 Three Flashes or Below Threshold (Level A)	Not Applicable	The site does not contain content that flashes.
2.4.1 Bypass Blocks (Level A)	Supports	A "Skip to Main Content" link is provided, and pages use header, navigation, main, and footer regions.
2.4.2 Page Titled (Level A)	Partially Supports	Web pages have descriptive titles. Some PDF documents do not have a document title. See: https://journals.biologists.com/DocumentLibrary/language_polishing_services.pdf See: https://journals.biologists.com/dev/article-pdf/153/15/dev205534/3711672/dev205534_review_history.pdf
2.4.3 Focus Order (Level A)	Supports	Focus order follows the visual layout, and focus moves into dialogs when they open and returns when they close.
2.4.4 Link Purpose (In Context) (Level A)	Supports	The purpose of each link can be determined from its link text, or from the link text together with its surrounding context.

Criteria	Conformance Level	Remarks and Explanations
2.5.1 Pointer Gestures (Level A 2.1 and 2.2)	Supports	The site does not require multipoint or path-based gestures.
2.5.2 Pointer Cancellation (Level A 2.1 and 2.2)	Supports	Functions are activated on release of the pointer, using standard links and buttons.
2.5.3 Label in Name (Level A 2.1 and 2.2)	Supports	Visible labels are included in the accessible names of links and controls.
2.5.4 Motion Actuation (Level A 2.1 and 2.2)	Supports	The site does not use device or user motion to operate functionality.
3.1.1 Language of Page (Level A)	Partially Supports	Web pages identify their language. Some PDF documents do not identify their language. See: https://journals.biologists.com/jcs/article-pdf/139/16/jcs265186/3712736/jcs265186.pdf
3.2.1 On Focus (Level A)	Supports	Moving focus to a component does not cause a change of context.
3.2.2 On Input (Level A)	Partially Supports	On search results pages, changing the "Sort by" option or selecting a filter checkbox immediately updates the results and moves keyboard focus back to the start of the search panel, without advance notice. Using the arrow keys on the "Sort by" menu triggers this on each keypress. See: https://journals.biologists.com/dmm/search-results?page=1&q=cancer
3.2.6 Consistent Help (Level A 2.2 only)	Supports	Contact information and the accessibility policy link appear in the same position in the site footer on every page.
3.3.1 Error Identification (Level A)	Supports	When a form is submitted with missing or invalid information, each field in error is identified with a text message next to the field, and the message is announced to assistive technology.

Criteria	Conformance Level	Remarks and Explanations
3.3.2 Labels or Instructions (Level A)	Supports	Form fields have visible labels, and required fields are marked with an asterisk explained by a text legend.
3.3.7 Redundant Entry (Level A 2.2 only)	Not Applicable	The site does not include multi-step processes that ask for the same information more than once. The confirm password field on the registration form is required for security.
4.1.1 Parsing (Level A) WCAG 2.0 and 2.1 – Always answer 'Supports' WCAG 2.2 (obsolete and removed) - Does not apply	Supports	For WCAG 2.0 and 2.1, the September 2023 errata update indicates this criterion is always supported for content using HTML or XML. This criterion was removed in WCAG 2.2.
4.1.2 Name, Role, Value (Level A)	Partially Supports	Most components expose their name, role, and state, with some exceptions. These include: 1. The promotional pop-up that appears on some article pages has no accessible name. See: https://journals.biologists.com/jeb/article/227/6/jeb247678/345106/Young-male-orchid-bees-produce-the-most-alluring 2. The pop-up that displays enlarged figures and tables is not identified as a dialog to assistive technology. See: https://journals.biologists.com/jeb/article/228/14/jeb249817/368379/Adding-a-marker-of-gut-integrity-an-example-of 3. On the registration form, the User Name, First name, and Last name fields remain marked as invalid

Criteria	Conformance Level	Remarks and Explanations
		to assistive technology after they have been filled in and the form resubmitted. See: https://journals.biologists.com/my-account/register?siteId=3&returnUrl=%2fjournals

Table 2: Success Criteria, Level AA

Notes:

Criteria	Conformance Level	Remarks and Explanations
1.2.4 Captions (Live) (Level AA)	Not Applicable	The site does not provide live audio or video content.
1.2.5 Audio Description (Prerecorded) (Level AA)	Supports	Narrated videos convey all important information through their narration, with visual content supporting what is spoken, so no additional audio description is needed.
1.3.4 Orientation (Level AA 2.1 and 2.2)	Supports	Content is not restricted to a single display orientation.
1.3.5 Identify Input Purpose (Level AA 2.1 and 2.2)	Partially Supports	The sign-in form and the registration form identify the purpose of their fields, with one exception: the User Name field on the registration form does not identify its purpose. See: https://journals.biologists.com/my-account/register?siteId=3&returnUrl=%2fjournals
1.4.3 Contrast (Minimum) (Level AA)	Partially Supports	Text meets minimum contrast requirements, with one exception: the "Help" link in the embedded Google Scholar access widget on article pages has insufficient contrast. See: https://journals.biologists.com/jeb/article/228/14/jeb

