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1 **Low genetic relatedness among linked individuals in the social network of an Australian**
2 **lizard.**

3

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15

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17 **Abstract**

18 Social networks are increasingly being used to describe animal social structure, however we
19 still have a limited understanding of the factors that shape networks, and this is particularly so
20 for more solitary species. We investigated the genetic relatedness of individuals in a social
21 network of a solitary living Australian scincid lizard, *Tiliqua rugosa*. We derived genetic
22 relatedness of 46 lizards from analysis of genotypes at 15 microsatellite DNA loci, and
23 described social networks from GPS locations of all the lizards every 10 minutes for 81 days
24 during their main activity period of the year. We found low relatedness among lizards in our
25 study population and inferred a high level of female-biased dispersal. Observed social
26 associations (inferred through synchronous spatial proximity) were lower than, but correlated
27 with, expected associations (calculated from home range overlap), and many close
28 neighbours did not contact socially, suggesting a deliberate avoidance of some neighbouring
29 individuals. Overall, there were no relationships between social associations and relatedness,
30 however among neighbouring males, and male-female dyads, the strongest relationships were
31 between lizards that were the least related. Explanations of this pattern may include the
32 avoidance of inbreeding in male-female dyads, or the direction of aggressive behaviour
33 towards less related individuals in male-male dyads. The results suggest that lizards can
34 discriminate among different levels of relatedness in their neighbours and tend to direct their
35 social interactions towards those that are less related. This may suggest there is a major
36 difference in the way that social links are formed between species that are solitary (where
37 links are to less related conspecifics) and species that form stable social aggregations (where
38 links are to more related individuals).

39 **Keywords:** social network, relatedness, Scincid, lizard, space use, male-male interactions,
40 pair bond

41 **Introduction**

42 Animal species range from solitary to eusocial in their social organisation (Michener 1969;
43 Linksayer 2010), but all interact socially with conspecifics at some times, in some of their
44 activities. An ongoing question is how genetic relatedness influences these social associations
45 (Wilson 1975). There are two main mechanisms by which genetic relatedness may influence
46 social interactions. Firstly, where individuals have limited opportunity for dispersal, they may
47 avoid inbreeding through avoiding social contact with related individuals of the opposite sex,
48 either through sex-biased dispersal or behavioural avoidance (Pusey and Wolf 1996).
49 Secondly, interactions with kin may be favoured when the benefits from cooperative
50 interactions exceed the costs associated with close living (Alexander 1974). Even in reptiles,
51 benefits may be gained from social interactions among kin. For example, the gidgee skink
52 (*Egernia stokesii*) lives in highly related groups with one or more cohorts of their offspring
53 (Gardner et al. 2001), and have enhanced vigilance to predators from this group living
54 (Lanham & Bull 2004). Thus there are several ways in which genetic relatedness may
55 influence social interactions among individuals and shape social network structure.

56 Increasingly, social networks are being used to explore the structure of social
57 associations within populations and within aggregations (Krause et al. 2007; Sih et al. 2009).
58 They provide a framework for quantifying associations among individuals on a dyadic level,
59 by representing a population as a series of nodes (representing individuals) connected by
60 edges (representing associations) and are particularly useful for testing hypotheses about the
61 factors influencing social structure (Wey et al. 2008). For instance, network analysis has
62 shown consistent social network associations among members of fission-fusion aggregations
63 (Croft et al. 2012), which are sometimes stronger in one sex than the other (Stanley and
64 Dunbar 2013; Carter et al 2013). However, there is conflicting evidence about whether these
65 social associations are influenced by genetic relatedness (Lukas et al. 2005). There is growing

66 evidence to suggest that relatedness can influence social structure, and social networks
67 provide an ideal framework in which to test these hypotheses. For example, Wisniewski et al.
68 (2010) showed that related female dolphins form stable coalitions in the fission-fusion
69 dynamics of pod formation, and Best et al. (2013) found that groupings of female kangaroos
70 had higher relatedness than average for the population. Similarly, Chiyo et al. (2011) reported
71 stronger associations among related than unrelated male elephants, and Kurvers et al. (2013)
72 found that foraging barnacle geese preferentially associated with related individuals and
73 familiar individuals. In contrast, Croft et al. (2012) found no evidence that related individuals
74 associated more strongly in shoals of wild guppies, although this result does not suggest
75 avoidance of related individuals.

