UC Davis UC Davis Previously Published Works

Title

Evidence of social niche construction: persistent and repeated social interactions generate stronger personalities in a social spider.

Permalink https://escholarship.org/uc/item/546944tk

Journal Proceedings. Biological sciences, 281(1783)

ISSN 0962-8452

Authors Laskowski, Kate L Pruitt, Jonathan N

Publication Date

2014-05-01

DOI

10.1098/rspb.2013.3166

Peer reviewed

$\ensuremath{\mathbf{1}\mathsf{Evidence}}$ of social niche construction: persistent and repeated social

2interactions generate stronger personalities in a social spider

3

4Kate L. Laskowski^{1*}& Jonathan N. Pruitt²

5

6¹ Department of Biology & Ecology of Fishes, Leibniz-Institute of Freshwater

7Ecology & Inland Fisheries, Müggelseedamm 310, 12587 Berlin, Germany

8² Department of Biological Sciences, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA

915260, USA

10*laskowski@igb-berlin.de

11

12Keywords: social niche specialization, familiarity, variance partitioning,

13 repeatability, Stegodyphus mimosarum

14

SUMMARY

While there are now a number of theoretical models predicting how 17 18consistent individual differences in behaviour may be generated and 19maintained, so far, there are few empirical tests. The social niche 20specialization hypothesis predicts that repeated social interactions among 21 individuals may generate among-individual differences and reinforce within-22individual consistency through positive feedback mechanisms. Here we test 23this hypothesis using groups of the social spider, Stegodyphus mimosarum, 24that differ in their level of familiarity. In support of the social niche 25specialization hypothesis, individuals in groups of spiders that were more 26familiar with each other showed greater repeatable among-individual 27variation in behaviour. Additionally, individuals that were more familiar with 28each other exhibited lower within-individual variation in behaviour, providing 29one of the first examples of how the social environment can influence 30behavioural consistency. Our study demonstrates the potential for the social 31 environment to generate and reinforce consistent individual differences in 32behaviour and provides a potentially general mechanism to explain this type 33of behavioural variation in animals with stable social groups.

35

INTRODUCTION

36

A fundamental goal in the field of the animal personality literature is to 38understand the mechanisms responsible for generating and maintaining 39consistent individual differences in behaviour. While there are now a number 40of well-developed theoretical models predicting potential causal mechanisms 41(reviewed in [1-3]), thus far empirical tests of these predictions are 42extraordinarily few (but see [4-6]). In order to fully explain the presence of 43consistent individual differences in behaviour, or personalities, a potential 44mechanism would need to address the two key aspects of personality: 45among-individual variation in behaviour and within-individual consistency 46over time. A recent hypothesis termed the social niche specialization 47hypothesis predicts that the social environment may play a key role in both 48promoting individual differentiation and individual consistency [7, 8].

The social niche specialization hypothesis predicts that when a group 50of individuals interacts repeatedly, it can be beneficial for them to develop 51"social niches" [7, 8]. These social niches provide a way to reduce 52competition among individuals and increase individual payoffs. First, by 53differentiating their behaviour from each other individuals can reduce direct 54competition with group mates [6, 9]. This type of niche specialization has 55been well established in ecology, where the presence of competing 56conspecifics can generate diet specializations among individuals [10, 11] and 57the social niche specialization hypothesis expands this concept beyond the 58foraging context. The presence of among-individual variation in behaviour 59can increase colony productivity [12] and individual reproduction [13] within 60social groups, supporting the prediction that social niches can enhance 61individual fitness and colony success.

Once among-individual differences in behaviour are established, the of a social niche specialization hypothesis predicts that they will be reinforced of thereby generating within-individual consistency in behaviour [7, 8]. of Predictability in behaviour might increase successful interactions among of individuals which can be especially important in stable social groups [1, 14]. of Within-individual consistency could also be generated if changing behaviour of social vidual's likelihood to repeat the behaviour [15, 16]. Therefore, the social roniche specialization hypothesis addresses both aspects of animal personality predicting that groups of individuals that have repeatedly interacted, rozshould exhibit greater among-individual variation and lower within-individual rous of individual's function. Stated another way, familiar groups of individuals rous of exhibit stronger personalities.

