

A simple proposal for the publication of journal citation distributions

Vincent Larivière¹, Véronique Kiermer², Catriona J. MacCallum³, Marcia McNutt⁴, Mark Patterson⁵, Bernd Pulverer⁶, Sowmya Swaminathan⁷, Stuart Taylor⁸, Stephen Curry^{9*}

¹Associate Professor of Information Science, École de bibliothéconomie et des sciences de l'information, Université de Montréal, C.P. 6128, Succ. Centre-Ville, Montréal, QC. H3C 3J7, Canada; Observatoire des Sciences et des Technologies (OST), Centre Interuniversitaire de Recherche sur la Science et la Technologie (CIRST), Université du Québec à Montréal, CP 8888, Succ. Centre-Ville, Montréal, QC. H3C 3P8, Canada

²Executive Editor, PLOS, 1160 Battery Street, San Francisco, CA 94111, USA

³Advocacy Director, PLOS, Carlyle House, Carlyle Road, Cambridge CB4 3DN, UK

⁴Editor-in-Chief, Science journals, American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1200 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005, USA

⁵Executive Director, eLife, 24 Hills Road, Cambridge CB2 1JP, UK

⁶Chief Editor, The EMBO Journal, Meyerhofstrasse 1, 69117 Heidelberg, Germany

⁷Head of Editorial Policy, Nature Research, Springer Nature, 225 Bush Street, Suite 1850, San Francisco 94104, USA

⁸Publishing Director, The Royal Society, 6-9 Carlton House terrace, London SW1Y 5AG, UK

⁹Professor of Structural Biology, Department of Life Sciences, Imperial College, Exhibition Road, London, SW7 2AZ, UK

*Corresponding Author. Email: s.curry@imperial.ac.uk

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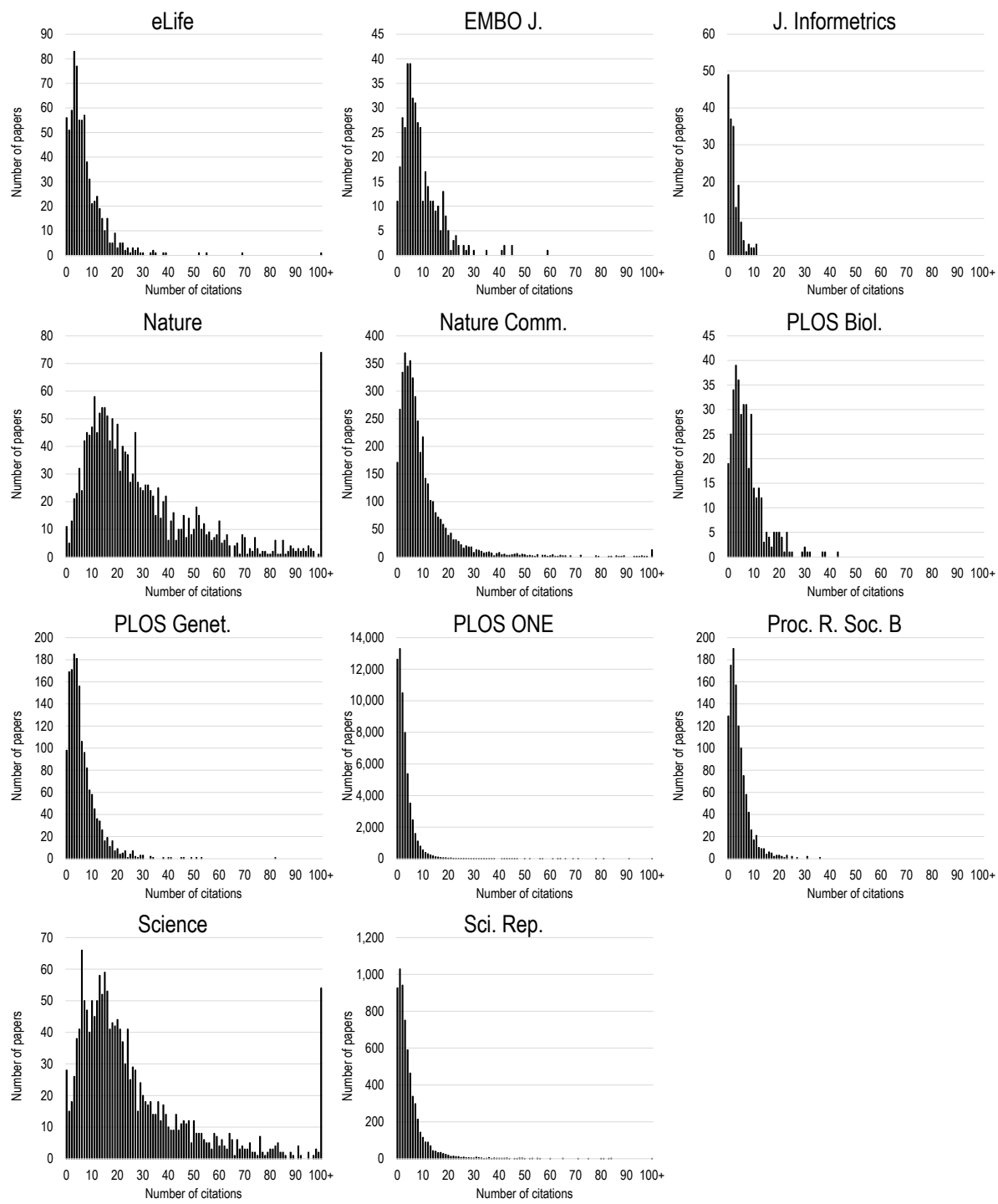


