**Final Data Visualization Pitch**

A study recently published in the journal *Animal Behaviour* discovered that Savannah sparrows use distinctly different songs today than they did 30 years ago. “The change is the result of cultural transmission of different song elements through many generations,” says biology professor Ryan Norris in the study’s press release. This finding surprised the researchers and illuminated birds’ abilities to alter the sound of their call dependent on time and space. Broadly, what the study found is that birdcalls are quite flexible.

To further explore this idea, I want to see how different species of birds change their calls dependent on the region in which they live. For example, does an Oregon crow call sound just like one in New York? How do different environments shape the sound of a bird’s song? I’ve never seen such a U.S. map that would allow listeners to do this—to access the same species’ call in different parts of the United States. This map could be published soon, too, because New Yorkers will be entering spring in about a month (fingers crossed) and thus, will be thinking about birds again.

My project will be an interactive U.S. map that plays five to ten common American birds that are found in many states across the country. These species will be easy to find with this “bird by state” database: <http://www.whatbird.com/browse/attribute/birds_na_147/38/location/>

Each different species song will be symbolized by a different color across the map (crow=black, blue bird=blue, etc). I chose bird songs because I discovered this database: <http://www.xeno-canto.org/> , which allows me to search birdcall sound files by species, by year and by region. I can access, for example, a crow call in Oregon, New York, Louisiana, and elsewhere.

I will talk with Dina Lipkind, a psychology researcher at Hunter College in Manhattan, who studies vocal development in birds. She may be able to tell me why different birdcalls sound different in separate parts of the United States.

To create this project, I will need to learn how to snag a US map that’s being used as part of a data visualization project currently and then learn how to color and texturize this map. Then, I will scrape and enter the link to different birdcalls into the code that correlates to the physical space of each state on this map.

<http://www.linkedin.com/pub/dina-lipkind/3/a90/80b> : great source

**Sounds**

[**http://www.xeno-canto.org/explore?query=American+Robin**](http://www.xeno-canto.org/explore?query=American+Robin)

**Birds**

American Crow:

Mourning dove:

American Robin:

Downy woodpecker:

American Goldfinch:

Bald Eagle:

House sparrow:

European starling:

**U.S. Regions**:

Have *at least one call* for each species in each region (if more, include those too!)

**Map**: <http://lilahrap.github.io/data-journalism-home/week-4/map.html>

<http://intridea.github.io/stately/>

<http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/phzmweb/interactivemap.aspx>

<http://www2.va.gov/directory/guide/map_flsh.asp?isflash>=

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Dina Lipkind.