While the development of social niches is theoretically possible in any 76group of repeatedly interacting individuals, these niches will likely be 77strongest when group membership is stable. When group turnover is low, 78individuals can more easily maintain the same social niche. For example, 79several studies have shown that individual birds will maintain consistent

80foraging behaviours when in the same social group [17, 18]. However, when 81the social context changes, frequently so will individual behaviour [17, 19]. 82In particular, a recent study demonstrated that social interactions did not 83strengthen personalities in threespined sticklebacks, even when group 84membership was experimentally maintained [20]. However, in the wild, 85sticklebacks maintain fairly fluid groups with high turnover [21, 22]. 86Therefore, it seems likely that social niche specialization holds the potential 87to be a more powerful mechanism in groups with stable membership where 88 repeated interactions among individuals are frequent. Here we test the key 89prediction of the social niche specialization hypothesis that familiarity among 90group members should generate individual personalities using the social 91spider Stegodyphus mimosarum. Social spiders of the genus Stegodyphus 92offer a superb model to evaluate the social niche specialization hypothesis 93because the dispersal tendency of this species is extraordinarily low, and 94thus, persistent social interactions among colony members are a common 95 feature in this species. Specifically, we compared the strength of consistent 96 individual differences in behaviour in groups of spiders that had lived 97together for differing amounts of time, i.e. were more or less familiar with 98each other. We measured two ecologically relevant behaviours in this 99species: response to a simulated predator attack and response to a 100simulated prey encounter. Variation in these behaviours might influence task 101differentiation such as prey capture and colony defence as has been found in 1020ther species (e.g. [12, 23, 24]). If repeated social interactions generate

103social niches, we predicted that among-individual variation in behaviour 104would increase and within-individual variation would decrease with the 105amount of time the group had been together.

106

107

108 METHODS

109

110**Collection and Laboratory Maintenance**

Stegodyphus mimosarum live in multi-female colonies ranging from 1-1122000 members throughout eastern Africa [25, 26]. Their webs are composed 113of two structures: a two-dimensional capture web and a dense three-114dimensional retreat composed of a series of silken tunnels. Spiders reside 115within their retreat for the majority of the day, and only emerge in response 116to prey or at night in order to repair their capture web. Females cooperate 117together in colony maintenance tasks including collective web maintenance 118and defence, cooperative prey capture, and alloparental care [27]

Ten colonies of *S. mimosarum* were collected in the town of Bela-Bela 120(24°53′S 28°17′E) in Limpopo, South Africa in November 2012. Colonies were 121collected by knocking down their capture webs, trimming off colonies' 122supporting foliage, and placing the colony in a cloth pillow case. Colonies 123were then transported to laboratory at the University of Pittsburgh, USA. 124Colonies were sorted in laboratory and their colony size (1-700 spiders) was 125determined. Eight of the largest colonies (400-600 individuals) were selected 126for use in our study. From each of these colonies we haphazardly selected 48 127females for inclusion in our studies. Assignment of females to different 128treatments groups was determined randomly using a random number 129generator in Excel (Microsoft 2010). Prior to being assigned to a treatment, 130females were housed individually in 2-oz deli cups that contained a dome of 131poultry wiring to facilitate web construction. Females were maintained in 132isolation for four weeks prior to the start of our experiment and sustained on 133an *ad libitum* diet of size-matched two-week old crickets.

134

135

136 Manipulation of Familiarity

In order to observe how repeated social interactions influenced among-138and within-individual behavioural variation, we manipulated the amount of 139time groups of spiders lived together. We generated 64 experimental 140colonies of 6 individuals and each colony was assigned to one of two 141familiarity treatments: control colonies (N=32 colonies) where familiarity was 142maintained throughout the experiment, and mixed colonies where familiarity 143changed over the experiment. Altogether the familiarity treatment ran for 144five weeks, and within each treatment, each colony was exposed to a social 145disturbance after either one, two, three or four weeks (N=8 groups per social 146disturbance per treatment). So for example, colonies that experienced a 147social disturbance after one week were then left undisturbed for four weeks 148and would have longer to become familiar with each other than colonies that 149were disturbed after four weeks. By varying the time of the social 150disturbance we could investigate how the length of social familiarity 151influenced individual behavioural variation. The social disturbance involved 152all of the members being removed from the colony and then being placed 153into a new container with all the same individuals (control treatment), or with 154new and unfamiliar individuals (mixed treatment).Colonies in the mixed 155treatment were reassembled using individuals from the same source colony 156that had not previously interacted. Therefore, individuals in the control and 157mixed colonies both experienced the same disturbance, but only the identity 158of the individuals in the mixed colonies was altered; any differences between 159the control and mixed colonies we could attribute to differences in familiarity 160among colony members.

