

The ‘beauty sleep hypothesis’ – is sleepy sexy?

Sleep is an incredibly important process thought to rejuvenate the brain and reset other critical daily rhythms. Despite the best effort of researchers, the core functions of sleep still remain largely unknown. With a new lens towards potential sexual functions, we ask whether birds that sleep more or better develop into more attractive individuals. By using cutting-edge electroencephalographic, behavioral, and color analytical techniques, we seek to answer whether birds, like humans, need their beauty sleep. The current research project is slated to begin in spring of 2016, during the breeding season of the house finch (shown below), an abundant desert bird which shows its health to conspecific females through its bright plumage.



Applicants should have strong interests in animal behavior, physiology and health, and/or sexual selection. Project involvement will require sign-up into a 3-credit hour research course (such as BIO 310, Special Problems and Techniques). As a researcher, you will be expected to work approximately 10 hours per week. Researchers will assist with bird capturing and handling, as well as sample collection and video watching. Participation in weekly lab meetings is optional but strongly encouraged. If interested, please send (1) an updated resume/CV and (2) a short description of your research experience and interests by 22 January to Pierce Hutton (Pierce.Hutton@asu.edu).