PEER REVIEW WRITING SKILLS, BEST PRACTICE AND BEHIND-THE-SCENES INSIGHTS

PEER TRAINING SCHOOL ON PEER REVIEW | MAY 2018

DUNCAN NICHOLAS
@DNJOURNALS
TODAY

- Experiences with peer review
- What journals want
- Preparing to review
- Review walk-through
- Finalising a review
- Journal management
EXPERIENCES WITH PEER REVIEW

- Who has submitted a paper for peer review?
- Who has performed a peer review themselves?
WHAT JOURNALS WANT

- Shared goals
- Reviewing goals
- Editorial goals
- Value of review
- Etiquette & ethics
- Involvement in a discipline
- Help the academic field
- Push your intellect
- Develop an under-represented area
- Achieve a leadership position
- Sharpen submissions to the highest quality
- Uphold academic standards
- Uphold editorial standards
- Foster author relationships
- Constructive feedback
- Clear communications
- Ability to meet deadlines
- Reliability
- Peer review is the heart of sound science
- Initiation into journal perspectives
- Improves your writing
- Develops professional relationships
- Increases your reputation
- Advances your career
- Personal biases & fairness
  - Unintentional favouritism
  - Gender, Race, Geography, Institution
  - Topics of study
  - Methods of study
- Conflicts of interest
  - Collaborators and colleagues
  - Competing papers
  - Funding or business agencies
Expertise

- Appropriate subject knowledge
- Awareness of lacking knowledge
- Confidentiality
  - Keep article confidential
  - Avoid competitive advantages
  - Guard against plagiarism
  - Obtain permission for co-reviews
Reliability

- Be sure you can meet the deadline
- Be realistic about submitting!
- Discuss extensions to deadlines
PREPARING TO REVIEW

- Journal guidelines
- Aims & Scope
- Peer review site
- Strategy
Instructions for authors, reviewers and editors

Guidelines pdf
- Shows mission of journal
- Papers you receive should meet with A&S
- Can help you decide if they really do
- Structured forms
- Additional measures and issues to pay attention to
- [link] www.editorialmanager.com/dnjournalsdemo
- Uploaded submissions of an example paper
- Create an account
- Create an account
- First name
- Last name
- Email
Create an account

- Username
- Password
- Country
Then we can assign some reviewers!
How to be a great dad: Parental care in a flock of greater flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*)

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The zoo-science literature on flamingos, and avian species in general, is lacking. However, this kind of research is important to improve the knowledge on these species and to improve their *ex-situ* and *in-situ* conservation. The aims of the present study were to assess the welfare of a captive colony of greater flamingo hosted at Parco Natura Viva, an Italian zoological garden, through ethological parameters and to improve the knowledge on this species in zoological gardens. In particular, the present study investigated and compared the parental care of females and males in 35 breeding pairs of greater flamingos. For each pair, we collected data on the parental care behaviour of both females and males, recording their position in relation to the nest (near the nest, on the nest, away from the nest) and the behavioural category that was performed. The main results were that males spent more time than females on the nest and near it and were more aggressive toward other flamingos. Therefore, male flamingos seem to be more involved in incubation duties and nest protection than females. Greater flamingos of this study performed species-specific behaviours. Both parents were involved in parental care and displayed all the activities reported in the wild. Therefore, the study flock of greater flamingos seems to be in a good welfare. This kind of research is important not only to expand the knowledge on bird species such as flamingos, but also to improve their husbandry and breeding in controlled environment.
REVIEWING A PAPER

- Strategy
- Introduction
- Design & Method
- Data & Results
- Discussion & Conclusion
Scan to familiarise yourself with the paper

1\textsuperscript{st} read – structure, originality, overall quality, suggestions for revision

