



HAL
open science

Heterospecific song quality as social information for settlement decisions: an experimental approach in a wild bird

Jennifer Morinay, Jukka Forsman, Blandine Doligez

► **To cite this version:**

Jennifer Morinay, Jukka Forsman, Blandine Doligez. Heterospecific song quality as social information for settlement decisions: an experimental approach in a wild bird. *Animal Behaviour*, 2020, 161, pp.103-113. 10.1016/j.anbehav.2020.01.002 . hal-02990558

HAL Id: hal-02990558

<https://cnrs.hal.science/hal-02990558v1>

Submitted on 24 Nov 2020

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

1 **Heterospecific song quality as social information for settlement**
2 **decisions: an experimental approach in a wild bird**

3

4 **Jennifer Morinay^{1,2,*}, Jukka T. Forsman^{3,4} and Blandine Doligez¹**

5 ¹ Université de Lyon, Université Lyon 1, CNRS, Laboratoire de Biométrie et Biologie
6 Evolutive UMR 5558, F-69622 Villeurbanne, France

7 ² Department of Ecology and Evolution, Animal Ecology, Evolutionary Biology Centre,
8 Uppsala University, Sweden

9 ³ Department of Ecology and Genetics, University of Oulu, PO Box 3000, FI-90014 Oulu,
10 Finland

11 ⁴ Current address: Natural Resources Institute Finland, Oulu, FI-90014, University of Oulu

12 * *Correspondence:* Jennifer Morinay, LBBE, CNRS UMR 5558, Univ Lyon - Université
13 Claude Bernard Lyon 1, Bâtiment Gregor Mendel, 43 boulevard du 11 novembre 1918, 69622
14 Villeurbanne Cedex, France

15 Email: jennifer.morinay@gmail.com

16

17

18 **Keywords:** aggressiveness, bird song, breeding site choice, eavesdropping, *Ficedula*
19 *albicollis*, heterospecific competition, individual quality, *Parus major*, signal, social
20 information

21 **Abstract**

22 Assessing local habitat quality via social cues provided by con- or heterospecific individuals
23 sharing the same needs is a widespread strategy of social information use for breeding habitat
24 selection. However, gathering information about putative competitors may involve agonistic
25 costs. The use of social cues reflecting local habitat quality acquired from a distance, such as
26 acoustic cues, could therefore be favoured. Bird songs are conspicuous signals commonly
27 assumed to reliably reflect producer quality, and thereby local site quality. Birds of different
28 species have been shown to be attracted to breeding sites by con- and heterospecific songs,
29 and to use conspecific song features as information on producer (and by extension habitat)
30 quality. Whether they can do the same with heterospecific song features, possibly differently
31 depending on individuals' own phenotype and in particular competitive ability, remains
32 unknown. We used a playback experiment in a wild population of collared flycatchers
33 (*Ficedula albicollis*), a species known to eavesdrop on dominant great tits' (*Parus major*)
34 presence and performance. We tested whether flycatchers, whose aggressiveness was
35 experimentally assessed, preferred to settle near broadcasts of a high quality great tit song (i.e.
36 song with large repertoire size, long strophes, high song rate), a low quality great tit song or a
37 chaffinch song (control). Among old females, aggressive ones preferred to settle near
38 broadcasts of high quality tit song and avoided broadcasts of low quality tit song, while less
39 aggressive females preferred to settle near broadcasts of low quality tit song. Male personality
40 or age did not influence settlement decisions. This shows that collared flycatcher females use
41 great tit song quality features as information for settlement decisions, though differently
42 depending on their own competitive ability and/or previous experience with great tit songs.
43 Our study therefore further illustrates the complex condition-dependent use of heterospecific
44 social information for breeding habitat selection.

45 **Introduction**

46 When habitat quality varies in time and space, choosing where to breed can have crucial
47 consequences for individual fitness. Hence, strong selective pressures can be expected to
48 promote behavioural strategies allowing individuals to optimize habitat selection decisions. In
49 particular, individuals can collect and use information about habitat quality to choose among
50 alternative breeding sites or patches (Dall, Giraldeau, Olsson, McNamara, & Stephens, 2005;
51 Danchin, Giraldeau, Valone, & Wagner, 2004). Such information can be acquired from the
52 individual's own interactions with its environment, i.e. its personal experience ('personal
53 information', e.g. its own reproductive success, Switzer, 1997). Alternatively, information can
54 be acquired from observing the interactions of other individuals sharing similar needs (either
55 con- or heterospecific putative competitors) with the environment and the result of these
56 interactions, either inadvertently or when they intentionally communicate with others ("social
57 information", Danchin et al. 2004, Dall et al. 2005).

58 When cueing on others, individuals can rely on the mere presence of con- or
59 heterospecifics (through site occupancy and/or breeding density, e.g. Jaakkonen, Kivelä,
60 Meier, & Forsman, 2015; Samplonius, Kromhout Van Der Meer, & Both, 2017; Thiebault,
61 Mullers, Pistorius, & Tremblay, 2014); this information can be easily accessible but does not
62 directly inform on the fitness consequences of others' decisions. Individuals can also use the
63 performance of others, i.e. the success obtained after making a decision, an information that
64 can be more difficult to access but better informs about the fitness consequences of the
65 decision. In the context of breeding habitat selection, information about others' performance
66 (when available) can often be used only after a delay, up to a whole breeding season
67 (Boulinier, Mariette, Doligez, & Danchin, 2008). When breeding synchrony with individuals
68 sharing similar needs is low, as might be the case for heterospecific competitors in particular,

69 eavesdropping on the reproductive investment of early competitors could inform on habitat
70 quality for decisions later in the same season (e.g. Forsman & Seppänen, 2011; Loukola,
71 Seppänen, Krams, Torvinen, & Forsman, 2013; Seppänen, Forsman, Mönkkönen, Krams, &
72 Salmi, 2011). However, assessing competitors' performance can involve proximity to their
73 breeding sites and therefore increase the risk of agonistic interactions (e.g. Ahola, Laaksonen,
74 Eeva, & Lehikoinen, 2007; Forsman et al., 2018; Merilä & Wiggins, 1995; Samplonius &
75 Both, 2019; Slagsvold, 1975). In this case, balancing the trade-off between information
76 accuracy and reliability, on the one hand, and information availability and costs associated to
77 information gathering, on the other hand, may require reducing such costs. This should favour
78 the use of cues reflecting others' performance obtained to a low cost, such as cues obtained
79 from a distance.

80 Among such cues, acoustic signals have been shown to be an information source
81 easily eavesdropped on, even from a long distance (e.g. anti-predatory strategies involving
82 eavesdropping on conspecific and heterospecific alarm calls; reviewed in Magrath et al.
83 2015). Experimental studies have clearly shown that calls and songs can, on their own, induce
84 conspecific (Hahn & Silverman, 2006) and heterospecific attraction (Fletcher, 2008;
85 Szymkowiak, Thomson, & Kuczyński, 2017) to otherwise empty breeding sites, a property
86 sometimes used in reintroduction programmes to enhance local settlement of released animals
87 (e.g. Ward and Schlossberg 2004). Importantly, signals used in sexual communication, which
88 include acoustic signals, are selected (1) to be conspicuous, allowing emitters to be detected
89 by the highest possible number of potential partners (in intersexual communication) and/or
90 competitors (in intrasexual communication), and (2) to reliably reflect individual quality (e.g.
91 in terms of health, competitive ability, etc.; Andersson, 1994; Catchpole & Slater, 2008).
92 Female birds have for example been shown to eavesdrop on males singing contests and adjust

93 mate choice and reproductive behaviour accordingly (Mennill, Ratcliffe, & Boag, 2002; Otter
94 et al., 1999). Therefore, acoustic signals can provide social information on individual quality
95 (e.g. Bischoff, Tschirren, & Richner, 2009; Buchanan & Catchpole, 2000; Møller, 1991), and
96 thereby indirectly on habitat / territory quality. Song features reflecting individual quality or
97 competitive ability have indeed been shown to affect breeding settlement decisions of
98 conspecifics in migratory passerine birds (e.g. song repetition and frequency variation in
99 yellow warblers, Kelly & Ward, 2017; song rate in wood warblers, Szymkowiak, Thomson, &
100 Kuczyński, 2016). Such refined acoustic information use could occur not only within, but also
101 between species; however this has not been explored yet even though it would have important
102 implications for our understanding of interactions and information sharing within
103 communities.

104 Using a playback experiment in a wild population of collared flycatchers *Ficedula*
105 *albicollis*, we experimentally tested whether individuals use songs from heterospecific
106 competitors as a source of information for nest site selection and whether they modulate the
107 use of this cue depending on song features reflecting the singer's quality. Migratory
108 flycatchers are known to use different heterospecific social information from their main
109 competitor, the resident great tit *Parus major*, for nest site selection (tit presence: Kivelä et al.
110 2014; tit density: Forsman et al. 2008; tit early reproductive investment: Seppänen et al. 2011,
111 Loukola et al. 2013; tit breeding phenology: Samplonius & Both, 2017). Flycatchers and tits
112 indeed largely share the same niche during breeding in terms of breeding sites, food resources
113 to nestlings and predators, and tits start breeding only a couple of weeks before flycatchers'
114 arrival from migration, thus providing flycatchers with valuable information for their own
115 breeding habitat choice decisions. Flycatchers have been shown to gain fitness benefits from
116 using these heterospecific information for settlement decisions and invest more in their

117 reproduction when copying great tits' choice (Forsman, Seppänen, & Mönkkönen, 2002;
118 Forsman, Thomson, & Seppänen, 2007). Prospecting tit nests to gather information on tit
119 presence or reproductive investment may nevertheless be risky (Ahola et al., 2007; Forsman
120 et al., 2018; Forsman & Thomson, 2008; Merilä & Wiggins, 1995; Samplonius & Both, 2019;
121 Slagsvold, 1975). Therefore, flycatchers could be expected to rely also on less costly cues,
122 such as great tit songs, which can be heard from a distance and whose characteristics
123 (repertoire size and strophe length) have been shown to correlate with great tit quality
124 (Lambrechts & Dhondt, 1986; McGregor, Krebs, & Perrins, 1981). The use of heterospecific
125 song features by flycatchers may nevertheless be expected to be sex-, personality-, and/or age-
126 dependent, as found for other heterospecific social cues (e.g. Forsman, Seppänen, & Nykänen,
127 2012; Morinay, Forsman, Germain, Daniel, & Doligez, in revision; Samplonius & Both,
128 2017).

