

Individual inter-annual nest-site relocation behaviour drives dynamics of a recently established Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis* colony in sub-arctic Russia

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Abstract

Avian breeding colonies are generally in a continuous state of flux, some parts growing whilst others shrink as individuals move within the colony on the search for better nest-sites. We examined the role of experience in breeding patch choice by individually marked Barnacle Geese *Branta leucopsis* in a recently established colony in sub-arctic Russia. Individuals failing to reproduce successfully tended to shift nest location further the following season than did successful pairs, and they did so towards the most dense nest aggregations within the colony, where reproductive success was higher. We suggest that individual decisions on nest-site choice shape the spatial dynamics of this colony. © 2011 The Authors. Journal compilation © 2011 British Ornithologists' Union.

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Keywords

Breeding dispersal, Coloniality, Conspecific attraction, Philopatry