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*Can You Predict the Weather by Watching Birds?*

I tested the hypothesis “If air pressure goes down, then bird foraging activity goes up.” Barometric pressure is used by meteorologists to predict weather. When air pressure decreases, a storm is probably coming. Since I couldn’t control for other weather variables such as relative humidity and temperature, I also looked at them and their potential effects on bird foraging activity. I set up three feeders, and I made videos of birds foraging at my feeders (a total of 1,614 visits) from October 19 through October 31, 2010 and from November 4 through November 12, 2010. I found that there was no relationship between foraging activity (length of visit and visits per minute) and air pressure that all the species showed. The Black-capped Chickadees, however, which are more territorial in winter than the other birds of my study, demonstrated a very strong positive relationship between foraging activity (length of visit and visits per minute) and air pressure. This means that they foraged more when the air pressure was higher. It turns out that you probably could predict the weather by watching birds if you only look at Black-capped Chickadees, House Finches, and House Sparrow females. This is exactly the opposite of my hypothesis, that if air pressure goes down, bird foraging activity goes up.