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Article

Selection of arboreal termitaria for nesting by cooperatively breeding Micronesian Kingfishers *Todiramphus cinnamominus reichenbachii*



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ABSTRACT

Limited nest-site availability appears to be an important factor in the evolution of delayed dispersal and cooperative breeding in some cavity-nesting species. The cooperatively breeding Pohnpei subspecies of Micronesian Kingfisher *Todiramphus cinnamominus reichenbachii* excavates nest cavities from the nests of arboreal termites *Nasutitermes* spp., or termitaria. In this first published description of nest-sites for this subspecies, we used surveys, remote sensing and radiotelemetry to evaluate the relationship between nest-site availability and co-operation. Results illustrate that nest termitaria are higher in the forest canopy, larger in volume and occur in areas with more contiguous canopy cover than unused termitaria. Nest termitaria were selected independently of the proximity to forest edges and territory boundaries, and we found no difference in characteristics of termitaria used by cooperative groups and breeding pairs. Logistic regression modelling indicated that termitaria with nest-like characteristics were not limited in abundance, suggesting that neither the prospects of inheriting nesting resources nor limited nest-site abundance are probable explanations for delayed dispersal in the Pohnpei subspecies of Micronesian Kingfisher.

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this does not seem to be a limiting factor for reproduction. Similar findings have been reported for this species in northern Mexico (Hardy 1963), Jalisco (Sánchez-Martínez & Renton 2009), and for other bird species nesting in termitaria in the Amazon (Brightsmith 2000, 2005) and the South Pacific Islands (Marsden & Pilgrim 2003; Kesler & Haig 2005). "

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