

Uncovering Evolutionary and Cognitive Patterns Using Eggshell Pigments

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LIU Post

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Time: 11:00 - 12:00 PM

Location: Hale Hall, Room 222

Global patterns of phenotypic variation can provide valuable insight into selective pressures driving trait evolution. Avian eggshell coloration is a prime candidate for studying this variation because it is formed by just two pigments and provides a model system for examining decision-making in wild animals. My lab is examining the global distribution of avian eggshell colors to determine how eggs have adapted to their local conditions, and how species interactions can provide strong selection pressures for or against specific colors. In this talk, I will explain how to quantify colors objectively, describe how we estimate color perception in other organisms, introduce research approaches to investigate cognition in the field, and highlight research by students in my lab who are uncovering ecological and evolutionary selection pressures on these colorful traits.

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