129 Upon flycatchers' arrival from migration, we broadcasted artificially created great tit
130 songs of either high quality (large repertoire, long strophes, high song rate) or low quality
131 (small repertoire, short strophes, lower song rate) and monitored flycatchers' settlement in
132 experimental zones. If flycatchers are attracted by great tits songs when choosing where to
133 breed, they should settle preferentially in zones with broadcasted tit songs; in addition, if
134 flycatchers use information about great tit quality as reflected by song features, they should
135 settle preferentially in zones with broadcasted high quality tit songs, i.e. presumably
136 indicating high quality habitat. We also tested whether the choice of a zone with high vs. low
137 quality tit song depended on flycatchers' age, which may affect previous experience with
138 great tit songs, and aggressiveness, which may affect the ability to face competitive costs with
139 great tits. Finally, we tested whether flycatchers adjusted early reproductive investment, as

140 previously found in this population (in response to tit density; Forsman et al. 2008), here
141 according to the experimental song treatment.

142

143

144 **Materials and methods**

145 *Animal welfare note*

146 To minimize disturbance during aggressiveness tests, we approached nest boxes as quietly as
147 possible and hid below a camouflage net. The Ringing Centre from the Museum of Natural
148 History in Stockholm granted permission for catching and ringing adults (here 77 females and
149 60 males) with individually numbered aluminium rings (licences nb. 471:M025 to JM and
150 471:M043 to Cécile Vansteenberghé). We captured male and female adults in the nest, either
151 directly (females during incubation) or using swinging-door traps (both parents during chick
152 rearing). We set up traps for 30-60 minutes maximum depending on nestling age (30 min
153 when nestlings were 5 days old or younger), to avoid nestling starvation if parents did not
154 resume feeding during the catching period; we checked upon the traps every 5-10 minutes,
155 and removed them as soon as the adults had been caught. We started catching sessions after
156 6:00 am to let birds feed and provision nestlings undisturbed for at least two hours after the
157 night period (sunrise occurs approx. at 4:00 am during spring). We handled adults during 5 to
158 10 minutes and released them straight after manipulation or (when catching both parents
159 during nestling feeding) kept them until capturing the partner (up to 40 min maximum). All
160 manipulations were done in accordance with the Swedish legislation applying at the time.

161

162 *Study area and population monitoring*

163 The experiment was conducted in spring 2017, in a patchy population of collared
164 flycatchers breeding on the island of Gotland (Sweden, Baltic Sea). In this population,
165 collared flycatchers and dominant great and blue tits (*Cyanistes caeruleus*) largely share the
166 same ecological niche during breeding: all three are hole-nesting species breeding in tree
167 cavities and readily accept nest boxes provided in excess in the study area (Doligez, Pärt,
168 Danchin, Clobert, & Gustafsson, 2004; Gustafsson, 1988); they also partly feed the same food
169 resources to nestlings (in particular caterpillars) and share predators (Lundberg & Alatalo,
170 1992). Collared flycatchers start arriving from migration on the breeding grounds late April-
171 early May, i.e. 2 weeks on average after the beginning of tit breeding season. Over the period
172 2012-2017, 33.5% of the nest boxes available in the population were occupied by collared
173 flycatchers, 25.7% by great tits, 9.4% by blue tits, 2.7% by other species (e.g. nuthatches,
174 sparrows, coal tits) or by tits that abandoned their nest before identification, and 28.7%
175 remain empty. In all nest boxes occupied by flycatchers, we captured females during
176 incubation and males during the chick rearing period (for nests reaching this stage). All
177 captured individuals were identified (or ringed if previously unringed), measured, weighed
178 and aged based on plumage criteria (yearlings vs. older adults; Svensson 1992). Nest boxes
179 were then visited regularly throughout the breeding season to record the main breeding
180 variables for each breeding pair (laying and hatching date, clutch size, number and condition
181 of nestlings, final fledging success).

182

183 *Playback experimental design*

184 In the 13 forest patches chosen for the study on the basis of a sufficiently high number
185 of nest boxes (> 30, and up to 180), we established experimental zones composed of five

186 neighbouring nest boxes (except for one zone, which had four), with four boxes (three for the
187 four-box zone) spread around a central nest box (at approximately 20 m distance);
188 experimental zones were separated from each other by at least 40 m (i.e. each zone was
189 surrounded by at least one row of non-experimental nest boxes). Each selected forest patch
190 contained 3 to 9 experimental zones, for a total of 57 experimental zones (19 of each
191 broadcast treatment; 4 patches with 3 zones, 7 patches with 4 or 5 zones and 2 patches with 8
192 or 9 zones). We conducted the playback experiment between the 29th of April and the 27th of
193 May, i.e. during the whole period of flycatcher settlement. During these 29 days, we
194 broadcasted at the centre of each experimental zone either (i) a great tit song track with high
195 quality song features, i.e. mimicking singing activity of high quality individuals (i.e. large
196 repertoire, long strophes, high song rate, Lambrechts & Dhondt, 1986; McGregor et al., 1981;
197 Rivera-Gutierrez, Pinxten, & Eens, 2010), (ii) a great tit song track with song features of low
198 quality individuals (i.e. with a small repertoire size, short strophes, low song rate) or (iii) a
199 song track from a generalist and widespread forest-dwelling bird species with no previously
200 shown influence on flycatcher settlement decisions, the common chaffinch, *Fringilla coelebs*,
201 as a control. Common chaffinches are migrant (on Gotland), are open-cup nesters and are
202 larger than collared flycatchers just like great tits. Even though chaffinches and flycatchers
203 partly share the same food resource to nestlings (insect larva), chaffinches are habitat
204 generalists and their presence should not reflect a particular resource. Furthermore, there is
205 currently no direct evidence about resource or interference competition, or about interspecific
206 information use, between chaffinches and flycatchers. Consequently, chaffinches appear a
207 good control species for the song playback experiment. We ensured that each patch contained
208 at least one experimental zone of each treatment. The distance between experimental zones
209 reliably reflected the natural density of great tit breeding pairs in our forest patches (average

210 minimal distance between breeding great tits in our experimental forest patches in the
211 preceding year, i.e. 2016: 59.8 m \pm 9.3 SD; N=403). Because great tit and chaffinch songs can
212 be heard from a long distance ($>$ 100 m in our forest patches), a prospecting flycatcher should
213 thus have been able to simultaneously hear several experimental broadcasts and choose
214 among treatments.

215 Song tracks were broadcasted from dawn (1 hour before sunrise) for a duration of 17
216 hours, corresponding to dusk at the beginning of the broadcasting period and up to 1h30
217 before dusk at the end of the broadcasting period. Along the broadcasting period, the starting
218 hour of the broadcast was adjusted (15 minutes earlier every 10 days) to match the seasonal
219 change of dawn hour, but the length of the track remained unchanged. To match the natural
220 singing activity of great tits, we broadcasted 10 minute-long song periods every 30 minutes
221 from dawn to 3 hours after dawn, and then every hour till the end of the sequence (see Figure
222 A1), similarly to Krebs et al. (1978). Tracks were broadcasted at \sim 85-95dB, i.e. close to the
223 natural sound amplitude of great tit songs (McGregor and Horn 1992; sound amplitude
224 checked at 1 m distance with a sound level meter “Dr. Meter MS10”). In each experimental
225 zone, song track was broadcasted from a camouflaged loudspeaker (Zealot S1) attached 1.5-2
226 m above ground on a tree next to the central nest box of each experimental zone.

227

228 *Playback song structure*

229 To create the broadcasted sound tracks while limiting pseudoreplication risk, we used songs
230 from 4 different great tits to mimic songs of high quality tits, from 4 others to mimic songs of
231 low quality tits and from 4 different chaffinches for controls. Great tit songs were recorded in
232 the same population in 2016, at dawn chorus, with a Sennheiser MKH70 microphone and a

233 Zoom H4N recorder. Chaffinch songs were recorded either on Gotland in 2016 (1 individual)
234 or on the Swedish mainland (3 individuals) and available on-line (Xeno Canto on-line
235 database, www.xeno-canto.org, accessed in April 2017; recordings ID: XC84011, XC196974,
236 and XC27602). Each sound track was composed of songs originating from only one
237 individual to mimic the presence of a single singing individual in each experimental zone, and
238 in each zone, the song track broadcasted remained unchanged during the whole broadcasting
239 period, to avoid mixing signals from different individuals in case flycatchers were able to
240 individually recognize singers. All recordings were in .wav format to ensure sufficient sound
241 quality and had a sample frequency of 44.1 kHz and a resolution of 16 bit. Using Audacity
242 software (v. 2.1.0, <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>), original recordings were high-pass
243 filtered with a threshold below the song minimum frequency (2 kHz), modified to create the
244 song bouts (see Figure A1) and amplified. We amplified whole song bouts (see Figure A1)
245 but kept natural variations in amplitude within bouts, to mimic singing bird movements to a
246 flycatcher listening from a fixed point.

247

248 *Controlling for neighbouring live great tits*

249 To keep nest boxes in the experimental zones available to flycatchers and avoid songs from
250 live great tits to strongly interfere with our broadcasted great tit songs, we prevented great tits
251 (but not blue tits) to settle in our experimental zones from early April by narrowing the
252 entrance hole of all experimental nest boxes to 28 mm diameter with drilled chipboards
253 attached around the nest box hole. At the beginning of the broadcasting period, i.e. on the 29th
254 of April, we removed the chipboards to expand again the nest box entrance hole to 32 mm
255 diameter (recommended size for both great tits and flycatchers, L. Gustafsson pers. comm.).

