

The Condor
Volume 104, Number 4
November 2002 C.E.
Abstracts

BRIEF COMMUNICATIONS

SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF ANDEAN CONDOR ROOSTS: INFLUENCE OF SEX, AGE, AND SEASON

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Manuscript received 15 November 2001; accepted 16 July 2002.

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Abstract. We examined how Andean Condors (*Vultur gryphus*) segregate by sex and age in summer and autumn at a communal roost in the Patagonian Andes. Preferred roosting places received earlier sun at sunrise (summer) and later sun at sunset (autumn); sheltered crevices were also selected. Individuals strongly competed for preferred places: adults dominated juveniles and within each age class males dominated females. Although individuals preferred roosting places independent of their dominance status, fighting and subsequent relocating led to a defined social structure at the roost. Sunny exposures may allow occupants to maximize time available for foraging, plumage care, and maintenance, and to avoid cold stress. Irregularity in the spatial distribution and aggregation patterns of Andean Condors may be the result of requirements for roosting. Availability of adequate roost places should be considered in conservation programs.

Key words: age, Andean Condor, dominance, roost, sex, social structure, *Vultur gryphus*.