Criteria	Conformance Level	Remarks and Explanations
		249817/368379/Adding-a-marker-of-gut-integrity-an-example-of
1.4.4 Resize text (Level AA)	Supports	Text can be resized to 200 percent without loss of content or functionality.
1.4.5 Images of Text (Level AA)	Supports	Information is presented as text. Where promotional banner images contain text, the same information is provided as text alongside them.
1.4.10 Reflow (Level AA 2.1 and 2.2)	Partially Supports	Page content reflows to a single column at a width of 320 CSS pixels. When a page is loaded at that size or larger zoom, no advertisement is shown. When the page is zoomed after loading at a larger window size, the advertisement banner at the top of the page does not resize and extends beyond the viewport, requiring horizontal scrolling. See: https://journals.biologists.com/dev
1.4.11 Non-text Contrast (Level AA 2.1 and 2.2)	Partially Supports	Form fields on the sign-in and registration pages have visible boundaries. The "Update Search" field on search results pages has a border with insufficient contrast against its background. See: https://journals.biologists.com/dmm/search-results?page=1&q=cancer
1.4.12 Text Spacing (Level AA 2.1 and 2.2)	Supports	No loss of content or functionality occurs when text spacing is increased.
1.4.13 Content on Hover or Focus (Level AA 2.1 and 2.2)	Supports	The site does not display custom content on hover or focus. Additional information such as author details is shown only on click.
2.4.5 Multiple Ways (Level AA)	Supports	Content can be located through site search, advanced search, navigation menus, issue archives, and subject browsing.

Criteria	Conformance Level	Remarks and Explanations
2.4.6 Headings and Labels (Level AA)	Partially Supports	Headings and labels describe their topic or purpose, with some exceptions. These include: 1. Article pages include an empty heading in the Competing interests section. See: https://journals.biologists.com/jeb/article/227/6/jeb247241/345672/The-influence-of-the-post-hepatic-septum-and 2. The "Update Search" field on search results pages is labeled "Querybuilder input" for assistive technology, which does not describe its purpose. See: https://journals.biologists.com/dmm/search-results?page=1&q=cancer
2.4.7 Focus Visible (Level AA)	Supports	A visible focus indicator is shown on interactive elements.
2.4.11 Focus Not Obscured (Minimum) (Level AA 2.2 only)	Supports	Focused elements are not entirely hidden by the sticky article toolbar or other content.
2.5.7 Dragging Movements (Level AA 2.2 only)	Supports	The site does not require dragging movements.
2.5.8 Target Size (Minimum) (Level AA 2.2 only)	Partially Supports	Most targets meet the minimum size or spacing requirement, with some exceptions. These include: 1. Peer-review icon links on issue table of contents pages are 16 by 16 pixels and placed directly above the author list. See: https://journals.biologists.com/bio/issue/14/10

Criteria	Conformance Level	Remarks and Explanations
		2. The "Help" link in the embedded Google Scholar access widget on article pages is 16 pixels tall and placed next to other links. See: https://journals.biologists.com/jeb/article/228/14/jeb249817/368379/Adding-a-marker-of-gut-integrity-an-example-of
3.1.2 Language of Parts (Level AA)	Supports	Content is in English. Terms in other languages are proper names, such as institution and funder names.
3.2.3 Consistent Navigation (Level AA)	Supports	Navigation menus and the site footer appear in the same order on every page within each journal site.
3.2.4 Consistent Identification (Level AA)	Supports	Components with the same function are identified consistently across pages.
3.3.3 Error Suggestion (Level AA)	Supports	Error messages describe how to correct the error. For example, required fields state that they are required, password errors list the password requirements, and the confirm password field states when passwords do not match.
3.3.4 Error Prevention (Legal, Financial, Data) (Level AA)	Supports	The site does not include legal or financial transactions. Changes to account information in My Account can be reviewed and cancelled before they are submitted, using the Update and Cancel buttons.
3.3.8 Accessible Authentication (Minimum) (Level AA 2.2 only)	Supports	The sign-in form supports password managers and pasting. The verification step uses object recognition, which is permitted by this criterion.
4.1.3 Status Messages (Level AA 2.1 and 2.2)	Supports	Form error messages, search result counts, and verification expiry warnings are announced to assistive technology without receiving focus.

Table 3: Success Criteria, Level AAA

Notes:

Criteria	Conformance Level	Remarks and Explanations
1.2.6 Sign Language (Prerecorded) (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
1.2.7 Extended Audio Description (Prerecorded) (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
1.2.8 Media Alternative (Prerecorded) (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
1.2.9 Audio-only (Live) (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
1.3.6 Identify Purpose (Level AAA 2.1 and 2.2)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
1.4.6 Contrast (Enhanced) (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
1.4.7 Low or No Background Audio (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
1.4.8 Visual Presentation (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
1.4.9 Images of Text (No Exception) (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
2.1.3 Keyboard (No Exception) (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
2.2.3 No Timing (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
2.2.4 Interruptions (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
2.2.5 Re-authenticating (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
2.2.6 Timeouts (Level AAA 2.1 and 2.2)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
2.3.2 Three Flashes (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated

Criteria	Conformance Level	Remarks and Explanations
2.3.3 Animation from Interactions (Level AAA 2.1 and 2.2)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
2.4.8 Location (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
2.4.9 Link Purpose (Link Only) (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
2.4.10 Section Headings (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
2.4.12 Focus Not Obscured (Enhanced) (Level AAA 2.2 only)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
2.4.13 Focus Appearance (Level AAA 2.2 only)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
2.5.5 Target Size (Level AAA 2.1 and 2.2)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
2.5.6 Concurrent Input Mechanisms (Level AAA 2.1 and 2.2)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
3.1.3 Unusual Words (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
3.1.4 Abbreviations (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
3.1.5 Reading Level (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
3.1.6 Pronunciation (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
3.2.5 Change on Request (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
3.3.5 Help (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
3.3.6 Error Prevention (All) (Level AAA)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated
3.3.9 Accessible Authentication (Enhanced) (Level AAA 2.2 only)		Level AAA criteria not evaluated