We used a split-design where each of our eight source colonies were 162used to establish one replicate of each of our eight treatment combinations 163(mixed and control colonies at one, two, three and four weeks since social 164disturbance). Relatedness among individuals is known to influence social 165spider behaviour [28, 29] and this design ensured that all source colonies 166equally contributed to all treatment groups. Therefore, if relatedness among 167individuals was more influential on behaviour than familiarity, we would 168expect to see no differences between the control and mixed colonies. All 169experimental colonies were housed in 1.5L clear, plastic deli cups which 170contained a concave-up dome of poultry wiring to facilitate web construction. 171Lids were covered with a 1mm x 1mm screen which allowed ample airflow 172and low humidity levels. Colonies were kept on a maintenance diet of *ad* 173*libitum* six-week old crickets once weekly. To ensure successful prey capture, 174crickets were immobilized prior to being place in colonies' capture webs. 175After the social disturbance, all individuals were rehoused within a new 1.5L 176container with chicken wire. All colonies resumed normal feeding behaviour 177within three days of the social disturbance. At the end of our five week 178experiment, all colonies were disassembled, individuals were isolated back 179into 2-oz deli cups, and their personality types were repeatedly assayed daily 180for the next ten days in two ecological contexts.

181

182**Personality Assay: Boldness towards Predators**

This assay was designed to measure how quickly an individual 184recovered from a potential predator attack. Variation among individuals in 185this behaviour could be influential in determining individual specializations 186within the nest on tasks such as colony defence [12, 23, 24] and is a known 187determinant of division of labour and collective behaviour in this species. 188Boldness-shyness assays were initiated by removing spiders from their home 189containers and placing them within a rectangular enclosure (13.5 cm x 13 190cm x 3.5 cm). Spiders were permitted 60 sec to acclimate before applying 191two rapid jets of air to the dorsal, anterior part of the animal from 192approximately 10 cm away, using an infant ear-cleaning bulb. This stimulus 193universally elicited a huddle response from *S. mimosarum*, and resembles 194the rapid approach of an avian predator [23, 30]. As our measure of 195boldness, we recorded the individual's latency to resume movement 196following the huddle response. Five boldness assays (one per day) were 197completed on each spider beginning 24 hours after the end of the familiarity 198treatments. After completing their assays spiders were returned to their 199home containers.

200

201Personality Assay: Tendency to Attack Prey

202 This assay was designed to measure how guickly an individual 203attacked a simulated prey item; a behaviour that is likely important in 204determining foraging task specializations within a colony [12, 23, 24]. We 205staged prey capture events in spiders' home containers and noted whether 206they attacked a prey stimulus or not. Using a simulated prey item allowed us 207to standardize the prey escape cues each spider was exposed to. Trials were 208initiated by removing the lid to spider's container and placing a 1.5 cm x 1.5 209cm piece of printer paper in the spider's capture web. We then provided 210spiders 2 minutes acclimation time before administering a vibratory 211stimulus. We subsequently vibrated the paper using a portable, handheld 212vibratory device (FunFactory, Minivibe Bubbles). A thin aluminium wire 213extended from the end of the vibrator and made contact with the paper, 214 which resulting in the paper flittering back and forth within the capture web 215similar to Lepidopteran prey. We vibrated the paper for a total of ten 216minutes, or until the spiders emerged and bit the paper. For this behavioural 217assay we recorded a binary response of whether the spider approached and

218attacked the stimulus within the ten minute timeframe or not. . Prey capture 219assays started 24h after individuals had completed their boldness assays. 220This ensured that individuals had enough time to construct rudimentary 221capture webs and retreats within their home containers. Prey capture assays 222were implemented daily for five days.

223

224

225 Data analysis

In order to ease analysis and interpretation of our data, we first 227inverted our measure of boldness: latency to resume movement after a 228huddle response. To do this, we subtracted each individual's latency from 229the maximum time of ten minutes (600 seconds). Therefore, individuals with 230higher boldness scores were considered more "bold," i.e. they resumed 231movement more quickly after the huddle response, compared to individuals 232with lower boldness scores which were considered more "shy". The resulting 233boldness scores were non-Gaussian distributed and best approximated a 234Poisson error distribution which we used for all further analyses. Attack 235tendency was a binary variable and we used a categorical (yes/no) error 236distribution for all analyses.

We first tested for the main effects of familiarity treatment (mixed 238versus control) and time since social disturbance (one, two, three, four 239weeks) on each of our behavioural measures. We ran a separate generalized 240linear mixed model for each behaviour including familiarity treatment, time 241since social disturbance and their interaction as fixed effects. We also 242included individual, experimental colony and source colony as random 243effects to account for the non-independence of our behavioural measures. 244There was no significant variation among experimental or source colonies 245and so we subsequently removed these effects from further analyses.

