

University of Miami's Department of Psychology Welcomes



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Bird Song and the Problem of Signal Reliability

Thursday, October 8, 2009, 3:30 PM
5th Floor Conference Room
Department of Psychology, Flipse Building

Abstract: Male birds use song to advertise their quality as mates to females and their aggressiveness and fighting ability to other males. In both contexts, selection may often favor cheating, in the sense of dishonest exaggeration of signaler attributes. I will show evidence that bird song nevertheless communicates reliable information about a number of traits of signalers. I will also discuss evidence bearing on the various theories that have been proposed to explain the maintenance of signal reliability in such situations.