2\textsuperscript{nd} read – smaller issues – grammar, typos, formats

3\textsuperscript{rd} read – concluding statements and overall recommendation
- Introduce the broader background
- Details directly relate to the research question
- Logical, clear, and easy to follow
- Justify the research and why it is important
- Is it sound?
- Is there supporting evidence for the question?
- Is it current?
- Is it interesting?
- Could it advance the field?
INTRODUCTION

In the wild, greater flamingos (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) are threatened by phenomena such as habitat loss and change, human activities and pollution (Ogilvie & Ogilvie, 1986; Nasiwaa, 2000; Yosef, 2000; Hockey et al., 2005; Mitiadou, 2005; IUCN, 2015). Therefore, ex-situ conservation programs are essential. However, the ethical imperative to save threatened species from further decline and extinction in the wild has for them a priority over concerns regarding individual animal welfare (Minteer & Collins, 2013). A scientific non-invasive ethological method to assess the welfare of the animals is to verify the performance of natural behaviour, even in captive settings (Hill & Broom, 2009). Flamingos are highly gregarious birds that live and breed in large dense flocks (Pickering et al., 1992), often including thousands of pairs. Obtaining information and data on their behaviour in the wild is therefore difficult due to constraints such as individual identification and approach to the birds (Studer-Thiersch, 1975; 2000; King, 2000). For this reason, together with long-term studies on wild flamingo flocks, research on captive colonies might be valuable and complementary to improve the knowledge on the ethology, morphology, physiology and endocrinology of these species (King, 2000). Studying the behaviour of flamingos in the wild and in controlled environment is important for the implementation of the husbandry and the breeding of this species (Melfi, 2009; Rose et al., 2014). However, the zoo-science literature on flamingos, and avian species in general, is still under-represented (Rose et al., 2014).

involved in nest building, but the female takes over as the laying time approaches. The nest building activity of both partners proceeds also during the first two weeks of incubation, leading to an increase in the nest height (Studer-Thiersch, 1975).

After mating, the female lays one egg in the nest. Both females and males take part in the incubation, lasting from 27 to 31 days (Beletsky, 2006; Celzily, 1993; Elphick, 2014). However, in the first period, the female is reported to spend more time on the nest than the male (Studer-Thiersch, 1975). When incubating the egg, flamingos display different behaviours, such as standing, stretching the wings, preening, self-scratching and looking at the nest (Studer-Thiersch, 1975). In addition, they take care of the egg, moving it with the bill. Flamingos could either stand or sit on the egg and the time spent standing up depends on the weather conditions. When one partner leaves the egg, the time taken to the other one to climb on the nest and incubate the egg is generally short or even simultaneous (Studer-Thiersch, 1975). Both the incubating partner and the vacant one outside the nest can perform aggressive behaviour toward other flamingos disturbing the incubation (Studer-Thiersch, 1975).

The aim of the present study was to assess the welfare of a captive colony of greater flamingos hosted at Parco Natura Viva, an Italian zoological garden, through ethological parameters and to improve the knowledge on this species in zoological gardens, especially during the breeding season. In particular, the present study investigated and compared the parental care of females and males in a flock of greater flamingos. For each breeding pair, the behaviour of both the female and the male during the egg incubation period was recorded. The
- Consider Validity and Reliability
- Appropriate sampling techniques
- Appropriate control groups
- Appropriate assessment measures
- Are there guidelines?
- Is it understandable?
- Could you repeat it?
MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study subjects and area

The study was carried out in a flock of 147 greater flamingos of different age, 70 females and 77 males, housed at Parco Natura Viva – Garda Zoological Park in Italy, in a 1.100 m² enclosure. The study subjects were 35 breeding pairs, during the peak of their breeding activity. The enclosure was composed by a muddy area and a grassy area. The muddy area surrounded a water pool with two islands, used by flamingos to build their nest mounds and rear the chicks. The basal structure of the nest mound was built by humans, whereas flamingo pairs completed the nest construction properly.