246 Our primary research question was to determine whether increasing 247 familiarity among colony mates increased consistent individual differences in 248behaviour. To test this we compared the among- and within-individual 249variation components of each behaviour in each of our treatment 250 combinations. However, it is important to note that because of its binary 251nature, it is impossible to directly estimate the within-individual (residual) 252variance in attack tendency. We ran a separate model for each behaviour in 253each familiarity treatment (control versus mixed) at each time point (weeks 254since social disturbance) including individual as a random effect. We then 255used these variance components to estimate repeatability as the proportion 256of total variation attributable to among-individual variation. We corrected all 257 repeatability estimates as appropriate for each behaviour's distribution 258(Poisson with additive overdispersion for boldness, binary for attack 259tendency; [31]). We did not include any other fixed or random effects, such 260as experimental colony, source colony or body size, as these factors only 261varied between, not within, individuals and any variance attributable to 262these factors would remain in the within-individual (residual) variance 263providing a conservative repeatability estimate [32]. Additionally, in

264preliminary analyses we found that these effects had no significant or 265 consistent effect on either behaviour nor accounted for any significant 266portion of behavioural variation (data not shown). Therefore all repeatability 267estimates reported here can be considered "non-adjusted" and should be 268more broadly generalizable [31]. We used generalized linear mixed models 269 with Markov Chain Monte Carlo estimation for all analyses. MCMC is a 270Bayesian statistical method that is powerful for fitting non-Gaussian 271 distributions and partitioning variance among random effects [32, 33]. We 272used MCMCglmm [33] in R 2.15 (http://www.r-project.org/) which returns 27395% credibility intervals for both fixed and random effects. If the 95% Cl's of 274two variance estimates did not overlap, we interpreted this as evidence that 275the estimates are significantly different from each other. Throughout we 276used non-informative proper priors [33] appropriate for the relative error 277 distributions (Poisson for boldness; categorical for attack latency) and 278preliminary analyses indicated that our results were not sensitive to changes 279in prior settings (data not shown). We ensured convergence and adequate 280chain mixing by comparing the posterior distributions and auto-correlation 281plots of five independent chains with 500,000 iterations, a 1,000 burn-in 282period and thinning every 100 iterations for each model.

283

284

RESULTS

The average boldness score across all individuals was 216 ± 5.3 (± 287stn. error), meaning that individuals resumed moving after the huddle 288response after 383 seconds. While there was no main effect of familiarity 289treatment (treatment effect: -0.97, 95% CI: [-2.99, 1.16]) there was a 290significant effect of time since social disturbance (time effect: -0.56 [-1.16, -2910.03]). Groups that had been together longer tended to be shyer than 292groups that had recently been disturbed (Figure 1a). This effect did not 293differ between the two colony types (colony x time interaction: -0.31 [-0.56, 2941.02]).

Across both treatments and all time periods, attacks on a simulated 296prey item occurred in 25% of all trials This proportion did not differ between 297colony types (colony effect: -0.008 [-1.13, 1.25]) or across time (time effect: -2980.11 [-0.42, 0.22]; colony x time interaction: 0.15 [-0.30, 0.58]; Figure 1b).

We found evidence for consistent individual differences in both 300boldness and attack tendency in both familiarity treatments (Figure 2, Table 3011). In support of the social niche specialization hypothesis, the repeatability 302of boldness was significantly higher in the control colonies compared to the 303mixed colonies at all time points, except when the colonies had not been 304disturbed for four weeks. Importantly, this increase in repeatability was 305driven by lower within-individual variation in boldness in the control colonies 306compared to the mixed colonies. This means that individuals in the control 307colonies exhibited more consistent behaviour at all time points compared to 308individuals in the mixed colonies. Additionally, the among-individual 309variation and therefore repeatability of boldness significantly increased the 310longer a group had been together regardless of whether it was a control or 311mixed colony. After not being disturbed for four weeks, individuals in the 312mixed colonies achieved similar among- and within-individual variation as 313those in the control colonies. In contrast, the repeatability of attack 314tendency remained at a similar level in both familiarity treatments across all 315time periods (Table 1)

316

317

DISCUSSION

318

The field of animal personality currently seeks potentially generalizable 320mechanisms that can generate and maintain consistent individual 321differences in behaviour. The social niche specialization hypothesis offers 322one such mechanism. The social niche specialization hypothesis posits that 323individuals will develop social niches as a result of living within a stable 324social group. In support of this view, we demonstrated here that consistent 325individual differences in boldness behaviour increased in the social spider *S*. 326*mimosarum* the longer that individuals remained in a stable social group. 327 We recovered evidence that social niches for boldness behaviour 328developed as a result of familiarity among colony mates. Control colonies all

330familiar colony mates. If social group familiarity is a key driver of 331repeatability, we would expect to see stronger personalities in these

