The power of sexual selection to drive changes in mate recognition traits gives it the potential to be a potent force in speciation. Sexual selection is often powerful enough to produce features that are harmful to the individual's survival. Sexual selection is prominent in a lot of species including ducks. Females ducks are pickier to who they choose as their mates. This criteria on what females look for includes display, attentiveness, aggressiveness, and good appearance. Actions such as aggressiveness, comfort movements, and sexual interest were recorded. Ducks have a variation of different sexual selection with plumage, bill color, and patch color.

In an experiment done with dabbling ducks they tested ornament evolution in dabbling ducks using a phylogenetic study of character evolution. The methods of this experiment were collecting 42 different species of ducks, and where scored. Duck species were scored as possessing bill coloration if the bill of the male has spots or is completely colored with carotenoid pigmentation. Figures 1 shows the bill coloration in species that are absent, present and equivocal. Figure 2 displays a reconstruction of plumage color classified as monomorphic, dimorphic, or equivocal.

Figure 1

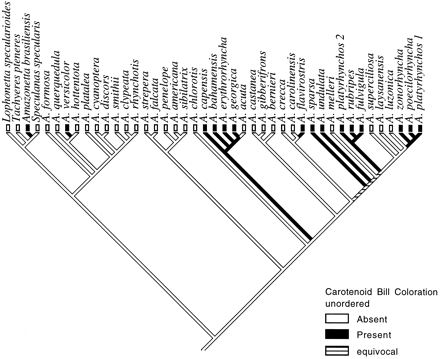
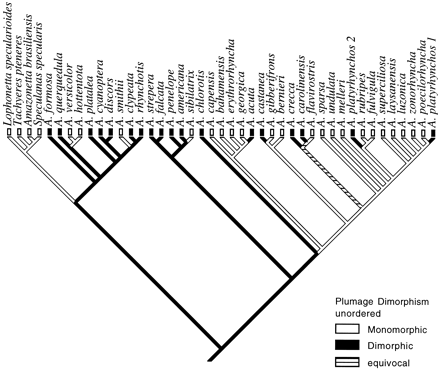


Figure 2



The test was success as bright bill and plumage coloration showed a higher mating chance. Other experiments have shown this in other animals as well.

Work citied

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