

Conspecific effect on habitat selection of a territorial cavity-nesting bird

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© 2014 by the Wilson Ornithological Society. The simulated presence of conspecifics has been proposed to attract territorial songbirds to protect nesting areas when the habitat is being disturbed by human activities. We studied the effects of conspecifics on the nest-site selection of the Thorn-tailed Rayadito (*Aphrastura spinicauda*; Furnariidae), a forest songbird that depends on cavities for nesting. Plantations represent usable habitat for foraging, but the scarcity of cavities restricts their use during the breeding period. The use of nest boxes is a documented measure to mitigate the negative effect of plantations on cavity users. We installed nest boxes in a plantation of *Pinus radiata* in south-central Chile, using the simulated presence of conspecifics as a potential tool to attract rayaditos to new available sites to nest. We simulated the presence of conspecifics through playback during 45 days prior nest building. Our results showed two contrasting outcomes. Firstly, conspecific