**Ready to fight: Reliable predictors of aggression in a joint-nesting nonpasserine bird**

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For a signal to be considered aggressive, it should increase in aggressive contexts, predict subsequent aggression, and elicit a response in receivers. Tests of the second, 'predictive', criterion with respect to aggressive signaling are most common for passerine bird songs, while passerine and nonpasserine calls and visual displays have received less attention. I tested the predictive criterion in free-living groups of the cooperatively breeding smooth-billed ani, a nonpasserine with a rare breeding system. I hypothesized that 1) males would be more likely to attack than females, 2) both hoots and throat inflation would predict attack and 3) hoot playback would elicit a stronger aggressive response than playback of the common ahnee call. All of the attacking birds were male, supporting my first hypothesis. Hoots and throat inflation were significant predictors of attack in male smooth-billed anis, supporting my second hypothesis. I found no difference in aggressive response for hoot compared to ahnee call playback; thus, my third hypothesis was not supported. I also found that the number of hoot calls and the proportion of time spent in the throat inflation posture increased in the period immediately prior to attack. Thus, throat inflation and hoot calls increase in aggressive contexts and appear to communicate intent to attack in this species. Receiver responses to hoots and throat displays remain to be investigated.