256 As a consequence, late blue and great tits could also settle in the experimental zones during
257 the broadcasting period. When this happened before the first flycatcher pair had settled in the
258 experimental zone and the nest box density was sufficiently low (for 3 of the 57 zones), we
259 slightly relocated the experimental zone by adding one nest box on the edge of the zone and
260 excluding the box occupied by the tit pair, in order to provide the same number of available
261 nest boxes (5) to the first flycatcher pair to settle in all zones. Out of the 57 experimental
262 zones, 30 (52%) remained free from great tits during the whole playback experiment.

263 The singing performance of great tits in the vicinity of our experimental zones might
264 locally affect our treatment. Therefore, we controlled for the singing activity of tits within or
265 in close vicinity of each experimental zone. We counted the number of different songs that
266 could be heard close-by from the tree where the loudspeaker was placed, during 10 minutes
267 picked at random before 10:00 am and in between two broadcasted songs. We recorded this
268 measure of singing activity by alive great tits for each zone during 4 to 7 days a week
269 depending on the experimental zone and field time constraints, obtaining between 16 and 27
270 measures per zone, and we averaged it over the whole broadcasting period to obtain a
271 measure of mean song ‘bias’ in each zone.

272

273 *Aggressiveness test*

274 We estimated the aggressiveness level of flycatchers settling in the experimental zones during
275 nest building or early egg laying stages. We followed the protocol detailed in Morinay et al
276 (2019). In short, at the beginning of the test, an observer attached (i) clay decoys representing
277 either a flycatcher pair or a male great tit to the nest box of the focal pair and (ii) a
278 loudspeaker broadcasting songs of the corresponding species below the nest box. The

279 observer then sat camouflaged 8-10 m away and recorded all the behaviours of both the male
280 and the female flycatchers for 15 minutes if both individuals were seen at least 5 minutes
281 during this first period, or up to 25 minutes if at least one of them arrived at the end of the
282 first 15 min only, to allow describing flycatchers' behaviour for at least 5 minutes. We
283 conducted one test with flycatcher decoys and one with great tit decoy. However, if one
284 individual was not seen during either test, we conducted more tests (up to 5), with a day break
285 between two consecutive tests. To limit pseudoreplication risk, we used 10 sets of flycatcher
286 decoys, 10 sets of great tit decoys, 5 different song tracks per species, and we randomized the
287 song track used with a given decoy set. Aggressiveness score was then later estimated as the
288 number of moves within 2 m from the nest box (between branches or to the box, as well as
289 attacks on decoys) plus the number of chases performed against live intruders, standardized
290 per 15 minutes (the repeatability of this score within and between years is around 0.25,
291 Morinay et al. 2019). We averaged the scores obtained with the conspecific and heterospecific
292 decoys to obtain a unique individual score. However, when including in the models either of
293 these scores instead of the mean score led to qualitatively similar results. Over the 99
294 flycatcher pairs that started building nests in our experimental zones, we obtained
295 aggressiveness and age data for 77 females and 60 males.

296

297 *Statistical analyses*

298 We first tested whether overall flycatcher settlement in experimental zones differed between
299 song broadcast treatments (high quality great tit song, low quality great tit song, chaffinch
300 song as a control) by comparing nest box occupancy probability between treatments using a
301 generalized linear mixed model with flycatcher occupancy (binary variable) as the response

302 variable and broadcast treatment (3 levels: high quality tit song, low quality tit song, and
303 chaffinch song) as the sole fixed effect. We included the forest patch and the zone (nested in
304 the forest patch) as random terms, to account for the non-independence of the experimental
305 nest boxes within zones and forest patches.

306 Second, among settled pairs, we tested whether the probability for flycatchers to settle
307 in a given song broadcast treatment depended on individual and environmental factors using
308 generalized linear multinomial mixed models. Even though nest box choice is likely to be a
309 joint decision by both pair members, we fitted separate models for males and females,
310 because testing the effects of individual factors for both pair members in a single model
311 would lead to a reduced sample size (more females are captured than males, N=57 nest box
312 choices for which both the male and female age and aggressiveness were obtained). We fitted
313 models with the broadcast treatment of the zone chosen by each flycatcher (3 levels) as the
314 response variable and included as fixed effects (i) individual's age and aggressiveness score,
315 (ii) settlement date, (iii) the presence of previously settled great tits and flycatchers (2 separate
316 binary variables) as shown by the presence of nest material in a box in the experimental zone
317 on the day of choice and (iv) mean song bias. We included age and settlement date because
318 late arriving birds and yearlings have previously been found to rely more on social
319 information from great tits compared to early arriving and older ones (Seppänen and Forsman
320 2007). We included the presence of settled great tits and flycatchers prior to settlement of the
321 focal bird, as well as mean song bias, to control for social attraction. Given that the
322 aggressiveness effect on the use of heterospecific social information was previously found to
323 be age-specific in this system (Morinay et al., in revision), we tested in a second step the two-
324 way interaction between aggressiveness and age by adding it to the model with only main
325 effects. We included the forest patch as a random effect, but not the experimental zone

326 because there were many zones where only one pair settled (17 over the 51 zones where
327 flycatchers settled in total) and overall few replicates of each experimental treatment per
328 forest patch (1.5 zone of each treatment per patch on average, with 26 zones out of 57 being
329 the only replicate of a treatment in a given patch). The experimental zone was therefore
330 strongly confounded with treatment choice. Consequently, including the zone as a random
331 effect led to convergence issues and artificially high associated variances.

332 Finally, we tested whether flycatchers adjusted early reproductive investment,
333 measured here by (i) laying date, (ii) the delay between settlement and laying, and (iii) clutch
334 size, according to the broadcast treatment (3 levels) using (generalized) linear mixed effects
335 models. Besides the treatment, we included the same fixed and random effects as for the
336 preceding models, except for settlement date, which was included only in the model for clutch
337 size.

338

339 *Linear model implementation*

340 We implemented Bayesian linear models with the *MCMCglmm* function
341 (“MCMCglmm” R package, Hadfield, 2010). We scaled all continuous explanatory variables
342 to allow comparison between factors. We did not select models for fixed effects (Mundry &
343 Nunn, 2009). We implemented the model fitting the binary occupancy of each experimental
344 nest box with the ‘threshold family’ and the residual variance fixed to 1 (11 x 10⁴ iterations,
345 burn-in = 10⁴, thinning-interval = 50). We implemented models fitting the treatment chosen
346 using the ‘categorical’ family (15 x 10⁵ iterations, burn-in = 10⁴, thinning-interval = 700; and
347 when including the interaction term aggressiveness x age: 35 x 10⁵ iterations, burn-in = 3 x
348 10⁴, thinning-interval = 1,700); we fixed the variance-covariance residual matrix to 2/3 for the
349 diagonal terms (variance) and 1/3 for all the off-diagonal terms (covariance; Hadfield 2016).

350 We implemented the models for laying date with the Gaussian family (12×10^4 iterations,
351 burn-in = 6,000, thinning interval = 50) and for the delay in laying and clutch size with the
352 Poisson family (15×10^5 iterations, burn-in = 2×10^4 , thinning interval = 700). For all models,
353 we used normally distributed priors with a mean of 0 and a large variance (10^8) for fixed
354 effects, expanded priors (with $V = 1$, $\nu = 1000$, $\alpha \cdot \mu = 0$, $\alpha \cdot V = 1$) for the random
355 variance associated to the forest patch, and inverse-Gamma priors for the residual (when not
356 fixed) and random variances. Model convergence was assessed visually and by comparing
357 three chains per model using the *gelman.diag* and *gelman.plot* functions (Gelman & Rubin
358 approach, Plummer et al. 2006). Autocorrelation levels were always below 0.1 and effective
359 sample sizes above 1,500 per chain.

360

361 **Results**

362

363 *Occupancy pattern according to broadcast treatment*

364 The total number of settled flycatcher pairs was 33 in the high quality great tit song treatment,
365 27 in the low quality tit song treatment and 39 in the chaffinch song (control) treatment. The
366 probability for a nest box to be occupied by collared flycatchers did not differ between
367 treatments (posterior means and 95% Credible Interval (CI) considering the control treatment
368 as the reference: low quality tit treatment: -0.36 [-0.73; 0.12]; high quality tit treatment: -0.18
369 [-0.56; 0.23]; zone and forest patch variances did not differ from zero; $N=284$).

370

371 *Individual and environmental effects on the choice of a broadcast treatment*

372 The probability to choose an experimental zone of a given broadcast treatment
373 depended on female aggressiveness score (estimate [95% CI]: 0.81 [0.07; 1.61] for high
374 quality vs. control, from the model without interaction; N=77), but this effect differed
375 between yearling and older females (interaction aggressiveness score by age, Table 1, Figure
376 1). Among older females, less aggressive ones were more likely to settle in zones of the low
377 quality great tit song treatment (relation between aggressiveness level and probability to settle
378 in the low quality song vs. control treatment: estimate [95% CI]: -3.47 [-6.45; -0.96]; Table 1,
379 Figure 1b), while more aggressive ones were more likely to settle in zones of the high quality
380 great tit song treatment (relation between aggressiveness level and probability to settle in the
381 high quality song vs. control treatment: estimate [95% CI]: 1.33 [0.14; 2.63]; Table 1, Figure
382 1a). The probability to choose an experimental zone of a given broadcast treatment also
383 depended on the presence of competitors previously settled in the zone: flycatchers were more
384 likely to settle in a great tit song treatment zone (either high or low quality compared to
385 control) when other great tits had previously settled in the same zone (Table 1); they were
386 also more likely to settle in a control zone than in a high quality great tit song zone when
387 other flycatchers had previously settled in the experimental zone (Table 1). Neither settlement
388 date, song bias, male age nor male aggressiveness affected the probability to settle in a zone
389 of a given broadcast treatment (Table 1, N=60 for the model with male factors).