Trees, bushes and rocks were present in the enclosure, together with a wooden house to provide the flamingos with protection from weather conditions and a long feeding station. To minimize human disturbance, food was administered to the flamingos once a day in the feeding point. No interactions between humans and flamingos were allowed. The flamingo diet was composed by a specific pellet, containing cereals, vegetables, oils and fats, algae, shellfish, vitamins and mineral salts.

Flamingos were identified through a ring on one leg. The ring differed in colour and letters (three-letter combination). At the time of the study, the density of the flamingos in the enclosure was 0.13 individuals/m². In the wild, a density of 0.2 individuals/m² is usually found, corresponding to 180 flamingos/km² (Ramachandran, 2005). Subjects of the study were pairs that incubated an egg in the 2016 breeding season (N = 35).

Procedure and data collection

Subjects of the study were breeding pairs in which the female laid the egg. For each pair, a total of twenty 10-minute sessions were carried out during the incubation period. In particular, two sessions per day were done, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Thus, the data collection for each breeding pair lasted for ten days. Data were collected using a continuous focal animal sampling method (Altman, 1974).

For each pair, we conducted observations of parental care behaviour of both female and male, recording the position of the bird in relation to the nest and the behavioural category performed. Regarding the position of the bird, we recorded whether each flamingo parent was near the nest (less than 150 cm, which is approximately the higher flamingo body length; del Hoyo et al., 1992), on the nest or away from the nest (>150 cm). When the flamingos were on the nest, we recorded whether they were sitting (incubating) or standing. In particular, the behavioural categories collected in the study were agonistic behaviour, including aggressive interactions, such as extending the neck and beak at another bird (Stevens et al., 1992; Farrell et al., 2000), egg-care related behaviour (egg-rolling and moving), nest-building behaviour, self-directed comfort behaviour (preening, stretching and scratching) and sleeping (resting the head in the back). In addition, when flamingos were near the nest, all the other behaviours not directly associated with parental care were grouped in the behavioural category “Other”.

Statistical analysis

Kolmogorov-Smirnov goodness-of-fit tests revealed that not all data were normally distributed. Therefore, non-parametric statistic tests were used. In particular, Mann-Whitney tests...
Statements of stats

- Sample size
- Units of analysis
- Definitions of groups
- Means and standard deviations
- What is ‘significance’?
Ethical considerations

- Data manipulation and fabrication
- Image manipulation
- Distortion
Potentiation of paclitaxel activity by the HSP90 inhibitor 17-allylamino-17-demethoxygeldanamycin in human ovarian carcinoma cell lines with high levels of activated AKT

How to Manipulate a Citation Histogram

Davis P., The Scholarly Kitchen (2016)

https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2016/08/08/how-to-manipulate-a-citation-histogram/
RESULTS

Position of female and male flamingos in relation to the nest

Among female and male flamingos, significant differences were found in the time spent in different positions relative to the nest. The mean ± SD duration (seconds) spent near the nest (< 150 cm) was 1,049.86 ± 994.80 for females and 3,068.77 ± 1,539.68 for males. Regarding the time spent on the nest, the mean ± SD duration (seconds) was 5,359.51 ± 1,835.92 for females and 6,636.20 ± 1,835.95 for males. Finally, the mean ± SD duration (seconds) spent away from the nest (> 150 cm) was 5,590.63 ± 1,958.91 for females and 2,273.03 ± 1,651.74 for males (Fig. 1). Mann-Whitney tests revealed that males were near the nest and on the nest significantly more than females (Z-score = -5.544, P < 0.0001, and Z-score = -2.572, P = 0.010, N_f = N_m = 35, respectively). On the contrary, males were away from the nest significantly less than females (Z-score = 5.761, P < 0.0001, N_f = N_m = 35) (Fig. 1).

