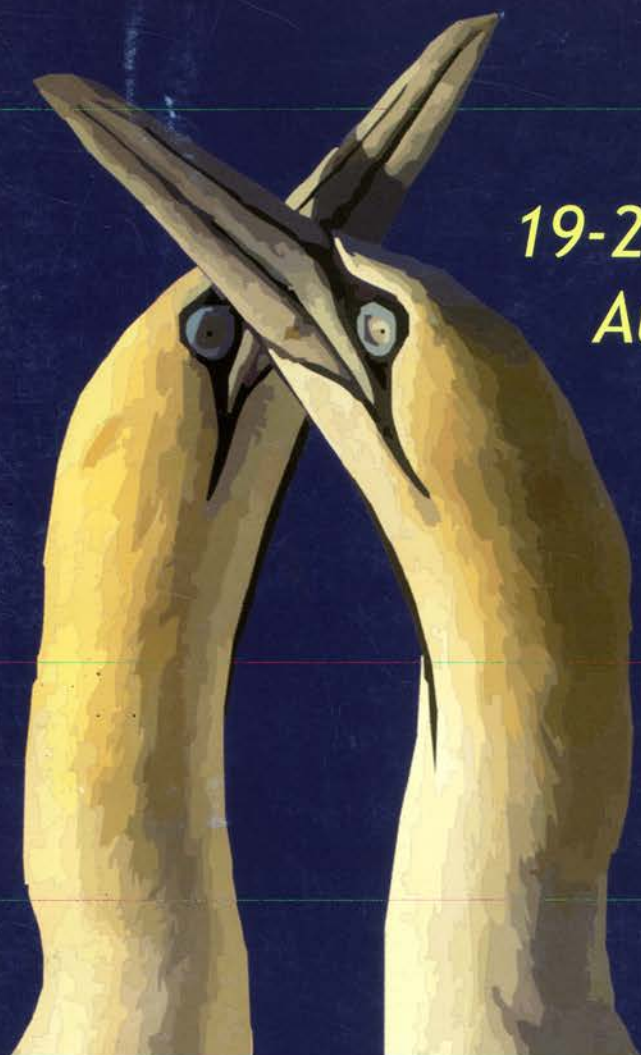


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ABSTRACTS

Linear and stable dominance hierarchies in cooperative breeding groups of carrion crow (*Corvus corone corone*)

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Social relationships among group members are important to understand the evolution of cooperative breeding, because dispersal and helping behaviour could be influenced by competition for resources. In cooperatively breeding groups, generally cohesive and stable, social relationships among individuals are expected to be clearly defined by linear and stable hierarchies to reduce conflicts between group members and to favour cooperation. We investigated dominance hierarchies in 47 groups of cooperatively breeding carrion crows by observing dyadic interactions over a food source. Groups contained retained offspring of the breeding pair and/or related immigrants. According to predictions, dominance hierarchies were linear and stable where males dominated females and within the same sex category, breeders dominated non breeders. Breeding males were most dominant, followed by male immigrants, male retained offspring, breeding females, female retained offspring and female immigrants. Results show that cooperative groups of carrion crow are organized and stable systems where dominance hierarchies are determined by constant factors across groups.

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