390

391 *Early reproductive investment according to broadcast treatment*

392 We found no difference between broadcast treatments in flycatcher laying date, delay between
393 settlement and laying, and clutch size (all 95% CI encompassed zero, N=77 or 76 for clutch
394 size for models with female factors, and N=60 for models with male factors; Table A1). As

395 expected, yearling females were found to lay eggs later in the season than older females
396 (Table A1). Aggressiveness scores and male age had no effect on early reproductive
397 investment (Table A1).

398

399 **Discussion**

400 Using a playback experimental approach, we tested whether flycatchers use complex quality
401 information contained in great tit songs as a source of heterospecific social information for
402 breeding site selection. Our results confirmed the direct use of this cue by old flycatcher
403 females for small-scale settlement decisions because we used broadcasted songs alone, i.e.
404 decoupled from the actual presence of great tit pairs. Flycatcher choice of experimental zones
405 depended on female aggressiveness level in interaction with female age: among old females,
406 more aggressive ones settled preferentially in zones with high quality great tit songs, while
407 less aggressive ones preferred zones with low quality tit songs. In addition to song presence
408 itself, our results thus provide evidence that heterospecific song features related to emitter's
409 quality can be used for important decision making. This source of heterospecific social
410 information did however not affect flycatchers' early reproductive investment (laying date,
411 clutch size, delay between settlement and laying), suggesting that different information
412 sources are used for different breeding decisions (Doligez et al., 2008) and calling for a finer
413 understanding of the fitness benefits of using each information source.

414

415 *Why and when using great tit song features for settlement decisions?*

416 Migratory flycatchers may not easily gather updated personal information about breeding

417 habitat quality when returning from migration and have therefore been shown to rely on
418 resident, already settled, great tit presence and early reproductive investment for their own
419 settlement decisions under strong time constraints (e.g. Forsman & Seppänen, 2011; Kivelä et
420 al., 2014). They have been found to benefit from settling near great tit nests in terms of
421 increased offspring number and condition (Forsman, Seppänen, & Mönkkönen, 2002;
422 Forsman, Thomson, & Seppänen, 2007); old flycatcher females also adjust reproductive
423 investment according to neighbouring tit clutch size, producing more and heavier eggs near
424 tits with large clutches (Forsman et al., 2012). Such reproductive benefits can be achieved via
425 the direct assessment of local habitat quality upon settlement, if a high quality great tit pair
426 secures a high quality territory, or via indirect effects through enhanced access to food
427 resources during nestling provisioning and/or social benefits such as protection against nest
428 predators (Forsman et al., 2002). This shows that heterospecific cues from great tits can
429 inform flycatchers about optimal breeding sites and thereby allow them to secure future
430 breeding success. Great tit songs may allow flycatchers to easily assess great tit density, but
431 also quality, from a distance, thus with limited costs, while direct information about early
432 reproductive investment might be more difficult and costly to gather (Ahola et al., 2007;
433 Forsman et al., 2018; Merilä & Wiggins, 1995; Samplonius & Both, 2019; Slagsvold, 1975).

434 Song production is overall costly (in terms of time, energy, predation risk and
435 agonistic contests) and should thus be selected to honestly inform on producer's quality (Gil
436 & Gahr, 2002), for example reflecting its past (Bischoff et al., 2009) or present parasitic load
437 (Buchanan & Catchpole, 1999; Møller, 1991). Song features in great tit males have been
438 shown to inform on male survival and reproductive success (McGregor et al. 1981,
439 Lambrechts and Dhondt 1986, Rivera-Gutierrez et al. 2010), on mate quality (to females)
440 during escalating song contests (Otter et al., 1999), and on competitive ability (to rivals) at the

441 conspecific level (Peake, Matessi, McGregor, & Dabelsteen, 2005). Great tit song features
442 have not directly been related to territory quality (Lambrechts and Dhondt 1988, but see Hoi-
443 Leitner et al. 1995, and Manica et al. 2014 for other species), but great tit males singing
444 longer strophes were found to be dominant at feeders (Lambrechts & Dhondt, 1986) and more
445 willing to engage in territorial defence (McGregor & Horn, 1992). Overall, these studies
446 suggest that great tit song features revealing singers' high quality are likely to be associated
447 with the acquisition and defence of a high quality territory, but also a better exploitation of
448 habitat during nestling provisioning and nest defence against predators via increased vigilance
449 and risk-taking (Krams, 1998). Thus, cueing on great tit song features may be an efficient
450 proximate mechanism for flycatchers to identify and select high quality individuals close to
451 which it can be beneficial to settle (Forsman et al., 2002; Forsman et al., 2007), as our results
452 for old aggressive females suggest. Because songs are acquired from a distance, Yet, we
453 cannot exclude the alternative explanation that, after the start of the experiment, the latest
454 great tit pairs settled around our experimental zones non-randomly, in particular with respect
455 to their own phenotype, depending on the broadcast treatment, and that flycatchers' settlement
456 decisions were affected by the presence or phenotype of these neighbouring great tits rather
457 than (or on top of) the experimentally broadcasted songs. However, flycatchers have been
458 shown to prefer settling in the closest vicinity to great tits, i.e. the nearest nest box (Kivelä et
459 al., 2014) and the average number of different great tit songs heard within or close to the
460 experimental zones (song bias) did not affect treatment choice by flycatchers. Therefore, we
461 believe that the alternative mechanism of an indirect effect of broadcast treatment on
462 flycatchers via an effect on neighbouring live great tits, although possible, is unlikely here.
463 Nevertheless, the use of broadcasted great tit songs as a social information source by
464 flycatchers did not preclude the simultaneous use of other sources, such as the presence of

465 great tit pairs, as reflected by a higher settlement probability in presence of previously settled
466 great tit pairs.

467 Our results are in line with recent studies examining the use of song features as a
468 source of information at the intraspecific level in other migratory species. Wood warblers
469 have for example been shown to cue on song rate (number of trills per minute) of conspecific
470 males to select breeding sites: males preferred settling near broadcasts of an apparently low
471 quality male, with a low song rate (Szymkowiak et al., 2016) probably to avoid competition
472 costs since song rate reflects individuals' aggressiveness (Szymkowiak & Kuczyński, 2017).
473 Similarly, yellow warblers discriminate conspecific songs reflecting pairing status based on
474 syllable frequency and song repetition within song bouts and use this information for breeding
475 site selection: they were more likely to settle in areas with broadcasts mimicking the presence
476 of already paired conspecifics, presumably indicating high-quality sites (Kelly & Ward,
477 2017). Interestingly here, our results clearly suggest that such song features informing on
478 individuals' quality constitute cues that can cross species boundaries.

479 Nevertheless, the availability of great tit songs to newly arrived flycatchers may vary
480 both within and between years. When flycatchers arrive on the breeding grounds, a large part
481 of great tit females can have initiated incubation and thus great tit male singing activity can be
482 largely reduced (Amrhein, Johannessen, Kristiansen, & Slagsvold, 2008; Mace, 1987). The
483 time delay between great tit settlement and flycatcher arrival, as well as the time interval
484 between the arrival of the first and last flycatchers, may strongly constrain the possibility for
485 flycatchers to eavesdrop on great tit song and may emphasize the use of other information
486 sources. The timing of great tit reproduction but also the synchrony of flycatcher arrival show
487 high variability between years in this and other populations (Morinay, Forsman, Kivelä,

488 Gustafsson, & Doligez, 2018; Samplonius & Both, 2019), affecting the availability of cues
489 linked to great tit presence and reproductive activity upon flycatcher arrival. Thus selective
490 pressures should favour flexibility in the use of the different heterospecific cues in response to
491 environmental variation. Great tit song characteristics may be used for flycatcher settlement
492 decisions when tits are late and by early arriving flycatchers, while other information about tit
493 quality and reproductive investment (e.g. clutch size, tit incubating or provisioning activity;
494 Seppänen et al. 2011, Samplonius and Both 2017) or conspecific social information should be
495 favoured otherwise, even though settlement date had no influence here on broadcast treatment
496 choice. Manipulating information availability through the timing of song broadcast would be
497 needed to explore this hypothesis. In our study, tit laying date was intermediate (34.8 ± 7.8
498 (SD), counted from the 1st of April) compared to other years (26.6 ± 6.9 for 2016, an early
499 year, and 42.3 ± 3.9 for 2013, a late year; see Morinay et al. 2018), which may explain
500 relatively small differences between broadcast treatments.

501

502 *Role of female experience and competitive ability*

503 Old females were able to use the information about both the presence and quality of great tit
504 individuals provided by songs to select a breeding site. Conversely, yearling females were not
505 affected by song presence or quality, even though yearlings are usually more prone to use
506 social information, including heterospecific one, as shown before in the pied flycatcher –
507 great tit system (Seppänen & Forsman, 2007; Loukola et al., 2013). This difference between
508 yearling and older females plausibly results from different past experience with great tit
509 songs. Among songbirds, the response to songs is usually shaped by imprinting both in the
510 conspecific (Catchpole & Slater, 2008; Kroodsma, 1982) and the heterospecific context

511 (Hansen & Slagsvold, 2003). Because flycatchers breed a couple of weeks later than great tits,
512 flycatcher fledglings are usually not exposed to great tit songs before leaving on migration
513 mid-August. Therefore, flycatcher yearlings arriving on breeding grounds from migration are
514 not expected to be able to associate great tit song features with singer's quality estimates.
515 Cueing on great tit song features may require experience obtained only during the first
516 breeding season for flycatchers, and yearling flycatchers could use other information sources
517 to assess great tit presence and reproductive investment (Seppänen & Forsman, 2007; Loukola
518 et al., 2013).

