

**Selection criteria**

The criteria for selection are scientific excellence, originality and interest across disciplines within biology. The Editor is responsible for all editorial decisions and she makes these decisions based on the reports received from the referees and/or Editorial Board members. Many more good proposals and articles are submitted to us than we have space to print, we give preference to those that are of broad interest and of high scientific quality.

**Publishing format**

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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, *Phil. Trans. 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 has final authority in all matters relating to publication.

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*Cover image:* Composite image of the original map made by John Snow in 1854 (Snow J. 1855 *On the mode of communication of cholera*, 2nd edn, London, UK: John Churchill), influenza virus model (CDC Public Health Image Library) and a phylogeographic reconstruction of A/H1N1/09pdm influenza pandemic (courtesy of Philippe Lemey, Marc Suchard and Andrew Rambaut; <http://phylogeography.org/>). Globe image from GoogleEarth (© 2013 CNES/SPOT Image; Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO).