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PhD

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The nest pictures taken at the Psychology wing of the BioSci building. Specifically room P-419T. I created the collage using photoshop in my office (P-545).

Images of Research Competition
University of Alberta

Animal Architecture

Honourable Mention (2020)

How does a beaver build its dam, honey bees their hive, or a bird its nest? We know of many examples of animal architecture occurring in nature, but we understand very little about how animals know what structure to build and how to build it. Much like we can assign certain buildings or structures to the artist or architect who created them, examining the design of different bird nests allows us to detect whether individual birds have unique building styles. Thus, I aim to determine how birds develop their nest-building behaviour by investigating whether different individuals of the same species have different building styles. More specifically, I study the role that learning and genetics play in nest building, a behaviour traditionally considered purely instinctual. The nests in this image were built by five different zebra finch males, the nest builder in this bird species. Each column shows two nests built by the same male, one using pink string and another using orange string. By looking at the picture, would you say each bird has his own style?