519 Among older females, the difference in choice of great tit song broadcast treatment
520 according to aggressiveness level could result from two mechanisms. First, old flycatcher
521 females may adjust their settlement decisions depending on the balance between expected
522 benefits in terms of habitat quality and costs in terms of competition level and agonistic risks.
523 While flycatchers benefit from breeding close to great tits, the latter bear costs from this
524 proximity, with (depending on years) either lower number, quality, size or survival of
525 offspring reared close to flycatcher nests (Forsman, et al., 2007), likely due to competition for
526 food resources. Great tits may therefore be expected to show aggressiveness towards
527 flycatchers at the settlement stage. In this context, only more aggressive flycatcher females
528 may be able to cope with increased costs associated to settling near more competitive /
529 aggressive great tits and benefit from the most favourable habitats (as reflected by higher
530 quality great tit songs); less aggressive females still preferred settling near great tits, i.e. in
531 habitats of supposedly higher quality than control (chaffinch song) zones, but they avoided
532 zones where agonistic risk and competition with great tits was expected to be highest. This
533 could be in line with previous intraspecific results showing higher settlement of great tits near
534 broadcasts of great tit songs with smaller repertoires, i.e. reflecting potentially lower quality

535 individuals (Krebs et al., 1978): later-settlings individuals could indeed be low competitive
536 individuals more prone to avoid potential competitive costs. Alternatively, flycatcher females
537 may have adjusted their response to our aggressiveness test after settlement, depending on the
538 song broadcast treatment and thus apparent competitive level of neighbouring great tits. In
539 this population, the repeatability of our aggressiveness score is around 0.2, meaning that this
540 trait is largely plastic (Morinay et al., 2019). Furthermore, we measured aggressiveness after
541 settlement, during nest building, at a time when songs were still broadcasted for most
542 flycatcher pairs, and higher singing performance was suggested to induce social aggression, at
543 least at the intraspecific level (Gil & Gahr, 2002). In the case of post-settlement adjustment of
544 aggressiveness level, however, it would be surprising that only females, but not males,
545 respond to the broadcasted song treatment, since males are as much involved in territory
546 defence against heterospecific intruders as females (unpublished results). Furthermore, such
547 adjustment of aggressiveness level implies that individuals respond in the absence of great tit
548 individuals actually defending their neighbourhood. Importantly, both mechanisms, i.e. the
549 adjustment of settlement choice according to female aggressiveness level or the post-
550 settlement adjustment of aggressiveness response by females according to broadcasted songs,
551 imply that old flycatcher females are able to discriminate great tit songs features reflecting
552 high and low quality individuals, use them as a heterospecific social information source and
553 adjust their behaviour accordingly, whether pre- or post-settlement.

554

555 *No role of male factors*

556 Interestingly, male age and aggressiveness score did not influence pair settlement with
557 respect to the broadcast treatment. Even though nest site selection is a joint behaviour by both

558 pair members, our results thus suggest that only female flycatchers were capable of adjusting
559 this behaviour in response to great tit songs, which could reflect a higher ability to
560 discriminate song features compared to males. Selective pressures may be higher in flycatcher
561 females compared to males for the use of songs in the context of species recognition (when
562 facing hybridization risk with sympatric pied flycatchers; Qvarnström, Rice, & Ellegren,
563 2010; Wheatcroft & Qvarnström, 2017) and/or mate selection (with higher constraints on
564 females than males due to facultative polygyny; Gustafsson & Qvarnström, 2006;
565 Qvarnström, Sheldon, Pärt, & Gustafsson, 2003). Former studies have shown differential
566 auditory processes between sexes in several species (Del Negro, Kreutzer, & Gahr, 2000;
567 Williams, 1985), upon which selection could act differently. Alternatively, males could
568 discriminate song features just as well as females (as suggested by the widespread ‘dear
569 enemy’ effect; Moser-Purdy & Mennill, 2016), but may be less prone to use this information
570 for settlement decisions if other social cues are more relevant at the spatial scale of site choice
571 for males, supposedly involving smaller scales compared to females (Arlt & Pärt, 2008;
572 Doligez, Pärt, & Danchin, 2004; Greenwood, 1980; Morinay et al., 2018; Samplonius & Both,
573 2017). The different selective pressures acting on male and female settlement and
574 reproductive investment may also favour the acquisition and use of complex social
575 information such as tit clutch size or tit song features by females, allowing them to adjust
576 decisions (e.g. Forsman et al., 2002, 2012, 2007), while males must quickly secure nest sites
577 to attract mates in the face of strong male-male competition, and thus cannot take time for
578 gathering such complex information (see Samplonius & Both, 2017b). Theoretically, the sex-
579 specific pattern observed here could also result from different breeding costs and benefits of
580 settling close to high (or low) quality great tits between males and females. Such sex-specific
581 costs and benefits may however be difficult to estimate here because both sexes participate in

582 nest defence and offspring provisioning. Further work would be needed to assess whether
583 flycatcher males can discriminate great tit song features and in this case which other
584 information sources would be more valuable to them compared to females.

585

586 Overall, our results shed further light on the complexity of social information use by
587 providing evidence for the use of refined heterospecific information sources such as the
588 quality-related information contained in heterospecific acoustic signals for settlement
589 decisions. Interestingly, the resulting global occupancy pattern was unaffected by our
590 broadcast treatment, emphasizing the importance of accounting for individual variability to
591 understand the complex use of social information. Further work is needed to assess how and
592 when different information sources are used for different breeding decisions (see e.g. Doligez
593 et al., 2008) depending on individual and environmental conditions, including the
594 quantification of fitness benefits of using each information source in a given context. In the
595 case of great tit songs, this could include manipulating another information source
596 simultaneously (e.g. territory quality, through food supplementation; Récapet, Bize, &
597 Doligez, 2017), or manipulating individuals' phenotype (e.g. body condition), on top of song
598 broadcasts, to explore how individuals' characteristics (sex, age, condition, aggressiveness but
599 also previous experience) affect which information is used for decisions along the breeding
600 period, from nest site choice to parental care investment until (and possibly after) fledging.

601

602 **Data, code and materials**

603 The dataset supporting this article has been uploaded as Supplementary Material 1 and 2.

604 **Competing interests**

605 The authors declare no competing interests.

606

607 **References**

608 Ahola, M. P., Laaksonen, T., Eeva, T., & Lehikoinen, E. (2007). Climate change can alter
609 competitive relationships between resident and migratory birds. *Journal of Animal*
610 *Ecology*, 76, 1045–1052. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2656.2007.01294.x>

611 Amrhein, V., Johannessen, L. E., Kristiansen, L., & Slagsvold, T. (2008). Reproductive
612 strategy and singing activity: Blue tit and great tit compared. *Behavioral Ecology and*
613 *Sociobiology*, 62(10), 1633–1641. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00265-008-0592-6>

614 Andersson, M. B. (1994). *Sexual selection* (Princeton). Princeton.

615 Arlt, D., & Pärt, T. (2008). Sex-biased dispersal: a result of a sex difference in breeding site
616 availability. *The American Naturalist*, 171(6), 844–850. <https://doi.org/10.1086/587521>

617 Bischoff, L. L., Tschirren, B., & Richner, H. (2009). Long-term effects of early parasite
618 exposure on song duration and singing strategy in great tits. *Behavioral Ecology*, 20(2),
619 265–270. <https://doi.org/10.1093/beheco/arp012>

620 Boulinier, T., Mariette, M., Doligez, B., & Danchin, E. (2008). Choosing where to breed:
621 breeding habitat choice. In É. Danchin, L.-A. Giraldeau, & F. Cézilly (Eds.),
622 *Behavioural ecology* (Oxford Uni, pp. 285–319). Oxford: Oxford University Press Inc.

623 Buchanan, K. L., & Catchpole, C. K. (1999). Song as an indicator of male parental effort in
624 the sedge warbler. *Animal Behaviour*, 57, 307–314.
625 <https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2000.1003>

626 Catchpole, C. K., & Slater, P. J. B. (2008). *Bird song: biological themes and variations*.

627 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

628 Dall, S. R. X., Giraldeau, L.-A., Olsson, O., McNamara, J. M., & Stephens, D. W. (2005).
629 Information and its use by animals in evolutionary ecology. *Trends in Ecology &*
630 *Evolution*, 20(4), 187–193. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tree.2005.01.010>

631 Danchin, E., Giraldeau, L.-A., Valone, T. J., & Wagner, R. H. (2004). Public information:
632 from nosy neighbors to cultural evolution. *Science*, 305(5683), 487–491.
633 <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1098254>

634 Del Negro, C. D., Kreutzer, M., & Gahr, M. (2000). Sexually stimulating signals of canary
635 (Serinus canaria) songs: Evidence for a female-specific auditory representation in the
636 HVC nucleus during the breeding season. *Behavioral Neuroscience*, 114(3), 526–542.
637 <https://doi.org/10.1037//0735-7044.114.3.526>

638 Doligez, B., Berthouly, A., Doligez, D., Tanner, M., Saladin, V., Bonfils, D., & Richner, H.
639 (2008). Spatial scale of local breeding habitat quality and adjustment of breeding
640 decisions. *Ecology*, 89(5), 1436–1444. <https://doi.org/10.1890/07-0113.1>

641 Doligez, B., Pärt, T., & Danchin, E. (2004). Prospecting in the collared flycatcher: gathering
642 public information for future breeding habitat selection? *Animal Behaviour*, 67(3), 457–
643 466. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anbehav.2003.03.010>

644 Doligez, B., Pärt, T., Danchin, E., Clobert, J., & Gustafsson, L. (2004). Availability and use
645 of public information and conspecific density for settlement decisions in the collared
646 flycatcher. *Journal of Animal Ecology*, 73(1), 75–87. [https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-
647 2656.2004.00782.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2656.2004.00782.x)

648 Fletcher, R. J. (2008). Social information and community dynamics: nontarget effects from
649 simulating social cues for management. *Ecological Applications*, 18(7), 1764–1773.
650 <https://doi.org/10.1890/07-1850.1>

