



Seewiesen Colloquia

Speaker invited by: Niels Dingemans

Thursday, 12 September 2013, 13:00 h, in House 4, Lecture Room

Three Frontiers in the Study of Behavioural Syndromes (aka Animal Personalities)

Dr. Andy Sih

University of California

Over the past decade, a rapidly growing number of studies have shown that animals often exhibit personalities; e.g., where some individuals are consistently more aggressive, bold, active, exploratory or social than others. Here, I present theory, data and ideas on three ‘frontiers’ in the study of the ecological and evolutionary implications of this phenomenon. First, I discuss a theoretical/conceptual framework for explaining variation in the phenomenon. Why are individuals sometimes very consistent (stable) in their personality, but other times, less so? When do we expect early experiences to have large effects on later personality, versus when do we expect little or no lasting effect of early experiences? Second, I examine the interaction between individual behavioural types (BTs) and the social situation in determining individual behaviours and fitness outcomes (mating success). This section raises issues about group selection on personalities, keystone individuals, social skill and rapidly reversible mating systems. Finally, I present data and ideas on a key ecological implication of behavioural syndromes – the effect of behavioural type dependent dispersal on ecological invasions and spatial ecology, in general.

Who is Andy Sih?

1980: PhD, University of California Santa Barbara
1982 - 2001: Assistant, associate, full professor, University of Kentucky
2000: President, Animal Behavior Society
2001 - present: Professor, Distinguished Professor, University of California, Davis
2010 Quest Award, Animal Behavior Society -
ISI Highly Cited Researcher

Selected publications:

Sih, A., J. Cote, M. Evans, S. Fogarty and J. Pruitt. 2012. Ecological implications of behavioral syndromes. **Ecology Letters** 15:278-289.
Luttbeg, B and A. Sih. 2010. Risk, resources and state-dependent adaptive behavioral syndromes. **Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society** 365:3977-3990.
Sih, A. and A.M. Bell. 2008. Insights for behavioral ecology from behavioral syndromes. **Advances in the Study of Behavior** 38:227-281.
Sih, A., A.M. Bell, J.C. Johnson, and R.E. Ziemba. 2004. Behavioral syndromes: an integrative overview. **Quarterly Review of Biology** 79:241-277.
Sih, A., A.M. Bell and J.C. Johnson. 2004. Behavioral syndromes: an ecological and evolutionary overview. **Trends in Ecology and Evolution** 19:372-378.