High-Level Accessibility Evaluation (WCAG 2.1)

Springer Nature

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Prepared for:
BTAA-Library Accessibility Alliance

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SUMMARY

This report reflects the findings of a high-level assessment of the Springer Nature platform for its conformance with the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 (WCAG 2.1).

There were no WCAG 2.1 AA compliance issues with Springer Nature, however there are problems with the PDF content of the site. The following issues are the most important to address to improve system compliance.

Top Findings

1. **PDF Content:** The prevalent problem with the accessibility of Springer Nature resources are issues with the PDF content. This is a complex topic that requires specific attention to the structure and content of a given PDF. For a checklist of requirements and how to test PDF content, please refer to the SSA Section 508 Checklist for PDFs.

2. **Focus Appearance:** While not a violation, there is an opportunity to enhance the usability of the site for users with visual impairments by improving the focus appearance when navigating by keyboard. The current focus indicator is a thick yellow ring, which works well against dark backgrounds, but when the focus indicator appears over white backgrounds, there is very low contrast which can be difficult for users with visual impairments.

3. **Best Practices:** Pay attention to best practices when creating web content. The content on the individual results page should have at least one main landmark.

ACCESSIBILITY FINDINGS

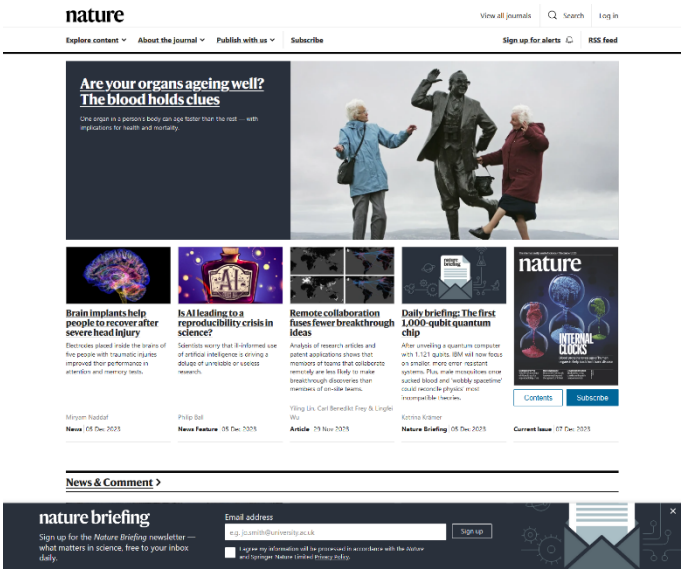
This report was conducted against the Springer Nature Platform and covers a selection of pages and features that were to be tested as a representative sample of the database's conformance to the WCAG 2.1 AA standards.

The resource was reviewed using a combination of manual and automatic review tools and assistive technologies, including the WAVE Accessibility Assessment tool, Axe Accessibility Assessment tool, WCAG Color Contrast Checker, and NVDA screen reader. PDF content was tested against Section 508 requirements using Adobe Acrobat's accessibility tools and manual analysis. All problems identified by automatic tools were verified manually. This evaluation was performed using Firefox on Windows 11.

Below are the errors revealed during the accessibility evaluation of the Springer Nature platform. Each result shows a summary of accessibility issues and the reason it was flagged. Screenshots are included.