651 Forsman, J.T., Seppänen, J.-T., & Mönkkönen, M. (2002). Positive fitness consequences of
652 interspecific interaction with a potential competitor. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*,
653 269, 1619–1623. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2002.2065>

654 Forsman, J.T., Seppänen, J. T., Mönkkönen, M., Thomson, R. L., Kivelä, S. M., Krams, I., &
655 Loukola, O. J. (2018). Is it interspecific information use or aggression between putative
656 competitors that steers the selection of nest-site characteristics? A reply to Slagsvold and
657 Wiebe. *Journal of Avian Biology*, 49(3), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jav.01558>

658 Forsman, J.T., & Thomson, R. L. (2008). Evidence of information collection from
659 heterospecifics in cavity-nesting birds. *Ibis*, 150(2), 409–412.
660 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1474-919X.2007.00773.x>

661 Forsman, J.T, Hjernquist, M. B., Taipale, J., & Gustafsson, L. (2008). Competitor density
662 cues for habitat quality facilitating habitat selection and investment decisions. *Behavioral*
663 *Ecology*, 19(3), 539–545. <https://doi.org/10.1093/beheco/arn005>

664 Forsman, J.T, & Seppänen, J.-T. (2011). Learning what (not) to do: testing rejection and
665 copying of simulated heterospecific behavioural traits. *Animal Behaviour*, 81(4), 879–
666 883. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.anbehav.2011.01.029>

667 Forsman, J.T, Seppänen, J.-T., & Nykänen, I. L. (2012). Observed heterospecific clutch size
668 can affect offspring investment decisions. *Biology Letters*, 8(3), 341–343.
669 <https://doi.org/10.1098/rsbl.2011.0970>

670 Forsman, J.T, Thomson, R. L., & Seppänen, J.-T. (2007). Mechanisms and fitness effects of
671 interspecific information use between migrant and resident birds. *Behavioral Ecology*,
672 18(5), 888–894. <https://doi.org/10.1093/beheco/arm048>

673 Gil, D., & Gahr, M. (2002). The honesty of bird song: Multiple constraints for multiple traits.
674 *Trends in Ecology and Evolution*, 17(3), 133–141. <https://doi.org/10.1016/S0169->

675 5347(02)02410-2

676 Greenwood, P. J. (1980). Mating systems, philopatry and dispersal in birds and mammals.
677 *Animal Behaviour*, 28(4), 1140–1162. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0003-3472\(80\)80103-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0003-3472(80)80103-5)

678 Gustafsson, L. (1988). Interspecific and intraspecific competition for nest holes in a
679 population of the collared flycatcher *Ficedula albicollis*. *Ibis*, 130(1), 11–16.
680 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1474-919X.1988.tb00951.x>

681 Gustafsson, L., & Qvarnström, A. (2006). A test of the “sexy son” hypothesis: sons of
682 polygynous collared flycatchers do not inherit their fathers’ mating status. *The American*
683 *Naturalist*, 167(2), 297–302. <https://doi.org/10.1086/498623>

684 Hadfield, J. D. (2010). MCMC methods for multi-response Generalized Linear Mixed
685 Models: The MCMCglmm R package. *Journal of Statistical Software*, 33(2), 1–22.
686 <https://doi.org/10.1002/ana.22635>

687 Hadfield, J. D. (2016). MCMCglmm course notes. Retrieved from [https://cran.r-](https://cran.r-project.org/web/%0Apackages/MCMCglmm/vignettes/CourseNotes.pdf)
688 [project.org/web/%0Apackages/MCMCglmm/vignettes/CourseNotes.pdf](https://cran.r-project.org/web/%0Apackages/MCMCglmm/vignettes/CourseNotes.pdf).

689 Hahn, B. A., & Silverman, E. D. (2006). Social cues facilitate habitat selection: American
690 redstarts establish breeding territories in response to song. *Biology Letters*, 2(3), 337–
691 340. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rsbl.2006.0472>

692 Hansen, B. T., & Slagsvold, T. (2003). Rival imprinting: Interspecifically cross-fostered tits
693 defend their territories against heterospecific intruders. *Animal Behaviour*, 65(6), 1117–
694 1123. <https://doi.org/10.1006/anbe.2003.2146>

695 Hoi-Leitner, M., Nechtelberger, H., & Hoi, H. (1995). Song rate as a signal for nest-site
696 quality in blackcaps (*Sylvia atricapilla*). *Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology*, 37(6),
697 399–405. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00170587>

698 Jaakkonen, T., Kivelä, S. M., Meier, C. M., & Forsman, J. T. (2015). The use and relative

699 importance of intraspecific and interspecific social information in a bird community.
700 *Behavioral Ecology*, 26(1), 55–64. <https://doi.org/10.1093/beheco/aru144>

701 Kelly, J. K., & Ward, M. P. (2017). Do songbirds attend to song categories when selecting
702 breeding habitat? A case study with a wood warbler. *Behaviour*, 154(11), 1123–1144.
703 <https://doi.org/10.1163/1568539X-00003461>

704 Kivelä, S. M., Seppänen, J.-T., Ovaskainen, O., Doligez, B., Gustafsson, L., Mönkkönen, M.,
705 & Forsman, J. T. (2014). The past and the present in decision-making: the use of
706 conspecific and heterospecific cues in nest site selection. *Ecology*, 95, 3428–3439.
707 <https://doi.org/10.1890/13-2103.1>

708 Krams, I. (1998). Dominance-specific vigilance in the great tit. *Journal of Avian Biology*,
709 29(1), 55. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3677341>

710 Krebs, J., Ashcroft, R., & Webber, M. (1978). Song repertoires and territory defence in the
711 great tit. *Nature*, 271(5645), 539–542. <https://doi.org/10.1038/271539a0>

712 Kroodsma, D. E. (1982). Learning and the ontogeny of sound signals in birds. In D. E.
713 Kroodsma, E. H. Miller, & H. Ouellet (Eds.), *Acoustic communication in birds: song*
714 *learning ad its consequences, vol. 2* (pp. 1–23). New York: Academic Press.

715 Lambrechts, M., & Dhondt, A. a. (1986). Male quality, reproduction, and survival in the great
716 tit (*Parus major*). *Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology*, 19(1), 57–63.
717 <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00303843>

718 Lambrechts, M. M., & Dhondt, A. A. (1988). Male quality and territory quality in the great tit
719 *Parus major*. *Animal Behaviour*, 36, 596–601.

720 Loukola, O. J., Seppänen, J.-T., Krams, I., Torvinen, S. S., & Forsman, J. T. (2013). Observed
721 fitness may affect niche overlap in competing species via selective social information
722 use. *The American Naturalist*, 182(4), 474–483. <https://doi.org/10.1086/671815>

723 Lundberg, A., & Alatalo, R. V. (1992). *The pied flycatcher*. London, UK: T & AD Poyser.

724 Mace, R. (1987). The dawn chorus in the great tit *Parus major* is directly related to female
725 fertility. *Nature*, 330(6150), 745–746. <https://doi.org/10.1038/330745a0>

726 Magrath, R. D., Haff, T. M., Fallow, P. M., & Radford, A. N. (2015). Eavesdropping on
727 heterospecific alarm calls: From mechanisms to consequences. *Biological Reviews*,
728 90(2), 560–586. <https://doi.org/10.1111/brv.12122>

729 Manica, L. T., Maia, R., Dias, A., Podos, J., & Macedo, R. H. (2014). Vocal output predicts
730 territory quality in a Neotropical songbird. *Behavioural Processes*, 109(Part A), 21–26.
731 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.beproc.2014.07.004>

732 McGregor, P. K., & Horn, A. G. (1992). Strophe length and response to playback in great tits.
733 *Animal Behaviour*, 43(4), 667–676. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0003-3472\(05\)81025-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0003-3472(05)81025-5)

734 McGregor, P. K., Krebs, J. R., & Perrins, C. (1981). Song repertoires and lifetime
735 reproductive success in the great tit (*Parus major*). *The American Naturalist*, 118(2),
736 149–159. <https://doi.org/10.1086/283811>

737 Mennill, D. J., Ratcliffe, L. M., & Boag, P. T. (2002). Female eavesdropping on male song
738 contests in songbirds. *Science*, 296(5569), 873.
739 <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.296.5569.873>

740 Merilä, J., & Wiggins, D. A. (1995). Interspecific competition for nest holes causes adult
741 mortality in the collared flycatcher. *The Condor*, 97(2), 445–450.
742 <https://doi.org/10.2307/1369030>

743 Møller, A. P. (1991). Parasite load reduces song output in a passerine bird. *Animal*
744 *Behaviour*, 41(4), 723–730. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0003-3472\(05\)80909-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0003-3472(05)80909-1)

745 Morinay, J., Daniel, G., Gustafsson, L., & Doligez, B. (2019). No evidence for behavioural
746 syndrome and genetic basis for three personality traits in a wild bird population. *Animal*

747 *Behaviour*, 153, 69–82. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anbehav.2019.05.001>

748 Morinay, J., Forsman, J. T., Germain, M., Daniel, G., & Doligez, B. (n.d.). (in revision)

749 Personality traits modulate the use of heterospecific social information for nest-site

750 selection: experimental evidence from a wild bird population.

751 Morinay, J., Forsman, J. T., Kivelä, S. M., Gustafsson, L., & Doligez, B. (2018).

752 Heterospecific nest site copying behavior in a wild bird: assessing the influence of

753 genetics and past experience on a joint breeding phenotype. *Frontiers in Ecology and*

754 *Evolution*, 5, 167. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fevo.2017.00167>

755 Moser-Purdy, C., & Mennill, D. J. (2016). Large vocal repertoires do not constrain the dear

756 enemy effect: a playback experiment and comparative study of songbirds. *Animal*

757 *Behaviour*, 118, 55–64. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anbehav.2016.05.011>

758 Mundry, R., & Nunn, C. L. (2009). Stepwise model fitting and statistical inference: turning

759 noise into signal pollution. *The American Naturalist*, 173(1), 119–123.