Fig 1. Citation distributions of 11 different science journals. Citations are to ‘citable documents’ as classified by Thomson Reuters, which include standard research articles and reviews. The distributions contain citations accumulated in 2015 to citable documents published in 2013 and 2014 in order to be comparable to the 2015 JIFs published by Thomson Reuters. To facilitate direct comparison, distributions are plotted with the same range of citations (0-100) in each plot; articles with more than 100 citations are shown as a single bar at the right of each plot.

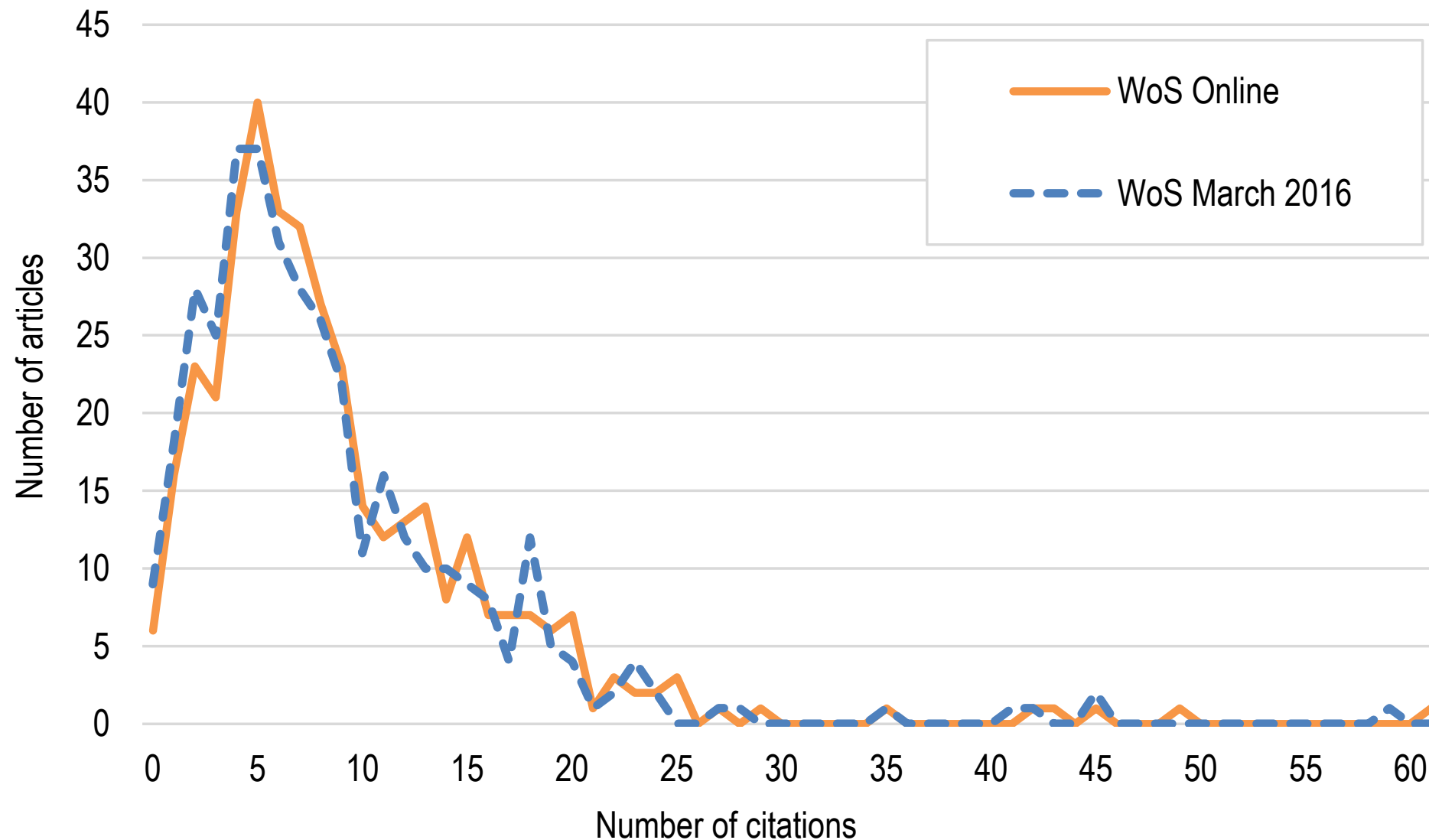


Fig 2. Comparison plot for EMBO Journal. The analyses in this paper are based on proprietary data bought from Thomson Reuters by the Observatoire des sciences et des technologies (OST-UQAM) and is similar to that used by Thomson Reuters to generate the JIFS ('WoS March 2016'). Publishers and Institutions with a subscription to the Web of Science™ have access to a different dataset ('WoS online').

