

## **Abstract**

Bird song is very important for communication in birds, especially in passerine birds. It helps to define male territory and singing is also used to attract a female in mating season. Singing is also important for maintenance of prezygotic reproductive barriers in many bird species. In various species of birds, especially in closely related, there may occur heterospecific copying of singing. This phenomenon is also known as the mixed singing. Mixed singing is emerging in different avian species by various mechanisms. Mostly this is an error during the learning phase of singing, but in some cases copying of singing may be adaptive.

The aim of this thesis is to summarize the existing knowledge and findings about mixed singing, also to describe known examples of mixed singers in closely related species, present hypotheses that may explain the origin of mixed singing, and discuss ecological and evolutionary significance of this phenomenon.

**Key words:** birds, songs, mixed singing, vocal mimicry, sister species