329experienced a social disturbance but were placed back with their original

332individuals as compared to the mixed colonies, regardless of when the social 333disturbance occurred. As predicted, the repeatability estimates of boldness 334were significantly higher in the control colonies than mixed colonies at all 335time points, except when the colonies had not been disturbed for four weeks. 336This increase in repeatability was driven by lower within-individual variation 337in the control colonies. Individuals became more consistent in their 338behaviour the longer they had spent with a social group, supporting the 339hypothesis that repeated social interactions can increase the benefits of 340predictable behaviour [7, 8]. Our data suggest that, at least in this species, 341 four weeks of repeated social interactions are needed to fully establish social 342niches. While several studies have now investigated how different ecological 343 factors influence among-individual variation in behaviour [4-6, 11], fewer 344have investigated how these factors generate individual consistency in 345behaviour (but see [19, 34]). Our study demonstrates that the stability of 346the social environment may be especially influential in generating and even 347reinforcing individual differences once they appear. A promising next step 348 will be to test whether colonies composed of behaviourally consistent 349(predictable) members perform better than colonies of unpredictable 350individuals.

While we found evidence for increased social niches in boldness with 352longer group fidelity, we found no such pattern for individuals' tendency to 353attack. Repeatabilities in attack tendency were similar regardless of the 354familiarity treatment or the time since the social disturbance. The overall 355low attack rates (attacks only occurred in ~25% of all trials) and distribution 356of the data (it is impossible to directly estimate the within-individual variance 357in a binary variable) likely reduced our ability to partition the behavioural 358variance. Granted, it is possible that our simulated prey was not as realistic 359as we hoped; however, this interpretation is at odds with the findings of 360other studies on other social *Stegodyphus* that used identical methods [23]. 361Another explanation may be that attack tendency is more strongly 362influenced by genetic or un- (or slowly-) changing state variables, such as 363body size [35, 36]. While we found no evidence that body size influenced 364attack tendency in *S. mimosarum* (data not shown), it remains that some 365other unmeasured state variable may influence this particular behaviour. It 366is also possible that among-individual variation in this particular behaviour is 367not as important as variation in boldness in familiar groups; other studies 368have found relatedness to be the most influential determinant of foraging 369efficiency in some social spiders [28, 29]. Consistent with this view, [12] 370 found that colony productivity increased with within-colony variation in some 371aspects of behaviour (brood care and exploration) but not others 372(aggressiveness). Boldness has already been implicated as an important 373determinant of task differentiation in other Stegodyphus species [23, 24] and 374our data support the finding that among-individual differences in boldness 375are a particularly important element of social organization in social 376Stegodyphus.

377 Social niche specialization may be a particularly powerful mechanism 378 for generating social organization in societies where individuals exhibit group 379fidelity, such as our spiders. In contrast, it may be difficult for evolutionary 380processes to select for the proper mix of personalities in groups where 381membership changes with each generation. This may help to explain why a 382previous study on sticklebacks recovered no evidence that repeated social 383interactions increased among-individual variation or within-individual 384consistency in behaviour [20]. Because, sticklebacks form large schools in 385the wild, and while certain pairs are found together more often than chance 386would predict [21], school membership is generally fluid [21, 22]. We argue 387that in these types of groups, the formation of social niches will be difficult 388since individuals are constantly interacting with new individuals (e.g. [37]). 389Instead we expect that more plastic behaviour would be beneficial. In 390contrast, repeated social interactions in more stable societies may provide a 391mechanism by which individual sense gaps in their societies' workforce and 392fill them, i.e., via shifts in personality. In other words, simple mechanisms 393such as positive feedback loops throughout development may, over time, 394permit the adaptive differentiation of individuals' personalities and (perhaps) 395their social roles. Such simple feedback loops have been implicated in 396numerous studies on social insect societies and manifest behaviourally as 397 individual differences in task performance thresholds ([38, 39] but see [40]). 398Here we studied how repeated social interactions among individuals in a 399social group influences behavioural variation, but another potential scenario

400where social niches might be important is in species with long-term mating 401partnerships [14]. An exciting area for future research would be to 402investigate how the number of stable social partners influences the 403development of social niches.

404

405**Conclusions**

406 The presence of consistent individual differences in behaviour have 407sparked so much interest in part because they have the potential to impact 408any number of evolutionary and ecological processes. And, while studies 409documenting the presence of personalities in animals continue to grow, we 410still know little about the factors responsible for their existence. Here we 411show that living in stable social groups has the potential to generate and 412 maintain consistent individual differences in behaviour. Individuals that were 413 from groups that were more familiar with each other exhibited greater 414among-individual variation and within-individual consistency in behaviour. 415Many species form social groups, suggesting that the development of social 416niches may allow individuals to increase their own fitness by enhancing their 417fit with their (social) environment. However, stability of group membership 418can vary dramatically among species and populations and we urge that more 419studies explore the potency of group fidelity to drive the generation and 420maintenance of individual differences in key functional traits, such as 421behaviour.