When flamingo partners were on the nest, we compared the time spent standing and incubating the egg between female and male flamingos. The mean ± SD duration (seconds) spent standing was 295.17 ± 297 for females and 259.54 ± 201.45 for males. On the other hand, the mean ± SD duration (seconds) of incubation was 5,064.34 ± 1,719.51 for females and 6,376.66 ± 1,757.92 for males (Fig. 2). Mann-Whitney tests revealed that males spent significantly more time than females incubating the egg (Z-score = -2.783, P = 0.005, N_f = N_m = 35), whereas no significant differences were found in the time spent standing on the nest (Z-score = 0.117, P = 0.905) (Fig. 2).
- Answer hypothesis
- Address main findings
- Implications for the field
- Global applications
- Limitations
- Future studies
DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Research on flamingo breeding behaviour is needed to improve the knowledge on these species in order to find strategies to increase their welfare and reproductive success in captivity.

PeerJ reviewing PDF | (2017-03-16)CHECK 16 Mar 2017

PeerJ Manuscript to be reviewed

(Ogilvie & Ogilvie, 1986). The aim of this study was to assess the welfare of a captive colony of greater flamingos, based on ethological parameters. Firstly, greater flamingos of this study were found to perform species-specific behavioural repertoire (Brown & King, 2005) and no abnormal behaviour was observed. Both parents were involved in parental care and displayed all the activities reported in the wild during incubation, such as moving and rotating the egg, nest-building, self-grooming and stretching, nest protection and resting (Studer-Thiersch, 1975; Pickering et al., 1992; Beletsky, 2006; Elphick, 2014). Moreover, the study flock breeds yearly and shows a good reproductive success, as the number of flamingos rises from 88 in 2012 to 177 in 2016. Therefore, our findings seem to underline that the study flock of greater flamingos is in a good welfare (Hosey et al., 2013; Hill & Broom, 2009).

Results from the current study highlight differences in parental care behaviour between female and male greater flamingos. Firstly, male flamingos of a breeding pair spent significantly more time on the nest and near it than females. These finding are in agreement with previous studies reporting a greater effort of male greater flamingos in incubation (Rendón-Martos et al., 2000; Rendón-Garrido, Rendón-Martos, Ramírez & Amat, 2014). On the contrary, females remained away from the nest, without caring about the egg and the nest, longer than males. On the basis of previous studies, male flamingos take care of the egg but do not feed their partner during the incubation process. Moreover, at least in the early stages, the parental investment in greater for females than males, due to the costs of egg-laying (Cezilly, 1993; Johnson & Cezilly, 2007). Therefore, it is possible that female flamingos remained less time in proximity of the nest, caring for the egg, and spent more time looking for food, to recover from the egg-laying effort.
FINALISING A REVIEW

- Summarising comments
- Making a recommendation
- Submitting a review
- Number comments
- Page, paragraph and line references
- Quote text
- Suggest specific revisions
- Support statements with evidence
- Prepare for disagreement…
- Be constructive
- Be fair
- Some journals require this
- Is it the reviewer’s job?
- Don’t include a decision category
- Contradict editor’s decision
- Can be confusing for authors

* Recommendation
  - Accept
  - Minor Revision
  - Revise
  - Reject, Revise and Resubmit
  - Reject
How to submit a review?
Let’s find out!

www.editorialmanager.com/dnjournalsdemo
Example of peer review process using Editorial Manager

Editorial offices

- Key features of the role
- Peer review management techniques and tools
Looks complicated, right?
- Coordinate peer review activities
- Support editors, authors and reviewers
- Solicit manuscripts and other materials
- Initial screening checks for journal format and guidelines
- Identify, invite and secure reviewers
- Prepare decision letters and other correspondence
- Ensure all deadlines are met throughout the review process
- Database maintenance of reviewers, keywords and addresses
- Regular editorial reports on copyflow, turnaround times and other key measures
- Submission rates
- Turnaround times
- Accept/Reject Rates
- Copyflow
- Promotion
- Communication
- Innovations
- Development
GOOD LUCK.... AND HAPPY REVIEWING!