

Personality traits and behavioural syndromes across seasons and years in Starlings

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Insights into how personality traits and behavioural syndromes vary over time and context are crucial for adequately estimating their developmental, evolutionary and ecological significance. We repeatedly quantified novel environment exploration and different aspects of the behavioural response towards a female conspecific (sociability traits) in captive male starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) across seasons and years. (Co-)variance-partitioning revealed moderate repeatabilities for all traits across seasons and years (range: 0.25-0.41), however, no significant among- (or within-) individual correlations between them. Our results indicate that exploration and sociability traits are context-general and relatively stable personality traits, but do not interlink into behavioural syndromes. This strongly suggests the independent evolutionary potential of these traits under selection, hence not constraining each other's evolutionary trajectories. More informed predictions about ecological and evolutionary implications await cross-validation with results from the wild and studies addressing the relation with life-time fitness variation.

keywords: Animal personality, long-term, across-season, social behaviour, (co)variance partitioning

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