423 **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

424 We thank Taylor Shearer, Nishant Singh, Aric Berning and Donna 425McDermott for assistance with spider colony maintenance.

426 REFERENCES						
427						
428[1] C	28[1] Dall, S.R., Houston, A.I. & McNamara, J.M. 2004 The behavioural ecology					
429	of personality: consistent individual differences from an adaptive					
430	perspective. <i>Ecology Letters</i> 7 , 734-739. (doi:10.1111/j.1461-					
431	0248.2004.00618.x).					
432						
433[2] D	2] Dingemanse, N.J. & Wolf, M. 2010 Recent models for adaptive personality					
434	differences: a review. Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society					
435	<i>B: Biological Sciences</i> 365 , 3947-3958. (doi:10.1098/rstb.2010.0221).					
436						
437[3] Wolf, M. & Weissing, F.J. 2010 An explanatory framework for adaptive						
438	personality differences. Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society					
439	<i>B: Biological Sciences</i> 365 , 3959-3968. (doi:10.1098/rstb.2010.0215).					
440						
441[4] M	41[4] Mathot, K.J., van den Hout, P.J., Piersma, T., Kempenaers, B., Réale, D. &					
442	Dingemanse, N.J. 2011 Disentangling the roles of frequency-vs. state-					
443	dependence in generating individual differences in behavioural					
444	plasticity. <i>Ecology Letters</i> 14 , 1254-1262. (doi:10.1111/j.1461-					
445	0248.2011.01698.x).					
446						
447[5] Nicolaus, M., Tinbergen, J.M., Bouwman, K.M., Michler, S.P., Ubels, R.,						
448	Both, C., Kempenaers, B. & Dingemanse, N.J. 2012 Experimental					

449 evidence for adaptive personalities in a wild passerine bird.

450 Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences **279**, 4885-

451 4892. (doi:10.1098/rspb.2012.1936).

452

453[6] Laskowski, K.L. & Bell, A.M. 2013 Competition avoidance drives individual

454 differences in response to a changing food resource in sticklebacks.

455 *Ecology Letters*. (doi:10.1111/ele.12105).

456

457[7] Bergmüller, R. & Taborsky, M. 2010 Animal personality due to social niche

458 specialisation. *Trends in Ecology & Evolution* **25**, 504-511.

459 (doi:10.1016/j.tree.2010.06.012).

460

461[8] Montiglio, P.-O., Ferrari, C. & Réale, D. 2013 Social niche specialization

462 under constraints: personality, social interactions and environmental

463 heterogeneity. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B:*

464 *Biological Sciences* **368**. (doi:10.1098/rstb.2012.0343).

465

466[9] Ravigné, V., Dieckmann, U. & Olivieri, I. 2009 Live where you thrive: joint

467 evolution of habitat choice and local adaptation facilitates

468 specialization and promotes diversity. *The American Naturalist* **174**,

469 E141-E169. (doi:10.1086/605369).

471[10] Svanbäck, R. & Bolnick, D.I. 2007 Intraspecific competition drives

increased resource use diversity within a natural population.

473 Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences **274**, 839-844.

474 (doi:10.1098/rspb.2006.0198).

475

476[11] Araújo, M.S., Bolnick, D.I. & Layman, C.A. 2011 The ecological causes of

individual specialisation. *Ecology Letters* **14**, 948-958.

478 (doi:10.1111/j.1461-0248.2011.01662.x).

479[12] Modlmeier, A.P., Liebmann, J.E. & Foitzik, S. 2012 Diverse societies are

480 more productive: a lesson from ants. *Proceedings of the Royal Society*

481 *B: Biological Sciences* **279**, 2142-2150. (doi:10.1098/rspb.2011.2376).

482

483[13] Pruitt, J.N. & Riechert, S.E. 2011 How within-group behavioural variation

484 and task efficiency enhance fitness in a social group. *Proceedings of*

the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences 278, 1209-1215. (doi:10.1098/
rspb.2010.1700).

487

488[14] Schuett, W., Tregenza, T. & Dall, S.R. 2010 Sexual selection and animal
personality. *Biological Reviews* 85, 217-246.

490

491[15] Harcourt, J.L., Ang, T.Z., Sweetman, G., Johnstone, R.A. & Manica, A.

492 2009 Social feedback and the emergence of leaders and followers.

