

Research in the group

My research has focused primarily on the use of visual signals (plumage colours) in communication by birds (both intrasexual and intersexual selection). Based on recent studies a hypothesis has been developed to explain the evolution of female ornaments independently of male showiness. Female ornamentation could be influenced by sexual selection through direct male choice or female-female competition, even apart from the classical case of sex-role reversed species. Moreover, female phenotypes may influence the result of the mate choice because the direct costs and benefits of mating with certain males vary among females. Condition-dependent variation in mate choice may have important evolutionary implications, not only within a population but also between populations. There are relatively few experiments to address how condition and/or genotype influences female mate choice decisions. Using different study species I am investigating these two areas of sexual selection. My research focuses also on parental investment involving negotiation between the sexes and how social birds and social fishes live and interact together, forming complex relationships and social structure.