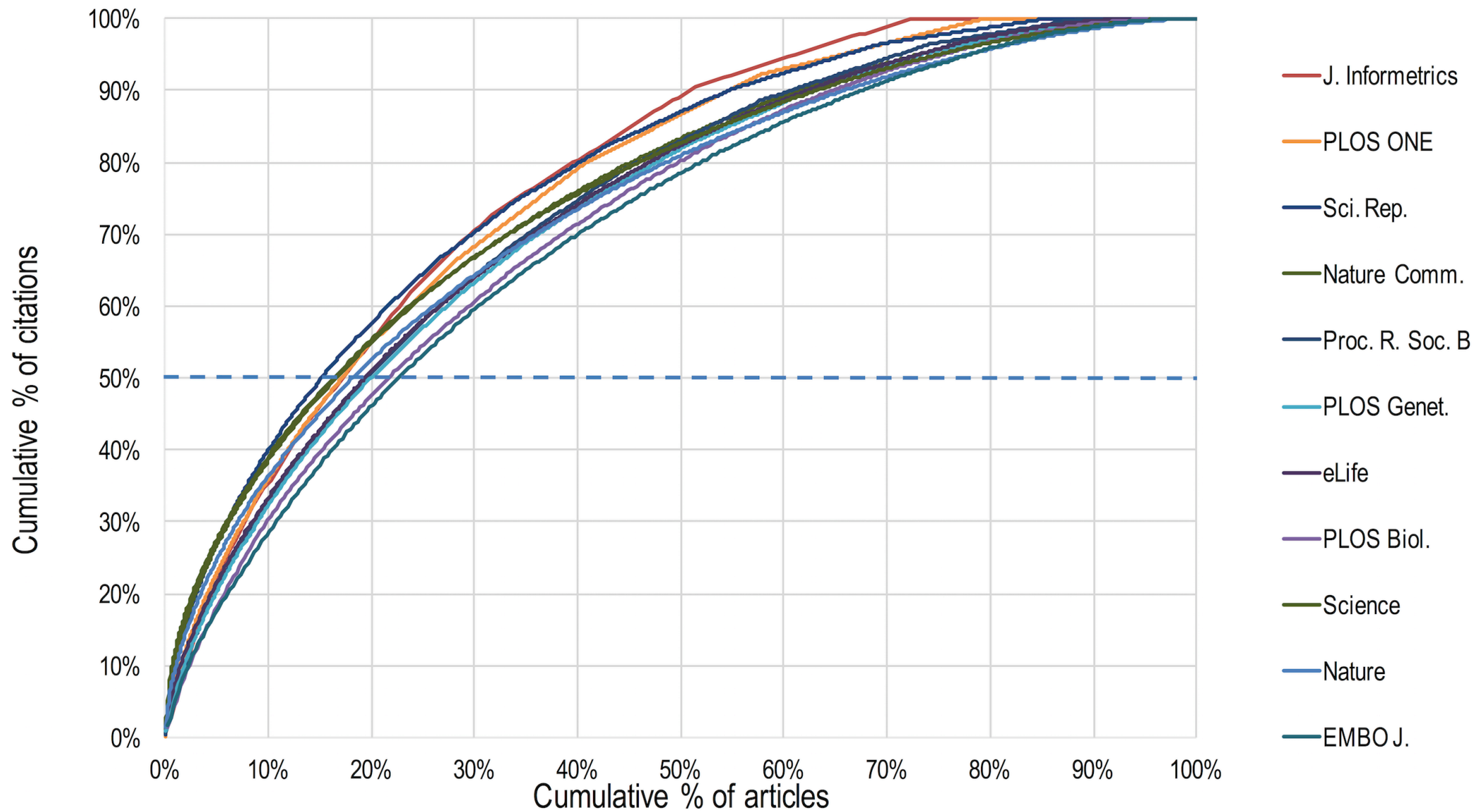


Fig 3. The cumulative % of citations and articles plotted for the 11 journals included in this study. The plots for all the journals are very similar, which reflects the skewness of the distributions shown in Figure 1.

