

Extra-pair paternity are commonly detected in populations of social monogamous birds, however it remains unclear how this strategy evolves and is maintained. Several adaptive and non-adaptive explanations were, proposed to explain female promiscuity with major attention being devoted to the hypothesis of genetic benefits to females in form of good or compatible genes for their offspring. These theories assume that extra-pair offspring are of better quality than their maternal half-sibs in the nest. This thesis summarizes available studies that have compared benefits and costs for males and females from extra-paired paternity and evaluated the adaptive explanation of female promiscuity. It seems that the evidence for indirect benefits to female promiscuity are generally weak in birds, and other mechanisms, such as sexual conflict or genetic correlations between the sexes may play a role in explaining the female bird propensity to copulate with extra-pair mates.