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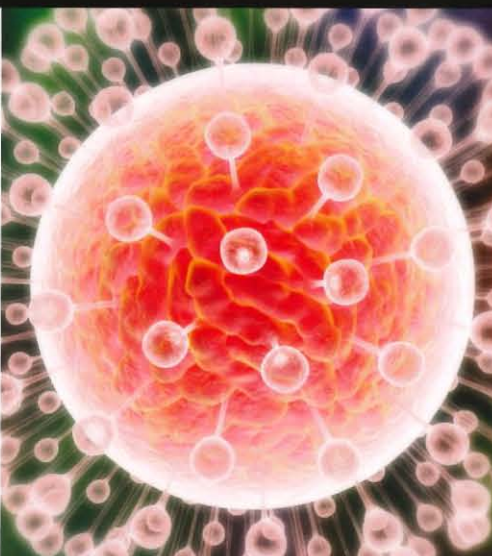
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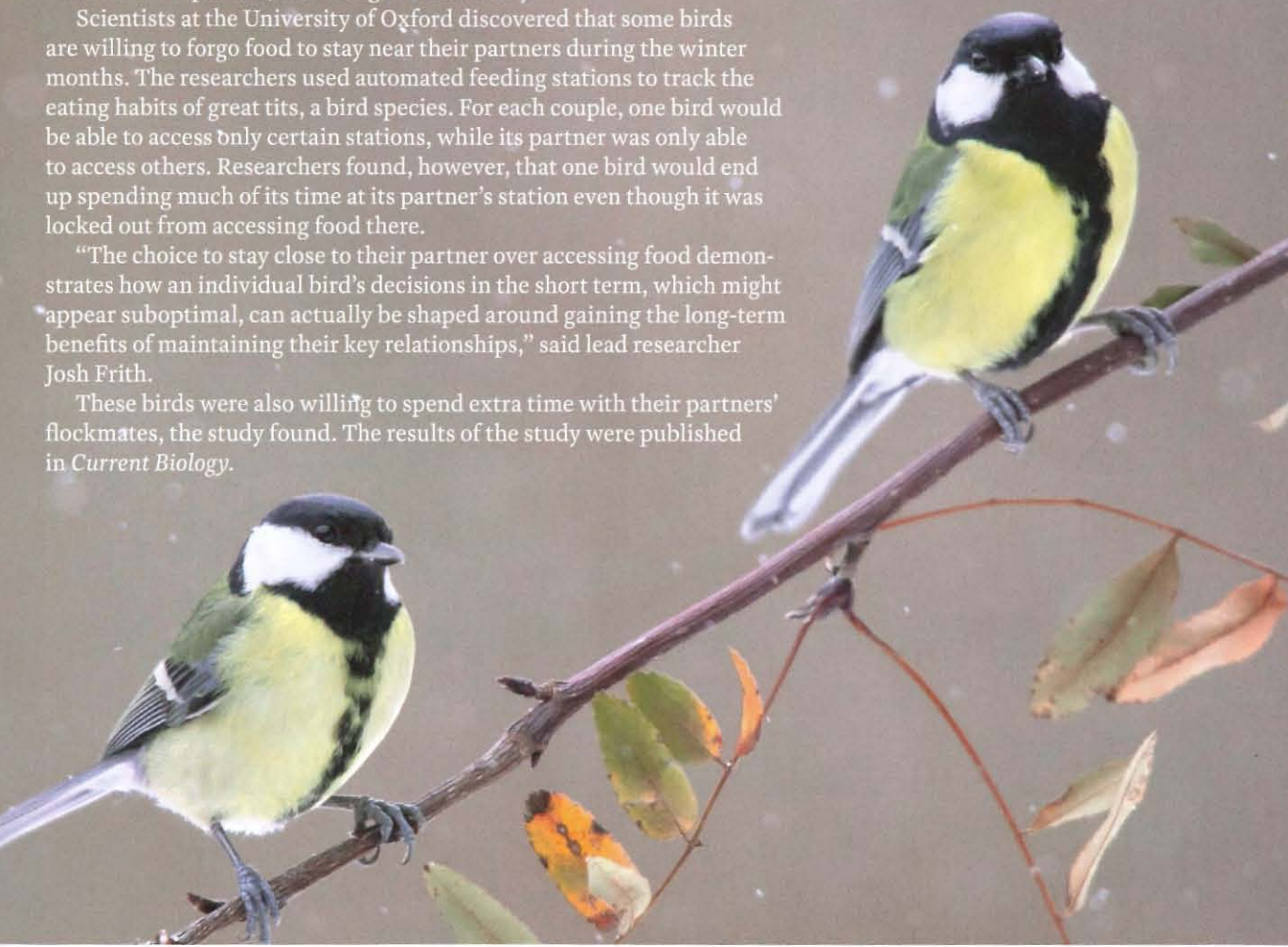
These Birds Choose Love over Food

BIRDS ARE WILLING TO STARVE THEMSELVES TO SPEND MORE TIME with their life partner, according to a new study.

Scientists at the University of Oxford discovered that some birds are willing to forgo food to stay near their partners during the winter months. The researchers used automated feeding stations to track the eating habits of great tits, a bird species. For each couple, one bird would be able to access only certain stations, while its partner was only able to access others. Researchers found, however, that one bird would end up spending much of its time at its partner's station even though it was locked out from accessing food there.

"The choice to stay close to their partner over accessing food demonstrates how an individual bird's decisions in the short term, which might appear suboptimal, can actually be shaped around gaining the long-term benefits of maintaining their key relationships," said lead researcher Josh Frith.

These birds were also willing to spend extra time with their partners' flockmates, the study found. The results of the study were published in *Current Biology*.



HOLY COW!

Some Sharks Can Live for Hundreds of Years

If the *Mayflower* passed by a baby Greenland shark in 1620, and if sharks could talk, this one could still tell the tale. That's because, according to a new study in *Science*, Greenland sharks have just copped the award for longest-living vertebrate, with at least one who lived an estimated 400 years.

Greenland sharks, as their name suggests, favor the waters of the cold North Atlantic. They are a widely distributed species and among the bruisers of the shark world, measuring 13 to 16 feet at maturity.

In order to determine if the sharks are indeed as old as they seem, a team of researchers studied the remains of 28 female Greenland sharks, looking at the lenses of the animals' eyes. The shark's lens is formed in utero and contains radioactive carbon-14 that was extant at the time. That means that carbon-14 dating—how much has decayed since the lens of the eye was formed—can serve as an accurate marker of the animal's age.

