

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITY

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General project description

A field project on the breeding ecology and vocal behaviour of the Spotted Pardalote (*Pardalotus punctatus*) (September 2024 – February 2025)

In this project, you would work with 1 PhD students (me), assisting with my research. This project will investigate the breeding ecology and vocal behaviour of the Spotted Pardalote. Tasks will include assisting with trapping and banding birds, nest searching, recording vocalisations, setup/take down of spy cameras, game cameras and RFID readers at the nest, habitat assessments, entering field data, participate to house chores (cooking, cleaning etc). Note: Field site: Brisbane Ranges National Park (VIC). Accommodation is in Geelong (VIC).



Female Spotted Pardalote



Clara Borrel (me!) holding a Spotted Pardalote

Part of a PhD project “Cooperation, coordination and communication within the family in avian species”

90% of bird species display biparental care of their offspring. Biparental care has been traditionally studied from a conflictual perspective. From this perspective, an individual is expected to maximize its own fitness at the expense of its family members by overexploiting them. Conversely, some new studies start to look at biparental care as a form of cooperation between family members. My PhD project investigates the links between cooperation, coordination and communication within families in the Spotted Pardalote (*Pardalotus punctatus*). By investigating these links, I hope to provide an evolutionary framework to study parental coordination during the breeding season as a form of cooperation between partners.

Requirements to participate

- Positive communication and teamwork skills
- Interest in ornithology and/or in behavioural ecology

- Hard work and high motivation (workdays start early and are long)
- Bird banding skills would be preferred but not mandatory
- Participation for the whole field season is not mandatory but preferred, volunteers should be involved for at least 1 months 5 days/week (4 days in the field, 1 day in the office)

Compensations

This job offer is unpaid. However, food expenses and accommodation are covered for volunteers.

Furthermore, you will gain hands-on experience in field data collection including safety practices to work in the outdoors and around animals, catching and handling wild animals, vegetation and habitat assessments, conducting behavioral observations, assisting with banding data collection, and using multiple field techniques for targeted surveys.

References

Informal article published on the project: <https://www.ecolsoc.org.au/blog/beyond-sexual-conflict/>

Griffith, S. C. (2019) Cooperation and Coordination in Socially Monogamous Birds: Moving Away From a Focus on Sexual Conflict. *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution* [Online], 7. Available from: <<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fevo.2019.00455>>. (to read!)

Fricke, C. (2014) *Sexual Conflict* [Online]. Oxford University Press (OUP). Available from: <<https://oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199941728/obo-9780199941728-0022.xml>>.

Wojczulanis-Jakubas, K. (2021) Being the Winner Is Being the Loser When Playing a Parental Tug-of-War—A New Framework on Stability of Biparental Care. *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution* [Online]. Available from: <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fevo.2021.763075/full?fbclid=IwAR31RnqwrYQG-ZKZdz3Sixz_sGiONTgNR3qaHek0XkqKJreIZmIx8Iylbtk>.