

ARTICLE CRITIQUE #1 (25 points)
due Wednesday, February 4 at beginning of lecture

Article: Madden, J.R. and Balmford, A. 2004. Spotted bowerbirds *Chlamydera maculata* do not prefer rare or costly bower decorations. Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology. <submitted online- no page numbers yet!>

This article may be found online by finding the SpringerLink page for Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology (use a search engine), click 'Online First', then scroll down until you see the papers available January 09, 2004. We'll try to put a link on the course website as well.

Assignment: Read the full article. Then, in 1-2 pages type written pages, please provide a critique of the paper. The purpose of this assignment is to make sure you can take a study from the primary literature, identify the specific hypotheses under consideration, how they were tested, and how the results relate to the hypotheses in question. Some general tips to get you started.

1. Start your critique with a brief summary of the research problem addressed in the article. This should be in your own words and should indicate that you understand the primary objective(s) of the study. Include here statements of the adaptive hypotheses that the authors are testing.
2. Provide a short overview of the methods used in the study and the primary results obtained. Again, this is your way of indicating that you have a general understanding of the article.
3. The bulk of the critique (again, only 2 pages!) should be your evaluation of the authors' work. Were the techniques they used appropriate? Are the results and conclusions presented in the paper consistent with the methods used? If you were going to do this study, what, if anything, would you do differently?
4. Remember – a critique doesn't have to be all negative! It's perfectly legitimate to decide that the authors did an OK job!
5. Whether you are positive or negative about the authors' work, you should back up your evaluation. For examples, don't just tell us that the methods were inappropriate – explain why you arrived at the conclusion that you did and indicate what information in the paper contributed to your point of view.
6. In terms of grading critiques, we are looking for evidence that you carefully read and evaluated the article. Although there may be some general points that we expect you to pick up on, we will be looking primarily at your arguments as to why the work was appropriate or not. There is no right or wrong answer for a critique!