493 *Current Biology* **19**, 248-252. (doi:10.1016/j.cub.2008.12.051).

494

495[16] Wolf, M., Van Doorn, G.S. & Weissing, F.J. 2008 Evolutionary emergence

496 of responsive and unresponsive personalities. *Proceedings of the*

497 *National Academy of Sciences* **105**, 15825-15830.

498 (doi:10.1073/pnas.0805473105).

499

500[17] Morand-Ferron, J., Wu, G.-M. & Giraldeau, L.-A. 2011 Persistent

501 individual differences in tactic use in a producer-scrounger game are

502 group dependent. *Animal Behaviour* **82**, 811-816.

503

504[18] Beauchamp, G. 2001 Consistency and flexibility in the scrounging

505 behaviour of zebra finches. *Canadian journal of zoology* **79**, 540-544.
506

507[19] Favati, A., Leimar, O., Radesäter, T. & Løvlie, H. 2014 Social status and

508 personality: stability in social state can promote consistency of

509 behavioural responses. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological*

510 *Sciences* **281**, 20132531. (doi:10.1098/rspb.2013.2531).

511

512[20] Laskowski, K.L. & Bell, A. in press Strong personalities, not social niches,
drive individual differences in social behaviour in sticklebacks. *Animal Behaviour*.

516[21] Ward, A.J., Botham, M.S., Hoare, D.J., James, R., Broom, M., Godin, J.-G.J.

517 & Krause, J. 2002 Association patterns and shoal fidelity in the three-

518 spined stickleback. *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London. Series*

- 519 *B: Biological Sciences* **269**, 2451-2455. (doi:10.1098/rspb.2002.2169).
- 520

521[22] Croft, D., James, R., Ward, A., Botham, M., Mawdsley, D. & Krause, J.

522 2005 Assortative interactions and social networks in fish. *Oecologia*

523 **143**, 211-219. (doi:10.1007/s00442-004-1796-8).

524

525[23] Grinsted, L., Pruitt, J.N., Settepani, V. & Bilde, T. 2013 Individual

526 personalities shape task differentiation in a social spider. *Proceedings*

527 of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences **280**.

528 (doi:10.1098/rspb.2013.1407).

529[24] Keiser, C.N., Jones, D.K., Modlmeier, A.P. & Pruitt, J.N. in press Exploring

530 the effects of individual traits and within-colony variation on task

531 differentiation and collective behavior in a desert social spider.

532 Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology.

533

534[25] Seibt, U. & Wickler, W. 1988 Bionomics and social structure of 'family

spiders' of the genus *Stegodyphus*, with special reference to the

536 African species *S. dumicola* and *S. mimosarum* (Araneida, Eresidae),

537 Goethe Universität.

539[26] Crouch, T. & Lubin, Y. 2000 Effects of climate and prey availability on

540 foraging in a social spider, Stegodyphus mimosarum (Araneae,

541 Eresidae). Journal of Arachnology 28, 158-168. (doi:10.1636/0161-

542 8202(2000)028[0158:EOCAPA]2.0.CO;2).

543

544[27] Lubin, Y. & Bilde, T. 2007 The evolution of sociality in spiders. Advances

545 *in the Study of Behaviour* **37**, 83-145. (doi:10.1016/S0065-

546 3454(07)37003-4).

547

548[28] Ruch, J., Heinrich, L., Bilde, T. & Schneider, J.M. 2009 Relatedness

549 facilitates cooperation in the subsocial spider, Stegodyphus

550 tentoriicola. *BMC evolutionary biology* **9**, 257. (doi:10.1186/1471-2148-

551 9-257).

552

553[29] Schneider, J.M. & Bilde, T. 2008 Benefits of cooperation with genetic kin

in a subsocial spider. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*

105, 10843-10846. (doi:10.1073/pnas.0804126105).

556

557[30] Riechert, S.E. & Hedrick, A.V. 1990 Levels of predation and genetically

558 based anti-predator behaviour in the spider, *Agelenopsis aperta*.

