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Understanding the evolution of infidelity using the Seychelles warbler system

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Proposition accompanying the PhD thesis:

Understanding the evolution of infidelity using the Seychelles warbler system

Sara Raj Pant

1. Despite decades of research, the evolution of infidelity in socially monogamous systems remains an enigma.
2. Our planet is beautifully intricate, brimming over with enigmas to be solved and riddles to be unravelled. – Gerald Malcolm Durrell.
3. Long-term studies of isolated populations are needed to accurately address evolutionary hypotheses on promiscuity. – This thesis.
4. Biology is the science. Evolution is the concept that makes biology unique. – Jared Diamond.
5. Social conditions play an important role in shaping patterns of infidelity in the Seychelles warbler and possibly other cooperative species.
6. Understanding of life begins with the understanding of patterns. – Fritjof Capra.
7. Patterns of infidelity in the Seychelles warbler are determined by within-individual changes with age, rather than by differences between individuals due to selective (dis)appearance.
8. What we observe is not nature in itself, but nature exposed to our method of questioning. – Werner Heisenberg.
9. A direct assessment of the genetic mechanisms at the basis of hypotheses on the evolution of infidelity or, at least, the components involved in such mechanisms is imperative.
10. Science is an ongoing process. It never ends. There is no single ultimate truth to be achieved, after which all the scientists can retire. – Carl Sagan.
11. No government can seize it, no thief can steal it, no relative can claim it, no one carrying it can be weighed down by it. Knowledge is the finest of all forms of wealth. – Vedic motto.