



# BIOLOGICAL ABSTRACTS

## What This Guide Does

This Guide will provide you with **step-by-step** instructions for navigating the **basic features** of Biological Abstracts.

First, let's find out if Biological Abstracts is what you need.

## What Is Biological Abstracts?

Biological Abstracts is a database that indexes and abstracts:

- **Journal articles**
- **Trade and Industry publications**
- And **society publications**

These range in date from **1926** to **present**.

Topics include agriculture, botany, biochemistry, biotechnology, ecology, microbiology, neuroscience, pharmacology, public health, and toxicology.

## Who Is It For?

Biological Abstracts is a key database for **Biological Engineering**. It is also useful in **Chemical** and **Environmental** engineering and **Food Science**.

## Is There Full Text?


**Yes**, full text is available for some (but not all) records.

## Can I Save Records?

You can **Save**, **Print**, and **Email** records.

## Are There Special Features?

**Yes**, Biological Abstracts offers:

- **Citation Linking:** Use the "Find related articles" feature, or the "Times cited" and "Cited reference" features to link to articles on similar topics. This will help you find a whole body of knowledge on your topic.
- **Citation Alerts:** Click on the  button to create email or RSS alerts to notify you every time your selected articles are cited.

## Step 1: Where to Find It

You can get to databases in a number of ways, but the fastest is to **Search** for **Biological Abstracts** on the Library's database search page:

<http://www.library.dal.ca/Find/?find=databases>

Select **Biological Abstracts**, and you will be linked to the Biological Abstracts search page.

### Trouble?

- Are you connecting from off-campus? A window will pop up when you click on the **Biological Abstracts** link. Simply enter the same username and password you use to access **My.Dal** (your email).

## Step 2: Searching

Type your **keywords** in the text box joined by **AND**, **OR**, or **NOT**. These words will help the database understand what you are and are not looking for.

Your **keywords** are usually chosen from the description of your research topic.

Here are 3 examples of searches:

- fisheries AND hydrocarbon (**both words** must appear in the results)
- biopile OR compost (**one or both words** must appear in the results)
- biopile NOT hydrocarbon (**first word** must appear in the results but **not the second word**)

Biological Abstracts®

Search for:

hydrocarbon in Topic  
Example: bird migrat\* AND "South America"


AND in Author  
Example: DaCosta C\* OR Da Costa C\*

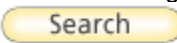
AND in Publication Name  
Example: Journal of Wildlife Management OR Wildlife Research

[Add Another Field >>](#)

Search Clear

Select the field you want to search, any limits you want. Options include **year published**, **literature type**, **language**, and **concept codes**.

Click on the  to search or browse indexed terms in a particular category (e.g. **author**, **publication name**).

After describing and limiting your search, click on the  button.

## Step 3: Managing Your Results

Did you get **too many** results? Do many of them have nothing to do with your subject? You need to **refine** your search. You can do this in a number of ways.

To the left of your search results is a **Refine Results** box. You can search within your results or use the checkboxes to narrow your results by **major concepts**, **authors**, **titles**, **subject**

areas, publication year, literature type, etc.

Make your selections and click on the **Refine** button. Your search history will be saved at the top of the screen.

You can also click on the **Analyze Results** button to narrow your results further. Sort results by **author, literature type**, etc.

Click on the **Save Analysis Data to File** to save the results of your analysis.

#### Trouble?

- Still **too many results**? Try refining your search more. Find a record that fits your topic and examine its **Controlled terms**. You can find Controlled terms in the **Abstract** or **Detailed** view of the record.
- Did you get **0 results**? You need to try some different combinations. Try **broader** or **simpler terms**. For example, there will be more results for bird than for chickadee.

## Step 4: Keep Track of Your Records

As you sort through your results, **Check the box** on the left-hand side of each record you think is important. Click **Next** to see the next page of records (this will not cause you to lose your previously marked records).

When you've finished, click on the **Add to Marked List** button. All of the records you've checked are shown.

- **Email, Print, or Save** your marked records. None of these options deal with the full article (e.i. the record will be e-mailed to you, not the full text).
- **Create an account** ("Sign In" found at the top of the screen) and receive search history updates through e-mail. You can also save citations to your account for future retrieval.
- **Read the Full Text**. Getting full text is explained in **Step 5**.

## Step 5: Getting Full Text

To find out if **full text** is available, click **Get it DAL**.

If full text is available, you will see a **list of databases** to choose from. Click **Go** to be linked directly to the database. Usually, you will be directed to a new screen with the article citation and a link to the PDF or HTML full-text.

If **full text is not available**, you will see the following screen:

To see if we have a copy of the article in print, click **Go** next to **Holdings in Novanet**. You also have the option to do **document delivery** and **export a citation** of the record to Refworks.

#### Trouble?

If you have **trouble accessing the article**, try using the "Finding Journal Articles" help guide at the Sexton Library or online at [http://www.library.dal.ca/Files/How\\_do\\_I/pdf/How\\_To\\_Journal\\_Articles.pdf](http://www.library.dal.ca/Files/How_do_I/pdf/How_To_Journal_Articles.pdf). If you still have problems, please contact us.

## More Help?

Did you know that there is someone at the **Library** with specialized information skills in your area of study?

This is your **Subject Specialist**, and he/she is here to **help you get a better understanding of the resources you need to succeed** at Dalhousie University.

To find out who your subject specialist is, or for help with this and other databases, contact a **Librarian**:

3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Sexton Library  
1360 Barrington Street  
P.O. Box 1000  
Halifax, NS  
Canada B3J 2X4

Phone: 494-3965  
Email: [Sexton.Library@dal.ca](mailto:Sexton.Library@dal.ca)



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