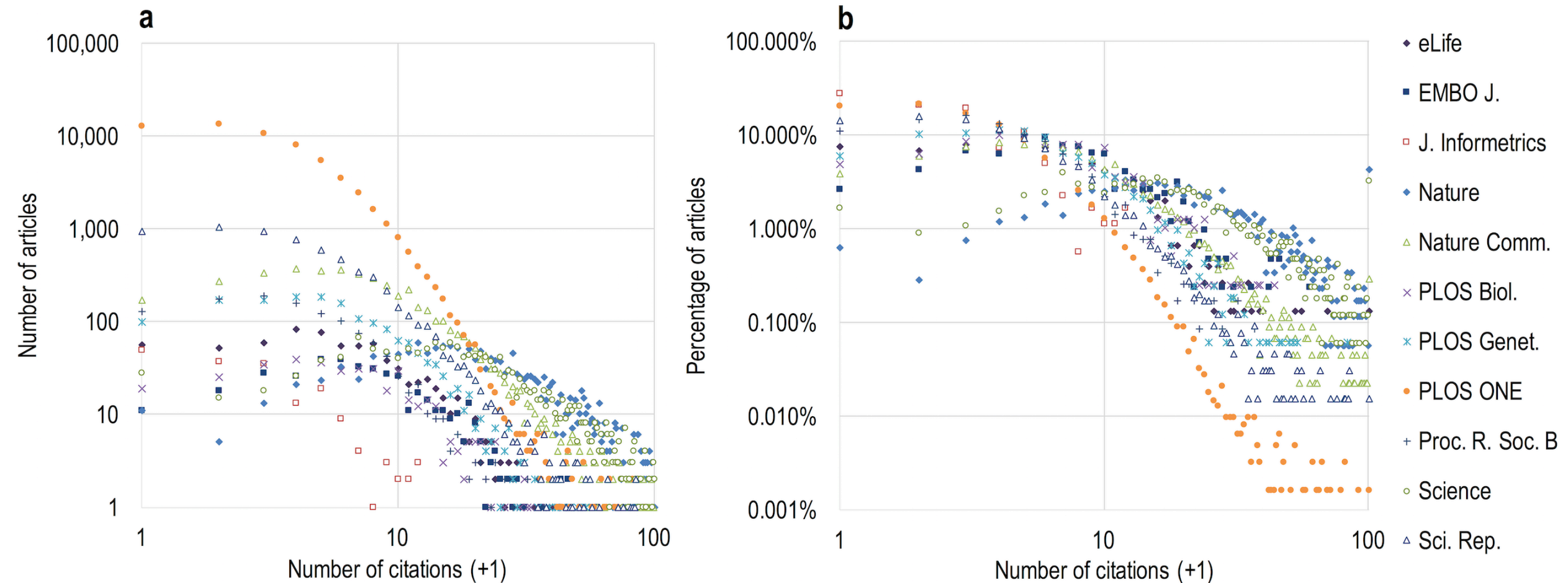


Fig 4. A log-scale comparison of the 11 citation distributions. (a) The absolute number of articles plotted against the number of citations. (b) The percentage of articles plotted against the number of citations.

Journal	Article		Review		Correction		Editorial- Material		Others documents		Unmatched Citations		Total Citations
	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	
	eLife	5,459	84.4%			10	0.2%	98	1.5%			902	
EMBO J.	3,219	82.2%	472	12.1%	2	0.1%	121	3.1%	4	0.1%	97	2.5%	3,915
J. Informetrics	387	92.6%	6	1.4%	1	0.2%			10	2.4%	14	3.3%	418
Nature	54,143	83.2%	3,554	5.5%	47	0.1%	2,770	4.3%	1,681	2.6%	2,903	4.5%	65,098
Nature Comm.	43,957	88.5%	82	0.2%	15	0.0%					5,609	11.3%	49,663
PLOS Biol.	2,927	87.0%	16	0.5%			201	6.0%			219	6.5%	3,363
PLOS Genet.	9,964	91.6%	238	2.2%	3	0.0%	46	0.4%			621	5.7%	10,872
PLOS ONE	168,590	90.7%	2,753	1.5%	86	0.0%	5	0.0%			14,378	7.7%	185,812
Proc. R. Soc. B	4,462	76.3%	436	7.5%	4	0.1%	31	0.5%			916	15.7%	5,849
Science	43,665	75.6%	5,816	10.1%	4	0.0%	4,522	7.8%	1,011	1.8%	2,747	4.8%	57,765
Sci. Rep.	29,668	86.2%	1	0.0%	11	0.0%	2	0.0%			4,750	13.8%	34,432

Table 1. Citations received in 2015 by document type published in 2013 and 2014.

Journal	JIF	% citable items below JIF
eLife	8.3	71.2%
EMBO J.	9.6	66.9%
J. Informetrics	2.4	68.4%
Nature	38.1	74.8%
Nature Comm.	11.3	74.1%
PLOS Biol.	8.7	66.8%
PLOS Genet.	6.7	65.3%
PLOS ONE	3.1	72.2%
Proc. R. Soc. B	4.8	65.7%
Science	34.7	75.5%
Sci. Rep.	5.2	73.2%

Table 2: Percentage of papers published in 2013-2014 with number of citations below the value of the 2015 JIF.