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Cover photo: A male house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) displays his black breast badge during the non-breeding season. Comparative analyses conducted among Old and New World sparrows suggest that black ventral patches (including the house sparrow's 'badge of status'), which have long been thought to have evolved by sexual selection, are most strongly associated with a signalling function in a non-breeding context (see Tibbetts & Safran, pp. 2376–2386). Photo: Jeffrey B. Mitton.

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