

SHORT COMMUNICATIONS:

PARENTAL BODY CONDITION DOES NOT CORRELATE WITH OFFSPRING SEX RATIO IN CORY'S SHEARWATERS

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Abstract. We analyzed offspring sex ratio variation in Mediterranean Cory's Shearwater (*Calonectris d. diomedea*) during two consecutive breeding seasons in two colonies. We test for differential breeding conditions between years and colonies looking at several breeding parameters and parental condition. We then explored the relationship between offspring sex ratio and parental condition and breeding parameters. This species is sexually dimorphic with males larger and heavier than females; consequently we expected differential parental cost in rearing sexes, or a greater sensitivity of male chicks to adverse conditions, which may lead to biased sex ratios. Chicks were sexed molecularly by the amplification of the CHD genes. Offspring sex ratio did not differ from parity, either at hatching or fledging, regardless of the colony or year. However, parental body condition and breeding parameters such as egg size and breeding success were different between years and colonies. Nevertheless, neither nestling mortality nor body condition at fledging varied between years or colonies, suggesting that male and female chicks were probably not differentially affected by variability in breeding conditions.

Key words: body condition, *Calonectris diomedea*, Cory's Shearwater, egg volume, sex ratio.