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Abstracts

## SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

### EFFECTS OF TEMPERATURE VARIABILITY ON EGG MASS AND CLUTCH SIZE IN GREAT TITS

CHRISTOPHER J. PENDLEBURY<sup>1</sup> and DAVID M. BRYANT

*School of Biological and Environmental Sciences, University of Stirling, Stirling, FK9 4LA,  
United Kingdom.*

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<sup>1</sup>Present address: British Trust for Ornithology Scotland, School of Biological and  
Environmental Sciences, Stirling University, Stirling, FK9 4LA, United Kingdom. E-mail:  
[chris.pendlebury@bto.org](mailto:chris.pendlebury@bto.org)

*Abstract.* Models of climate change generally predict rising mean global temperatures combined with greater variability in some regions. While relationships between mean temperature and several reproductive parameters are well documented, the effect of day-to-day variation in ambient temperature has received little attention. In our study, temperature variation had no significant effects in a wild population of Great Tits (*Parus major*). In contrast, egg mass tended to be smaller when ambient temperatures during the week prior to laying were more variable. We suggest that variable temperatures may be disadvantageous to an egg-laying bird. Thermal variability should therefore be considered as a discrete factor, distinct from mean temperature, when assessing the consequences of climate changes for breeding birds.

*Key words:* egg production, energy expenditure, Great Tits, *Parus major*, temperature variability.