

# XX CISO

NAPOLI, 26-29 SETTEMBRE 2019



## XX CONVEGNO ITALIANO DI ORNITOLOGIA LIBRO DEGLI ABSTRACT

a cura di  
Rosario Balestrieri  
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## **Territorial interactions in the Adélie penguin: etho-ecological determinants**

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Colonial birds often defend small breeding territories in dense colonies. Social interactions are costly, enhancing risk of fights/injuries. Territorial defence is crucial to achieve reproductive success, therefore it is expected to hold a pivotal role in seabirds from extreme habitats. We examined factors driving intraspecific territorial aggression in Adélie penguins (*Pygoscelis adeliae*), at Edmonson Point (Ross Sea, Antarctica). Behaviour was recorded by videotaping, on 51 marked individuals, at nest. Sex had no effect on agonistic interactions, as expected for species where both sexes contribute equally to parental investment. Aggression was more frequent during guard than in late incubation, possibly because the fitness value of chicks enhances territorial defence. During chick-raising, frequency of aggressive behaviours performed/received by penguins peaked with increasing number of intruders trespassing into a bird's territory and with decreasing number of South Polar skuas (*Stercorarius maccormicki*) patrolling around its nest. Central-nesters displayed more aggressive threats than peripheral birds and had greater reproductive success, suggesting that costs of social stress may be counteracted by higher fitness. Our findings suggest that predation risk, reproductive stage and territorial intrusion by conspecifics were key-drivers of intraspecific interactions in penguins, emphasising how the phenology of aggressive interactions may shape costs and fitness-benefits in a colonial seabird.

## **Yellowness of iris relates to age and individual quality in two owl species**

Arianna Passarotto<sup>1</sup>, Deseada Parejo<sup>1,2</sup>, Ángel Cruz-Miralles<sup>1,2</sup>, Jesús M. Avilés<sup>1</sup>

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Amongst variable bird phenotypic traits, eye coloration remains largely overlooked, with only a few studies suggesting a signalling function or a role in mate recognition and crypsis. Iris colour is a remarkably striking feature in the cryptic design of owls, which may suggest that it could play a signalling function. Here, we studied colour variation and potential signalling of iris colouration as quality indicator in parent-offspring communication and/or mate choice and social contexts in owlets and adults little owls (*Athene noctua*) and scops owls (*Otus scops*). Iris colour does not differ between sexes, but varies between years and with the ontogeny, since adults exhibit more intense coloured iris than their offspring in the two species. Owlet iris colour can hardly be involved in parent-offspring communication because it does not relate with owlet condition, but with parental quality. In adults, however, iris colour could potentially function as signal of quality, as it correlates with fitness components in the two species. This study suggests that the yellow iris colouration in adult little owls and scops owls may potentially play a role in social signalling and may constitute evidence of chromatic eye signalling in owls.

## **New technologies shed light on the behaviour of urban-dwelling peregrines**

Giacomo Dell'Omo

*Ornis Italica*

Peregrines are nowadays quite common in many cities and several nests are equipped with webcams throughout the breeding season. This offers a unique opportunity to observe rare behaviours not

