



Seewiesen Colloquia

Speaker invited by: Julia Schroeder

Thursday, January 17, 2013, 13h, House 4, Lecture Room

Family life of birds: sex, conflicts and cooperation

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Family life is rife with conflicts. Not only the interests of parents and their offspring may be different, but the male and the female parents may also disagree how much care each should provide for their offspring. I will review some of the works my group has carried out to understand family dynamics using shorebirds and penduline tits. We are investigating birds in their natural habitats, and use experimental manipulations and phylogenetic comparative analyses to work out the drivers of their social behaviour. A core idea is that breeding populations move on a cooperation-conflict continuum. An important, and not yet fully appreciated, component of breeding systems is social environment, and our recent works are revealing some unexpected effects of social environment on sex roles and breeding system evolution.

Who is Tamás Székely?

- 2012 Humboldt Award at University of Göttingen, Mercator Visiting Professor at Univ. of Bielefeld
- 2010 Maio Biodiversity Foundation, Founder and President, Republic of Cape Verde
- 2007 Professor of Biodiversity, University of Bath, UK
- 2006 Hrdy Visiting Fellow, Harvard University, US
- 2000 Lecturer and then Reader in Evolutionary Biology, University of Bath
- 1997 Post-doctoral Research Fellowship, University of Bristol, UK
- 1989 Lecturer in Animal Behaviour, Kossuth University, Hungary
- 1987 Research Assistant, Hungarian Ornithological Society, Budapest
- 1986 Ph.D., Kossuth University, Debrecen

Selected publications:

- Moore, J. M., T. Székely, J. Büki, & T. J. DeVoogd. 2011. Motor pathway convergence predicts syllable repertoire size in oscine birds. *Proceedings of National Academy of Sciences, US* 108: 16440-16445.
- Székely, T., A. J. Moore & J. Komdeur (eds). 2010. *Social behaviour: genes, ecology and evolution*. Cambridge University Press, 1-562.
- Kelsh, R., T. Székely & S. Stuart. 2011. Whys should biomedical scientists care about biodiversity? *Current Biology* 21: 210-211.
- Fairbairn, D., W. Blanckenhorn & T. Székely (eds). 2007. *Sex, size and gender roles*. Evolutionary studies of sexual size dimorphism. Oxford University Press, 1-266.
- Thomas, G. H., T. Székely & J. D. Reynolds. 2007. Sexual conflict and the evolution of breeding systems in shorebirds. *Advances in the Study of Behavior* 37: 277-340.
- Houston, A. I., T. Székely & J. M. McNamara. 2005. Conflict over parental care. *Trends in Ecol Evol* 20: 33-38.
- Székely, T., R. P. Freckleton & J. D. Reynolds. 2004. Sexual selection explains Rensch's rule of size dimorphism in shorebirds. *Proceedings of The National Academy of Sciences US*, 101: 12224 - 12227.