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## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

**A DAILY MISCELLANY OF INFORMATION BY MICHAEL KESTERTON**

FRIDAY, MARCH 25, 2005  
UPDATED AT 4:00 PM EDT

### **When sparrows worry**

"Sparrows, rabbits and other wild animals can suffer so much from the daily grind of finding food while avoiding predators that they can experience a form of chronic stress -- and this can affect their reproduction and survival levels," says University of Toronto Magazine. Dr. Michael Clinchy and Prof. Rudy Boonstra collected blood samples from 91 song sparrow fathers with six-day-old nestlings. They found food and predators together affected corticosterone levels (the principal stress hormone in birds), free fatty acid levels (the energy source used for flight), anemia, and nestling numbers and condition. The most-stressed sparrow dads were in environments with limited food and many predators.