review history

decision letter (rsos-211579.r0)

we hope you are keeping well at this difficult and unusual time. we continue to value your support of the journal in these challenging circumstances. if royal society open science can assist you at all, please don't hesitate to let us know at the email address below.

dear dr slagsvold:

i am pleased to inform you that your manuscript entitled "nest decoration: birds exploit a fear of feathers to guard their nest from usurpation" is now accepted for publication in royal society open science.

please ensure that you send to the editorial office an editable version of your accepted manuscript, and individual files for each figure and table included in your manuscript. you can send these in a zip folder if more convenient. failure to provide these files may delay the processing of your proof. you may disregard this request if you have already provided these files to the editorial office.

if you have not already done so, please remember to make any data sets or code libraries 'live' prior to publication, and update any links as needed when you receive a proof to check - for
instance, from a private 'for review' URL to a publicly accessible 'for publication' URL. It is good practice to also add data sets, code and other digital materials to your reference list.

You can expect to receive a proof of your article in the near future. Please contact the editorial office (openscience@royalsociety.org) and the production office (openscience_proofs@royalsociety.org) to let us know if you are likely to be away from e-mail contact -- if you are going to be away, please nominate a co-author (if available) to manage the proofing process, and ensure they are copied into your email to the journal. Due to rapid publication and an extremely tight schedule, if comments are not received, your paper may experience a delay in publication.

Please see the Royal Society Publishing guidance on how you may share your accepted author manuscript at https://royalsociety.org/journals/ethics-policies/media-embargo/. After publication, some additional ways to effectively promote your article can also be found here https://royalsociety.org/blog/2020/07/promoting-your-latest-paper-and-tracking-your-results/.

On behalf of the Editors of Royal Society Open Science, thank you for your support of the journal and we look forward to your continued contributions to Royal Society Open Science.

Kind regards,
Royal Society Open Science Editorial Office
Royal Society Open Science
openscience@royalsociety.org

on behalf of Dr Kimberley Mathot (Associate Editor) and Professor Kevin Padian (Subject Editor).

Associate Editor Comments to Author (Dr Kimberley Mathot):
Comments to the Author:
Dear Dr. Slagsvold,

I have read your manuscript carefully, and am satisfied that the experimental design, analysis and interpretation of results are all appropriate. I have a few comments/suggestions for improving the clarity of the manuscript:

Lines 61-63: Consider rephrasing to: “We propose a new idea, that birds decorate nests with feathers to trigger a fear response in their rivals, thereby reducing the risk of nest usurpation....”
Line 70: change from “often are” to “are often”
Line 75: change from “ecology and behaviour” to “ecologies and behaviours”
Line 88: begin he sentence with “To test the Fear of Feathers hypothesis, we let birds choose...”
Lines 110 to 124: I think it would be easier for readers to keep track of the two study areas if if you split the descriptions into the two separate study areas/nestbox design/species, rather than try to integrate them.
Line 117 to 118: please provide the exact number of banded blue tits out of the total sample of blue tits.
Line 129-130: Were all singing males assumed to be unmated? Please clarify how you determined individuals to be “unmated”.
Line 143: delete “of the day”
Line 161: replace “During” with “Between”
Line 181: add “preventing analysis of female behaviour”.
Line 183: replace “popularity” with “preference”.


Thank you for transferring your article for consideration for publication at Royal Society Open Science.

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