760 <https://doi.org/10.1086/593303>

761 Otter, K., McGregor, P. K., Terry, A. M. R., Burford, F. R. L., Peake, T. M., & Dabelsteen, T.

762 (1999). Do female great tits (*Parus major*) assess males by eavesdroppings ? A field study

763 using interactive song playback. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*, 266, 1305–1309.

764 <https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.1999.0779>

765 Peake, T. M., Matessi, G., McGregor, P. K., & Dabelsteen, T. (2005). Song type matching,

766 song type switching and eavesdropping in male great tits. *Animal Behaviour*, 69(5),

767 1063–1068. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anbehav.2004.08.009>

768 Plummer, M., Best, N., Cowles, K., & Vines, K. (2006). CODA: Convergence diagnosis and

769 output analysis for MCMC, *R news*(6), 7–11.

770 Qvarnström, A., Rice, A. M., & Ellegren, H. (2010). Speciation in *Ficedula* flycatchers.

771 *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 365(1547),
772 1841–1852. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2009.0306>

773 Qvarnström, A., Sheldon, B. C., Pärt, T., & Gustafsson, L. (2003). Male ornamentation,
774 timing of breeding, and cost of polygyny in the collared flycatcher. *Behavioral Ecology*,
775 14(1), 68–73. <https://doi.org/10.1093/beheco/14.1.68>

776 Récapet, C., Bize, P., & Doligez, B. (2017). Food availability modulates differences in
777 parental effort between dispersing and philopatric birds. *Behavioral Ecology*, 28(3), 688–
778 697. <https://doi.org/10.1093/beheco/arx017>

779 Rivera-Gutierrez, H. F., Pinxten, R., & Eens, M. (2010). Multiple signals for multiple
780 messages: great tit, *Parus major*, song signals age and survival. *Animal Behaviour*,
781 80(3), 451–459. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anbehav.2010.06.002>

782 Samplonius, J. M., & Both, C. (2017). Competitor phenology as a social cue in breeding site
783 selection. *Journal of Animal Ecology*, 86(3), 615–623. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijlh.12426>

784 Samplonius, J. M., & Both, C. (2019). Climate change may affect fatal competition between
785 two bird species. *Current Biology*, 29(2), 327–331.
786 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cub.2018.11.063>

787 Samplonius, J. M., Kromhout Van Der Meer, I. M., & Both, C. (2017). Nest site preference
788 depends on the relative density of conspecifics and heterospecifics in wild birds.
789 *Frontiers in Zoology*, 14(56). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12983-017-0246-5>

790 Seppänen, J.-T., & Forsman, J. T. (2007). Interspecific social learning: novel preference can
791 be acquired from a competing species. *Current Biology*, 17(14), 1248–1252.
792 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cub.2007.06.034>

793 Seppänen, J.-T., Forsman, J. T., Mönkkönen, M., Krams, I., & Salmi, T. (2011). New
794 behavioural trait adopted or rejected by observing heterospecific tutor fitness.

795 *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 278(1712), 1736–1741.
796 <https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2010.1610>

797 Slagsvold, T. (1975). Competition between the great tit *Parus major* and the pied flycatcher
798 *Ficedula hypoleuca* in the breeding season. *Ornis Scandinavica*, 6(2), 179–190.
799 <https://doi.org/10.2307/3676230>

800 Svensson, L. (1992). *Identification guide to european passerines* (Märstatryc). Stockholm,
801 Sweden: Svensson.

802 Switzer, P. V. (1997). Past reproductive success affects future habitat selection. *Behavioral*
803 *Ecology and Sociobiology*, 40(5), 307–312. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s002650050346>

804 Szymkowiak, J., & Kuczyński, L. (2017). Song rate as a signal of male aggressiveness during
805 territorial contests in the wood warbler. *Journal of Avian Biology*, 48(2), 275–283.
806 <https://doi.org/10.1111/jav.00969>

807 Szymkowiak, J., Thomson, R. L., & Kuczyński, L. (2016). Wood warblers copy settlement
808 decisions of poor quality conspecifics: support for the tradeoff between the benefit of
809 social information use and competition avoidance. *Oikos*, 125(11), 1561–1569.
810 <https://doi.org/10.1111/oik.03052>

811 Szymkowiak, J., Thomson, R. L., & Kuczyński, L. (2017). Interspecific social information
812 use in habitat selection decisions among migrant songbirds. *Behavioral Ecology*, 28(3),
813 767–775. <https://doi.org/10.1093/beheco/arx029>

814 Thiebault, A., Mullers, R. H. E., Pistorius, P. A., & Tremblay, Y. (2014). Local enhancement
815 in a seabird: Reaction distances and foraging consequence of predator aggregations.
816 *Behavioral Ecology*, 25(6), 1302–1310. <https://doi.org/10.1093/beheco/aru132>

817 Ward, M. P., & Schlossberg, S. (2004). Conspecific attraction and the conservation of
818 territorial songbirds. *Conservation Biology*, 18(2), 519–525.

819 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1523-1739.2004.00494.x>

820 Wheatcroft, D., & Qvarnström, A. (2017). Reproductive character displacement of female,
821 but not male song discrimination in an avian hybrid zone. *Evolution*, *71*(7), 1776–1786.
822 <https://doi.org/10.1111/evo.13267>

823 Williams, H. (1985). Sexual dimorphism of auditory activity in the zebra finch song system.
824 *Behavioral and Neural Biology*, *44*(3), 470–484. <https://doi.org/10.1016/S0163->
825 [1047\(85\)90904-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0163-1047(85)90904-5)

827 Table 1. Effect of individual and environmental variables on the probability to settle in experimental zones of a given broadcast treatment.

	Low quality tit vs. Control		High quality tit vs. Control	
	Posterior mean	95% CI	Posterior mean	95% CI
Model with female factors N=77				
Intercept	-1.24	[-3.28 ; 0.61]	0.50	[-0.88 ; 1.91]
Age ♀ (<i>yearling</i>)	-0.13	[-2.50 ; 2.42]	-1.77	[-3.62 ; 0.29]
Aggressiveness ♀	-3.57	[-6.58 ; -0.94] *	1.38	[0.17 ; 2.75] *
Aggressiveness x Age ♀ (<i>yearling</i>)	3.49	[0.25 ; 6.72] *	-1.07	[-2.99 ; 0.59]
Day of choice	-0.21	[-1.18 ; 0.80]	0.13	[-0.79 ; 1.06]
Presence of other great tits (<i>yes</i>)	2.73	[-0.03 ; 5.35]	3.79	[1.19 ; 6.64] *
Presence of other flycatchers (<i>yes</i>)	-1.26	[-3.38 ; 0.44]	-2.67	[-4.65 ; -0.64] *
Song bias	0.45	[-0.31 ; 1.29]	0.51	[-0.34 ; 1.34]
Forest patch variance	1.09 [0.00; 3.69]			
Model with male factors N=60				
Intercept	0.07	[-1.70 ; 1.92]	1.22	[-0.42 ; 3.31]
Age ♂ (<i>yearling</i>)	-1.35	[-3.68 ; 0.93]	-2.21	[-4.93 ; 0.38]
Aggressiveness ♂	-0.01	[-0.04 ; 0.02]	-0.03	[-0.08 ; 0.00] □
Day of choice	-0.23	[-1.30 ; 0.81]	0.59	[-0.57 ; 1.59]

Presence of other great tits (<i>yes</i>)	2.55 [0.14 ; 5.41] *	3.34 [0.89 ; 6.22] *
Presence of other flycatchers (<i>yes</i>)	-0.89 [-2.94 ; 1.23]	-2.59 [-5.06 ; -0.59] *
Song bias	0.14 [-0.71 ; 1.11]	0.75 [-0.24 ; 1.71]
Forest patch variance	1.12 [0.00; 3.90]	

832 Model outputs are estimates (posterior means and 95% Credible Intervals) for settlement in an experimental zone of the low quality great tit song
833 vs. the control (chaffinch song) treatment (left) and the high quality great tit song vs. the control treatment (right; i.e. the control treatment served
834 as reference here), for females and males separately (see text). For qualitative covariates, the estimated category is given in parentheses. Stars
835 indicate estimates whose 95% CI do not overlap zero. The 95% CI for the estimate of male aggressiveness score on the probability to settle in
836 experimental zones of the high quality tit song treatment just reached 0; however, this trend did not appear robust because it disappeared when
837 using a larger sample size including males not captured later on and which could not be aged (i.e. when excluding the age effect from the model).

838 Table A1. Output of models fitting flycatchers' early-reproductive investment including either female or male age and aggressiveness score.