1. Initial Interface

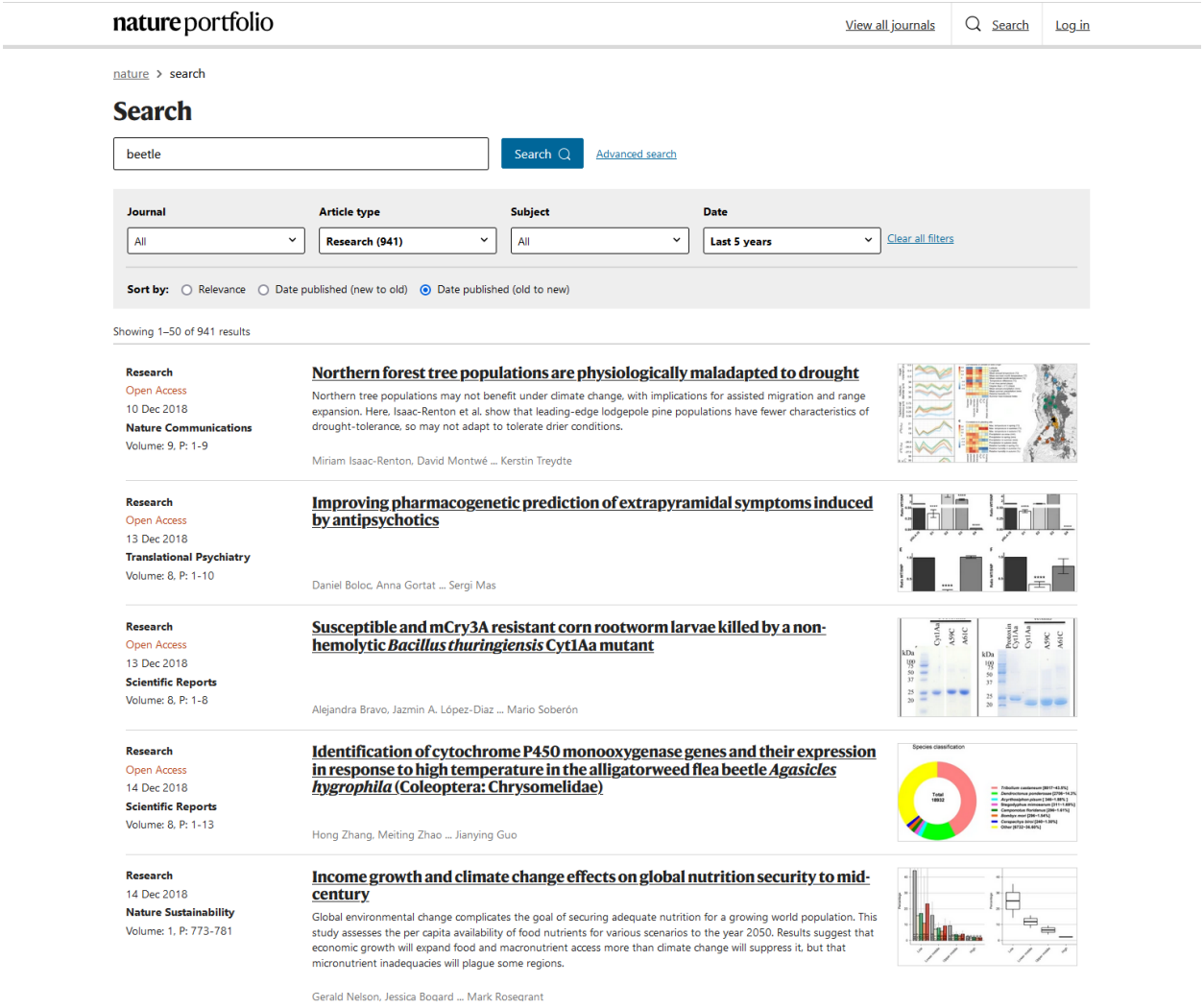
Test Case: Test initial interface/landing page to ensure menus, sub-menus, search box, images, icons, etc. are accessible. https://www.nature.com/#content



- **No issues found on automatic or manual analysis.**

2. Search Results

Test Case: From the initial landing page, conduct a search for: beetle. Test search results page, including filters/refine search: Filter “Journal” to Nature and “Article Type” to Research and “Date” to Last 5 years. Sort by Date published (old to new).



❖ **No issues found on automatic or manual analysis.**

3. Individual Results

Test Case: Select the first article and test the individual search result landing page: Test the top page functions (Cite this Article); Test the Sections pane (on the right) and the "Figures" menu. Test the actual document by downloading the PDF.

- **No issues found on automatic or manual analysis.**

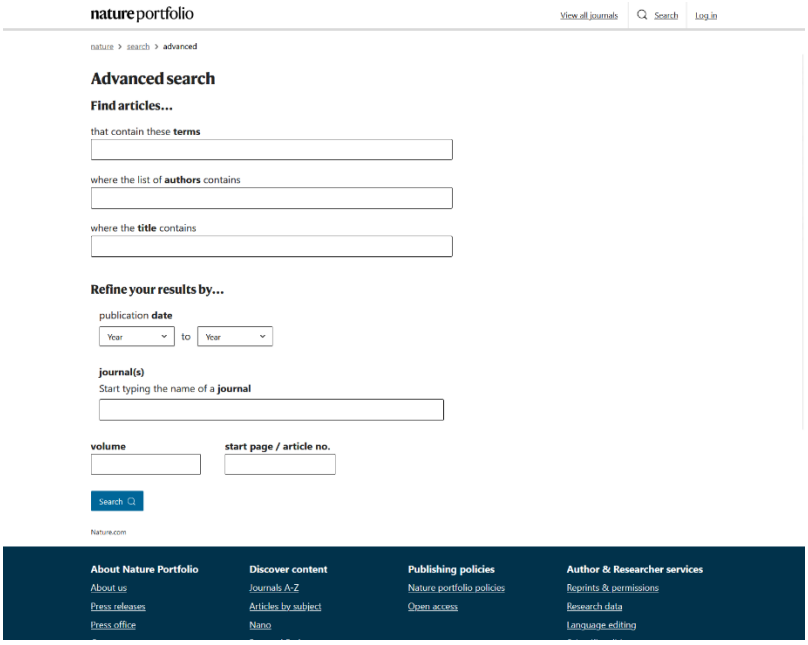
PDF Document Analysis:

PDF Area Assessed	Failed Issues
Document	Tagged PDF Color Contrast
Page Content	Tagged Content Tagged Annotations Tab Order Character Encoding
Forms	*None*
Alternate Text	Figures Alt Text Nested Alt Text Associated with Content Hides Annotation Other Elements Alt Text
Tables	Rows TH and TD

	Headers Regularity Summary (skipped)
Lists	List Items Lbl and Lbody
Headings	Appropriate Nesting

4. Advanced Search

Test Case: Test advanced search page.



- **No issues found on automatic or manual analysis.**