



# Nature's Music: The Science of Birdsong

By Peter R. Marler, Hans Slabbekoorn

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**Nature's Music: The Science of Birdsong** By Peter R. Marler, Hans Slabbekoorn

The voices of birds have always been a source of fascination. **Nature's Music** brings together some of the world's experts on birdsong, to review the advances that have taken place in our understanding of how and why birds sing, what their songs and calls mean, and how they have evolved. All contributors have strived to speak, not only to fellow experts, but also to the general reader. The result is a book of readable science, richly illustrated with recordings and pictures of the sounds of birds.

Bird song is much more than just one behaviour of a single, particular group of organisms. It is a model for the study of a wide variety of animal behaviour systems, ecological, evolutionary and neurobiological. Bird song sits at the intersection of breeding, social and cognitive behaviour and ecology. As such interest in this book will extend far beyond the purely ornithological - to behavioural ecologists psychologists and neurobiologists of all kinds.

- \* The scoop on local dialects in birdsong
- \* How birdsongs are used for fighting and flirting
- \* The writers are all international authorities on their subject

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## **Nature's Music: The Science of Birdsong** By Peter R. Marler, Hans Slabbekoorn Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Enter the world of research on bird song with 'Nature's Music: The Science of Birdsong,' edited by two of the field's experts, Peter Marler and Hans Slabbekoorn (Elsevier, 2004). Be forewarned: this book isn't for the faint of heart. It has 14 chapters, each one written by a researcher who presents substantive overviews of the staggering variety of mechanisms underlying the production of these delightful sounds that permeate our world -- the mimicry of the lyrebird, the deception of the chicken, the 2,000 songs of the brown thrasher. It comes with two CDs of songs and calls recorded across the globe over a 50-year span. If you really want to know what's up with bird song, hunker down with this book."--Sarasota Herald Tribune "An enormous amount of care and hard work has resulted in a lavishly produced and illustrated volume, complete with two CDs of bird sound recordings and even some music."--Clive K. Catchpole, School of Biological Sciences, Royal Holloway University of London, UK, in *ETHOLOGY*

"...a unique item...most chapters have 'learning boxes' that provide additional information, sometimes more technical than the rest of the text or simply expanding on a particular point. These are highly useful as they prevent the text from becoming too dense or detailed for a more general reader and provide the curious reader with a worthwhile digression from the regular text...The print index of the items on the CD-ROMS is very helpful. CD tracks are listed in numerical order by book chapter along with an informative description. The majority of the tracks relate to the learning boxes in the chapter and the book text also refers to the CD tracks where relevant...recommended for public libraries and for academic libraries that support this discipline...the comprehensive text and enjoyable CDs make this item a valuable addition to relevant collections."--Beth Thomsett-Scott, University of North Texas Science and Technology Library, in *E-STREAMS*

"The volume is a landmark for birdsong research...One of the great strengths of the book is its use of beautiful examples to teach key concepts...what really drives these lessons home are two CDs that contain over 90 tracks each...These superb recordings accompany sonograms or points in the text, so readers can read about particular songs while listening to them...Today's amateur birders deserve a sophisticated presentation of the natural history of birdsong. This book delivers...if you followed Luis Baptista's work and learned from him, you will appreciate what a lovely monument this is to his memory."--Jack Dumbacher of *CALIFORNIA WILD* (2005)

"Nature's Music is a remarkable book in many ways- the breadth of its coverage, the blend of field and laboratory studies, and the balance between facts and speculation...The quality of figures is excellent, as are the two CDs that convert many of the sounds illustrated as sound spectrographs back into an impeccably clean soundtrack. In all these ways, this book is a labor of love...This book will make fine reading for all those drawn to birds and their songs, and will provide a sturdy backbone for courses on animal behavior, animal communication and learning. Those who labor all day in concrete jungles or in the confines of a laboratory may find in this book an incentive to strap on the binocular, step outside and follow nature's music."--Fernando Nottebohm, Field Research Center, Rockefeller University in *NATURE MAGAZINE* (2005)

-Article in *BIONIEUWS* (March 2005)

About the Author

By Professor Peter R. Marler and Dr. Hans Slabbekoorn

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