	Model with female age and aggressiveness		Model with male age and aggressiveness	
	Posterior mean	95% CI	Posterior mean	95% CI
<i>Model fitting laying date</i>		<i>N</i> = 77		<i>N</i> = 60
Intercept	51.95 [51.03 ; 52.89] *		52.19 [51.11 ; 53.22] *	
Treatment (<i>low quality</i>)	-0.21 [-1.35 ; 0.83]		-0.47 [-1.63 ; 0.73]	
(<i>high quality</i>)	0.04 [-1.01 ; 1.18]		0.00 [-1.28 ; 1.26]	
Aggressiveness	0.36 [-0.06 ; 0.78]		0.25 [-0.24 ; 0.74]	
Age (<i>yearling</i>)	1.19 [0.29 ; 2.13] *		-0.25 [-1.46 ; 0.96]	
Presence of other great tits (<i>yes</i>)	-0.95 [-1.91 ; 0.09]		-0.82 [-1.88 ; 0.24]	
Presence of other flycatchers (<i>yes</i>)	1.29 [0.46 ; 2.23] *		1.31 [0.34 ; 2.29]	
Song bias	-0.05 [-0.45 ; 0.37]		-0.30 [-0.81 ; 0.24]	
Forest patch variance	0.06 [0.00 ; 0.27]		0.20 [0.00 ; 0.89]	
Residual variance	3.23 [2.25 ; 4.35]		3.29 [2.04 ; 4.59]	
<i>Model fitting delay between settlement and laying</i>		<i>N</i> = 77		<i>N</i> = 60
Intercept	2.34 [2.16 ; 2.52] *		2.33 [2.13 ; 2.53] *	
Treatment (<i>low quality</i>)	0.01 [-0.20 ; 0.21]		0.01 [-0.23 ; 0.23]	
(<i>high quality</i>)	-0.03 [-0.22 ; 0.20]		-0.15 [-0.41 ; 0.08]	
Aggressiveness	-0.02 [-0.11 ; 0.07]		-0.08 [-0.18 ; 0.01]	

Age (<i>yearling</i>)	-0.12 [-0.30 ; 0.06]	0.06 [-0.17 ; 0.29]
Presence of other great tits (<i>yes</i>)	-0.02 [-0.22 ; 0.18]	0.05 [-0.18 ; 0.25]
Presence of other flycatchers (<i>yes</i>)	-0.29 [-0.47 ; -0.11] *	-0.37 [-0.57 ; -0.19] *
Song bias	-0.01 [-0.10 ; 0.06]	0.05 [-0.05 ; 0.14]
Forest patch variance	0.01 [0.00 ; 0.03]	0.01 [0.00 ; 0.04]
Residual variance	0.01 [0.00 ; 0.03]	0.01 [0.00 ; 0.02]
Model fitting clutch size	N = 76	N = 60
Intercept	1.84 [1.63 ; 2.06] *	1.83 [1.60 ; 2.06] *
Treatment (<i>low quality</i>)	0.01 [-0.24 ; 0.24]	0.03 [-0.24 ; 0.29]
(<i>high quality</i>)	0.01 [-0.23 ; 0.26]	0.01 [-0.27 ; 0.28]
Aggressiveness	-0.02 [-0.12 ; 0.08]	-0.01 [-0.12 ; 0.09]
Age (<i>yearling</i>)	-0.07 [-0.30 ; 0.14]	-0.06 [-0.33 ; 0.21]
Presence of other great tits (<i>yes</i>)	-0.02 [-0.25 ; 0.18]	-0.02 [-0.28 ; 0.20]
Presence of other flycatchers (<i>yes</i>)	0.06 [-0.13 ; 0.29]	0.05 [-0.19 ; 0.30]
Song bias	-0.01 [-0.10 ; 0.09]	0.00 [-0.11 ; 0.11]
Settlement date	-0.02 [-0.13 ; 0.09]	-0.03 [-0.15 ; 0.10]
Forest patch variance	0.00 [0.00 ; 0.02]	0.01 [0.00 ; 0.02]
Residual variance	0.00 [0.00 ; 0.01]	0.00 [0.00 ; 0.01]

839

840 Estimated levels are given in parentheses; older females, the control treatment, and the absence of other great tits or flycatchers serve as references. Stars

841 indicate estimates which 95% CI do not overlap zero.

842

Figure legends

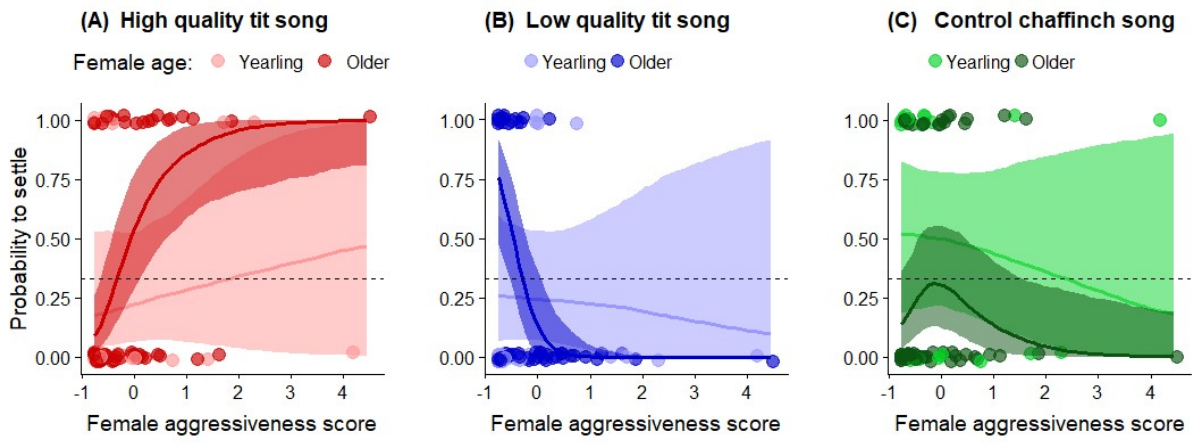
843 Figure 1. Probability for flycatchers to settle in an experimental zone according to the
844 broadcast treatment (3 levels: (a) high quality tit song, (b) low quality tit song, (c) chaffinch
845 song as a control) depending on female aggressiveness score and age (light red/blue/green:
846 yearling females; dark red/blue/green: older females). Predicted mean probabilities (solid
847 lines) and their 95% Credible Intervals (shaded areas) were derived for average estimates of
848 all other model parameters. Points indicate actual settlements (1 for settlement in the
849 broadcast treatment considered, 0 for settlement in one of the other two treatments). The
850 horizontal dashed line represents the probability to settle at random in a zone of the broadcast
851 treatment considered (i.e. 0.33).

852

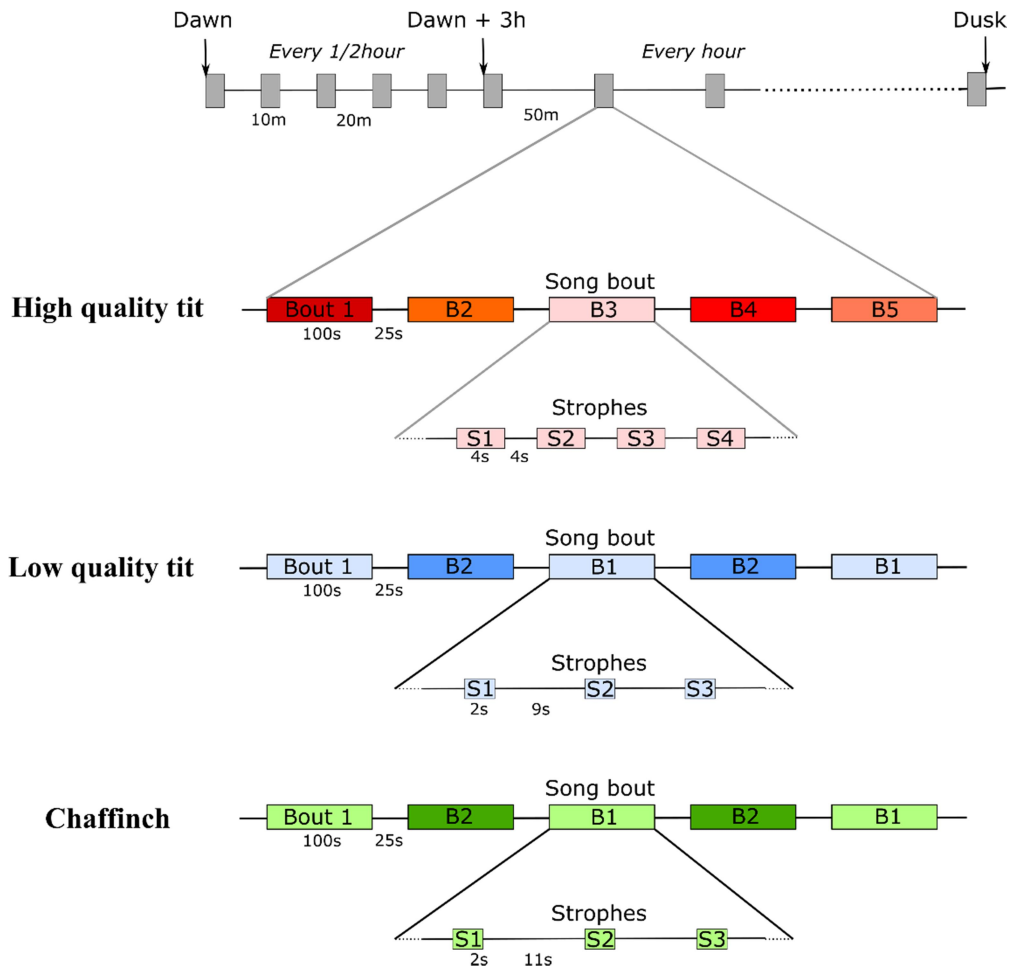
853 Figure A1. Structure of a song track (top), composed of a succession of 10 minute-long song periods.
854 Song periods are composed of song bouts (B1, B2...), which are composed of strophes (S1, S2 ...).
855 All strophes in the same song bout were composed of the same type of syllable. Depending on the
856 great tit natural song used for building the song track, the syllables within a strophe slightly varied in
857 rhythm, amplitude, and, before transformation, in length. To standardize strophe length, we duplicated
858 or deleted syllables. (a) Playback tracks mimicking a good quality great tit song had a repertoire size
859 of 5 song bout types, composed of 4 second-long strophes separated by 4 seconds of silence. (b)
860 Playback tracks mimicking a low quality song had a repertoire size of 2 song bout types, composed of
861 2 second-long strophes separated by 9 seconds of silence. (c) Chaffinch song track followed the same
862 temporal pattern than low quality tit treatment (but with one strophe every 11 seconds), as it better
863 matches their natural singing rhythm. The two different chaffinch song bout types per individual B1
864 and B2 were composed of a fixed syllable structure that could vary between individuals but was quite

865 conserved within individuals. The order of song bouts within a song period - and of strophes within
866 song bouts- were alternated between song periods and song bouts to avoid habituation.

867



870 **Figure A1**



871