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Abstracts

## SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

### INTRASPECIFIC LATITUDINAL VARIATION IN NEST ORIENTATION AMONG GROUND-NESTING PASSERINES: A STUDY USING PUBLISHED DATA

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*Abstract.* The relationship between nest entrance orientation and latitude among ground-nesting passerines was reviewed using published information. Data were collated for seven North American and European species. Pooling within-species comparisons, there was a clear trend from a preference for north-facing nests at lower latitudes to eastward- or southward-facing nests farther north. Orientations differed significantly in eight of 12 cases for which statistical comparison was possible, means differing in the expected direction in six of these cases. These results highlight how the influence of solar radiation on nest microclimate typically delineates preferred nest orientation in these species, i.e., at lower latitudes, the need for shade results in a preference for northward orientations; at mid latitudes, eastward orientations predominate, reflecting a probable balance between the benefits of warmth in the early morning and shade in the afternoon; while at high latitudes, nests may be oriented southward to gain warmth throughout the day.

*Key words:* ground-nesting birds, latitude, nest orientation, solar radiation.