


Bird calls: can they inform through repetition?

Date	13 Oct (Fri.)	
Time	16:00 (UTC+8)	
Venue	3N01	

Animal vocalizations are largely studied for their functional communications within a social group, but too often these studies focus on their acoustic properties, while the repetitive nature of some vocalizations, such as the contact call, is still poorly understood. The objective here is to determine what information could be transmitted through the rate of production of the contact calls, by investigating the influence of external factors such as environmental or social variables. Several alternative hypotheses about the functions of the rate of contact calls were tested with as model species the Swinhoe's White-eye (*Zosterops simplex*), a group-living passerine bird, using both field observations and captivity experiments. We found that contact call rate is not strongly associated with the environmental conditions of vegetation and predation risk, but instead are modulated by the social dynamics of the group, suggesting a source of information about social relationships, with a potential recruitment function.



Dr. Estelle Meaux is a postdoctoral fellow in the Mumby lab. She graduated with a MSc from the University of Strasbourg, France, and a PhD from Guangxi University, China. Her research interests focus on the social behaviours of group-living species, with a large diversity of model species, from studying cooperative behaviours in parrots and macaques to the investigation of acoustic communication in small passerines. After a first postdoc experience at the University of Edinburgh on the social competition between breeding laboratory rats, she recently joined the Mumby lab to study the chemosensory behaviours in the Asian elephant.