University of Birmingham

Professor Graham Martin BSc, PhD, DSc

Emeritus Professor, Avian Sensory Science

School of Biosciences (/schools/biosciences/index.aspx)

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About

Professor Graham Martin is an Ornithologist with an international reputation built upon his research into the sensory worlds of birds. In recent years he has used his expertise to focus on problems concerned with the functions vision, especially binocular vision, in foraging behaviour, and in understanding why some bird species are particularly vulnerable to collisions with human artifacts such as wind turbines and power lines.

Qualifications

BSc Human and Physical Sciences, University of Surrey
PhD Psychology, University of Exeter
DSc Biology, University of Birmingham

Biography

Professor Graham Martin did graduate work at the University of Exeter into the sensory bases of nocturnal activity in owls. He followed this with Post Doctoral work at The University of Sussex on the function of coloured oil droplets in the colour vision of pigeons. He took up his first post at the University of Birmingham in 1976 as a lecturer in Biology based in the then Department of Extramural Studies and the then Department of Zoology and Comparative Physiology. He became head of the School of Continuing Studies and also held a central University post for regional Development. However, he always based his research in Biology.

He moved full time to the School of Biosciences in 2002 where he established the Centre for Ornithology and set up the MSc programme in Ornithology, the only such programme in Europe. In his research he has traveled and collaborated widely and has published comparative research on over 60 species of birds from Albatrosses and Penguins, to Spoonbills and Kiwi. In 2010 he delivered a Plenary lecture about his work in Avian Sensory Ecology to the International Ornithological Congress in Brazil, just before taking retirement and being awarded the title of Emeritus Professor. He continues to research avian senses and edits the journal Bird Study on behalf of the British Trust for Ornithology. He is Vice-President of the British Ornithologist's Union and Council member of the European Ornithologists' Union.

Research

Research Theme within School of Biosciences: Organisms and Environment

Sensory Ecology of birds, especially the sensory bases of foraging and the reasons why birds are prone to collisions with human artifacts.

Other activities

Vice–President and Council member of the British Ornithologists' Union.
Council member of the European Ornithologists' Union.
Editor of the Journal Bird Study on behalf of the British Trust for Ornithology.
Chair of the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust.

Publications

Selected publications:

Martin GR (2011) Through Birds' Eyes: insights into avian sensory ecology. Journal of Ornithology DOI 10.1007/s10336-011-0771-5

Demery ZP, Chappell J, Martin GR (2011) Vision, touch and object manipulation in Senegal parrots Poicephalus senegalus. Proceedings of the Royal Society, B doi: 10.1098/rspb.2011.0374:

Martin GR, Piersma T (2009) Vision and touch in relation to foraging and predator detection: insighful contrasts between a plover and a sandpiper. Proceedings of the Royal Society, B 276:437-445

Martin GR (2007) Visual fields and their functions in birds. Journal of Ornithology 148 (Suppl 2):547-562

Martin GR (2009) What is binocular vision for? A birds' eye view. Journal of Vision 9:1-19

Martin GR (2011) Understanding bird collisions with man-made objects: a sensory ecology approach. Ibis 153:239-254

Martin GR, Portugal SJ (2011) Differences in foraging ecology determine variation in visual field in ibises and spoonbills (Threskiornithidae). Ibis 153:662-671

Martin GR, Shaw JM (2010) Bird collisions with power lines: Failing to see the way ahead? Biological Conservation 143:2695-2702

Martin GR, White CR, Butler P J (2008) Vision and the Foraging Technique of Great Cormorants Phalacrocorax carbo: pursuit or flush-foraging? Ibis 150:39-48

Martin GR, Wilson KJ, Wild MJ, Parsons S, Kubke MF, Corfield J (2007) Kiwi Forego Vision in the Guidance of their Nocturnal Activities. PLoSOne 2(2): e198. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0000198:

White CR, Day N, Butler PJ, Martin GR (2007) Vision and Foraging in Cormorants: more like Herons than Hawks? PLoSOne i2(7): e639.doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0000639:

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