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The advent of molecular techniques such as PCR at the end of the last century have revolutionised the way we look at animal mating systems. Many bird species previously thought to be monogamous have now been shown to engage in frequent copulations outside of their established pair-bond i.e. extra-pair mating.

This new distinction between social and genetic mating systems has many implications for sexual selection theory. I will discuss my research on extra-pair mating and female mate choice in the tui.

Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae

and discuss the consequences that this has had on the evolution of sexual dimorphism in this iconic kiwi species.

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SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL & ANIMAL SCIENCES

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