559 Animal Behaviour **40**, 679-687. (doi:10.1016/S0003-3472(05)80697-9).

561[31] Nakagawa, S. & Schielzeth, H. 2010 Repeatability for Gaussian and non-562 Gaussian data: a practical guide for biologists. *Biological Reviews* 85, 935-956. (doi:10.1111/j.1469-185X.2010.00141.x). 563 564 565[32] Dingemanse, N.J. & Dochtermann, N.A. 2013 Quantifying individual variation in behaviour: mixed-effect modelling approaches. Journal of 566 567 Animal Ecology 82, 39-54. (doi:10.1111/1365-2656.12013). 568 569[33] Hadfield, J.D. 2010 MCMC methods for multi-response generalized linear 570 mixed models: the MCMCgImm R package. Journal of Statistical 571 Software **33**, 1-22. 572 573[34] Arnold, C. & Taborsky, B. 2010 Social experience in early ontogeny has 574 lasting effects on social skills in cooperatively breeding cichlids. Animal 575 Behaviour **79**, 621-630. (doi:10.1016/j.anbehav.2009.12.008). 576 577[35] Pitcher, T.J. 1986 Functions of shoaling behaviour in teleosts. In The 578 behaviour of teleost fishes (pp. 294-337), Springer. 579 580[36] Biro, P.A. & Stamps, J.A. 2010 Do consistent individual differences in 581 metabolic rate promote consistent individual differences in behavior? Trends in Ecology & Evolution 25, 653-659. 582 (doi:10.1016/j.tree.2010.08.003). 583

584

585[37] Cote, J., Fogarty, S. & Sih, A. 2012 Individual sociability and choosiness

586 between shoal types. *Animal Behaviour* **83**, 1469-1476.

587 (doi:10.1016/j.anbehav.2012.03.019).

588

589[38] Beshers, S.N. & Fewell, J.H. 2001 Models of division of labor in social

insects. *Annual review of entomology* **46**, 413-440.

591

592[39] Myerscough, M. & Oldroyd, B. 2004 Simulation models of the role of

593 genetic variability in social insect task allocation. *Insectes Sociaux* **51**,

594 146-152. (doi:0.1007/s00040-003-0713-1).

595

596[40] Jandt, J.M. & Dornhaus, A. 2014 Bumblebee response thresholds and

597 body size: does worker diversity increase colony performance? *Animal*

598 Behaviour **87**, 97-106. (doi:10.1016/j.anbehav.2013.10.017).

599

600

602**Table 1.** Variance component (among- and within-individual) and 603repeatability estimates of boldness and attack behaviours in control and 604mixed colonies that experienced a social disturbance one, two, three, or four 605weeks ago. The within-individual variance could not be estimated for the 606binary variable of attack tendency (see methods for details). Numbers in [] 607indicate 95% credibility intervals.

Time since social disturbance						
	One week	Two weeks	Three weeks	Four weeks		
Boldness						
Control o	colonies	_	_	_		
		21.80 [11.90,	15.11 [9.12,	23.41 [13.03,		
Among	6.87 [3.94, 11.49]			44.991		
		36.32]	29.53]	46.33]		
Within	4.45 [3.51, 6.06]	3.52 [2.64, 4.79]	2.61 [2.00, 3.64]			
R	0.62 [0.47, 0.73]	0.86 [0.78, 0.92]	0.86 [0.79, 0.93]	0.83 [0.73, 0.91]		
Mixed co	lonies					
			11.93 [6.24,	21.75 [11.22,		
Among	4.12 [0.78, 10.30]	0.05 [0, 7.05]		40.4-1		
			21.52]	42.17]		
	19.31 [14.47,	23.58 [16.68,	12.01 [8.82,	9.91 [7.12,		
Within	07.001	22.241	1 6 9 9 1	10.001		
-	27.03]	33.20]	16.33]	13.69]		
R	0.16 [0.05, 0.36]	0.002 [0, 0.24]	0.54 [0.35, 0.66]	0.74 [0.56, 0.82]		
Attack tendency						
Control o	Control colonies					
Among	1.40 [0.39, 4.85]	1.73 [0.32, 5.00]	6.26 [2.16,	2.02 [0.21, 6.24]		
			18.37]	0 22 [0 11 0 22]		
R	0.32 [0.12, 0.56]	0.35 [0.12, 0.56]	0.70 [0.42, 0.85]	0.32 [0.11, 0.62]		
Mixed colonies						
Among	2.88 [0.84, 7.45]	3.14 [0.94, 8.73]	4.30 [1.46, 13.15]	3.31 [1.23, 8.68]		
R	0.45 [0.22, 0.66]	0.50 [0.23, 0.70]	0.55 [0.34, 0.78]	0.50 [0.26, 0.70]		
09						
10						
1 FIGURE LEGENDS						
12						

Figure 1. Average (± stn. error) boldness scores (a.) and proportion of prey 614attacks (b.) in the mixed and control colonies that experienced a social 615disturbance one, two, three, or four weeks ago.

Figure 2. Among-individual (a.), within-individual (b.), and the resulting 618repeatability estimate (c.) in boldness scores in the mixed and control 619colonies that experienced a social disturbance one, two, three or four weeks 620ago. Error bars represent the 95% CI for each estimate.





