To whom it may concern,

I am pleased to submit the manuscript titled *“*Estimating species occupancy across multiple sampling seasons with temporal autologistic occupancy models via the autoOcc R package*”* for consideration as a research methods guide in the Journal of Animal Ecology. This manuscript presents a user-friendly and statistically robust method to model species occupancy dynamics with data collected over multiple primary sampling periods (e.g., years), especially when there is insufficient data to fit more complex statistical techniques.

In this paper, I highlight the value of autologistic occupancy models as a parsimonious alternative that can be applied when data are sparse. I introduce the **autoOcc** R package, which implements these models in a frequentist framework, enabling model fitting, comparison, and prediction.

Through a series of simulations, I show that autologistic occupancy models outperform dynamic occupancy models in terms of bias and precision under a variety of scenarios. I also provide two worked examples that demonstrate how **autoOcc** can be used to derive ecologically meaningful inference from real-world datasets.

This work contributes to the growing need for accessible statistical tools that balance rigor with practicality. I believe this R package and research method guide will be of broad interest to ecologists, conservation biologists, and wildlife managers who work with detection/non-detection data and seek methods that are both flexible and robust in the face of common data limitations. I confirm that this manuscript has not been published elsewhere and is not under consideration by another journal. I have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

Thank you for considering this manuscript.

Cheers,

Mason Fidino