

~~HOSP Scholar's Day abstract, revised~~ Neophobic behavior and life history traits of House Sparrows
(*Passer domesticus*)

The House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) is an introduced, invasive species commonly viewed as undesirable in North America. However, the characteristics that make them such successful -pests also make them ideal study species. Their intelligence and curiosity, as well as their lack of fear toward humans, allows for clear observation of behavior and easy access to nestlings. This study of neophobic behavior (avoidance of novel objects) and life history traits provides insight into reaction patterns of House Sparrows, making room for generalizations about similar populations, as well as useful information about breeding biology. In the study population females were more hesitant to approach the unfamiliar object compared to males, and nestling growth demonstrated a linear correlation instead of the more common exponential growth of other species. This information supports more robust studies in the future by expanding knowledge of this frequently used study species.