where suitable breeding areas can be located by using the songs of other individuals as a cue. We suggest that the late arrival of young birds on breeding grounds, previously seen as a constraint, may be an adaptive strategy if they use conspecifics for locating breeding sites.

Dally J¹, Emery N¹, Clayton N²

Social facilitation of novel food acceptance in Rooks
(1) Sub-dept of Animal Behavior, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, CB4 8AA, UK, jmd54@cam.ac.uk, nje23@cam.ac.uk
(2) Dept. of Experimental Psychology, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, CB2 3EB, UK, nsc22@cam.ac.uk

The propensity to increase food consumption in the presence of feeding conspecifics can be attributed to a behavioral phenomenon known as social facilitation. In addition to enhancing food intake, the presence of conspecifics is also known to promote an individual’s acceptance of novel food. The current study investigates the effect of social facilitation on feeding behavior and novel food acceptance in a corvid, the Rook (Corvus frugilegus). In Experiment 1, we show that feeding in Rooks is subject to social facilitation at the general level. That is, Rooks eat significantly more of a familiar food in the presence of a conspecific compared to when alone. As generalist feeders, however, Rooks might often have to exploit novel food resources, a behavior which carries an inherent risk of illness or even death. In Experiment 2, Rooks were presented with two novel foods, one of which they could observe a conspecific eating. Our results showed that Rooks selectively ate the food eaten by the demonstrator, thereby reducing the risks associated with consuming an unknown food. Note that this effect was not exhibited when the birds were presented with a choice of familiar foods. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first demonstration of specific social facilitation in an animal that discriminates between foodstuffs in the visual domain.

Dauphine NS¹, Mahoney AC¹, Cooper RJ¹, Brooks DM²

Selective logging and bird conservation in the Cordillera de Colan, northern Peru
(1) University of Georgia, Warnell School of Forest Resources, Athens GA 30602, USA, dauphinen@forestry.uga.edu, rccooper@smokey.forestry.uga.edu (2) Houston Museum of Natural Science, 1 Hermann Circle Drive, Houston TX 77030, USA, dmbrrooks@hmns.org

This study examines the impacts of selective logging on understory birds in moist tropical forest in the Cordillera de Colán, Amazonas Department, northern Peru. Indigenous Aguaruna communities on the northern slopes of the cordillera practice single-tree selective logging, primarily for the timber species Tornillo (Cedrelina cateniformis). Birds there were sampled using mist nets at nine low elevation sites (550 - 750 meters a.s.l.) during February and March 2005. Understory birds recorded in regenerating forest on sites logged one and five years previously were compared with those on unlogged sites using a sample effort of 165,120 net-meter-hours. We netted 723 individuals of 101 species in 19 families. Sites logged five years previously had the highest capture frequency, highest species richness, and highest number of species unique to a single forest treatment. Three species accounted for 30% of captures: the Wedge-billed Woodcreeper ( Glyphorynchus spirurus), Koepecke’s Hermit ( Phaethornis koepckeae), and the Tawny-bellied Hermit ( Phaethornis syrmatophorus). An additional 57 species were caught only one or two times. A number of new distributional records for bird species were documented as part of this study, along with other important findings concerning the ecology and natural history of the avifauna of this little-known region.

Davydenko I

A census of waterbirds on large fishponds in the northern Ukraine
Kyiv Shevchenko University, Biol. Depart., Volodymirskia Str. 64, Kyiv 01033, Ukraine, i_davidenko@ukrpost.net

Large fishpond complexes can play a significant supporting role in the life of waterfowl and shorebirds by providing diverse biotopes, protective cover and feeding resources for breeding, molting, wintering and stopover staging. Thus a six-year waterbird census on large fishponds in the northern Ukraine (Kyiv, Zhitomir and Rivne regions) in 1997-2003 recorded 53 species of wetland birds. Most numerous were: Black-headed Gull ( Larus rididbundus) – 32.2%, Mallard ( Anas platyrhynchos) – 15.3%, Eurasian Coot ( Fulica atra) – 11.2%, Yellow-legged Gull ( Larus cachinnans) – 6.9%, Great Crested Grebe ( Podiceps cristatus) – 5.1%, Whiskered Tern ( Chlidonias hybrida) – 4.6%, Common Pochard ( Aythya ferina) – 4.4%, Great White Egret ( Ardea alba) – 3.9%, Common Tern ( Sterna hirundo) – 3.1%, Grey Heron ( Ardea cinerea) – 2.6%, and Mute Swan ( Cygnus olor) – 2.1%. Other species were recorded in much smaller numbers, including the following threatened species listed in the Ukrainian Red Data Book: Black Stork ( Ciconia nigra), Ferruginous Duck ( Aythya nyroca), Goldeneye ( Bucephala clangula) and White-tailed Sea Eagle ( Haliaeetus albicilla).

De Laet J¹, Summers-Smith D², Lens L¹, Van Gestel C¹, Matheve H¹

The status of the House Sparrow in large towns: First results from Belgium
(1) Terrestrial Ecology Unit, University of Ghent, K.L.ledegangstr. 35, B-9100 Ghent, Belgium, fmantrapp@scarlet.be, luc.lins@UGhent.be, carl.vangestel@UGhent.be, hans.matheve@UGhent.be (2) Thames Avenue 79, Guisborough, Cleveland TS14 8AJ, England, jdss@tribology.co.uk

A significant decline in the number of House Sparrows ( Passer domesticus) has occurred in urban habitats in mid latitude western Europe over the last 20 or more years. Belgium, a small west European country, has had no early data on the trend. In 2002, however, it began a public survey and published its first maps of sparrow densities in 2004. These initial counts suggest that the densities of sparrows in Belgium are close to those found in large towns and small villages in other European countries. There is no doubt that House Sparrows are also declining in Belgium, especially in its large cities.

Delgado MP, Carriles E, García de la Morena EL, Traba J, Morales MB

Filling gaps in old species: Landscape and microhabitat preferences in breeding female Little Bustards