



The Black Wheatear:

Size 17-19cm

Pairs remain together throughout the year

After mating, 2 weeks before initiation of egg laying, males start to build piles of stones.

No obvious function.

More stones, more fledglings

Explanations:

- Males who carry more stones also provide more food  
weak but positive correlation
- Females put more effort in reproduction  
if they observe stone-carrying (sometimes they measure the weight of stones)

Why should females invest more

Stone-carrying might reflect heritable male attractiveness or viability  
(Sexy son hypothesis)