76 For more solitary living and subsocial species, social networks can be derived from
77 the occasional contacts during courtship and mating, or while foraging at a common source
78 (Hamede et al. 2009). Our hypothesis is that even in some solitary species, genetic
79 relatedness should still influence aspects of social interactions, although Hirsch et al. (2013)
80 reported no influence of relatedness in social networks of solitary living racoons.

81 In solitary species, kin selection should favour associations of more related
82 individuals during any collaborative activities, but may lead to associations of less related
83 individuals during antagonistic encounters. Similarly, selection to reduce the degree of
84 inbreeding should favour associations of less related individuals for mating activity. Thus, we
85 suggest, species that are largely solitary should still have a signal of genetic relatedness built
86 into social network structures. Separate components of the social network associated with
87 different behaviours can be teased apart by examining different subsets of the social
88 interactions (Godfrey et al. 2012). We tested these hypotheses, that genetic relatedness
89 influences social network links, by comparing social network associations among individuals
90 of known genotype in a population of a largely solitary living Australian scincid lizard.

91 The Australian sleepy lizard, *Tiliqua rugosa*, is a large, long-lived, Australian scincid
92 lizard that occupies stable, overlapping home ranges (Bull 1994; Kerr & Bull 2006a).
93 Although it has a largely solitary life, each spring, adult lizards form monogamous pair-bonds
94 for up to 10 weeks before they mate, and individual pairs of lizards often re-establish those
95 partnerships in subsequent years (Bull 1988; 1994; Bull et al. 1998; Bull 2000; Bull &
96 Burzacott 2006; Leu et al. 2010a). The use of on-board activity and GPS loggers (Kerr et al.
97 2004a; Leu et al. 2010a), has allowed us to describe more cryptic and infrequent aspects of
98 their social system beyond pair associations, that cannot be captured from snapshot
99 observations.

100 Social networks based on frequency of contacts among active lizards have shown that
101 individuals associate with some neighbours and avoid others, and that this social structure
102 remains stable both within a year and over multiple years (Leu et al. 2010a; Godfrey et al.
103 2013). Our current study builds upon this previous research by exploring the genetic
104 relationships between adult lizards in a social network. The aim of the study was to determine
105 whether lizards that were connected in the social network were more (or less) related to each
106 other than if there had been random associations. In any population, individuals that live
107 closer together will have more opportunities to interact than those living further apart. In our
108 analyses we specifically asked whether we could detect an influence of genetic relatedness on
109 network structure after controlling for spatial proximity.

110

111 **Methods**

112 The study was conducted from October to December 2010, in a 1.0 x 1.5 km area of
113 chenopod shrubland (33° 54' S, 139° 20' E), near Bunday Bore Station in the mid-north
114 region of South Australia. The study period was during the austral spring and early summer,
115 the time when these lizards are most active each year (Kerr & Bull 2006; Kerr et al. 2008).

116 All 60 adult lizards resident in the area (30 males, 30 females) were captured by hand in
117 September 2010 and fitted with data loggers that were attached to the dorsal surface of the
118 tail with surgical tape. Handling time was normally no longer than 30 mins, and usually only
119 10-15 mins. The 60 lizards were part of a larger continuous population inhabiting similar
120 habitat surrounding the study area. The data loggers recorded synchronous GPS locations for
121 each lizard every 10 min when it was active (determined by a step-counter attached to the
122 lizard), for the duration of the study (Kerr et al. 2004a, Leu et al. 2010). GPS loggers were
123 manufactured at Flinders University (Adelaide, Australia) (Kerr et al. 2004a). For our
124 analyses, we considered all locations collected over the period 1 Oct - 20 Dec 2010 (81 days),
125 when the majority (~ 90%) of lizards in the study area had data loggers attached. A radio
126 transmitter (Sirtrack, Havelock North, NZ) with unique frequency allowed us to identify,
127 locate and hand-capture each lizard every 12 days to download data and to change batteries.
128 Each data logger plus radio unit weighed 37 g, or 4.5% of the average body weight of an
129 adult lizard, and 5.6% of the body weight of the lightest lizard in our study. Data downloads
130 were conducted at times before or after the diurnal period of activity, to avoid interfering with
131 normal behaviours and to reduce the impact of handling on lizard behaviour (Kerr et al.
132 2004). The lizards do not grow substantially during the season, and for any lizards where they
133 had noticeably gained (or lost) weight between captures (12 days), we completely refitted the
134 logger. Lizards behave normally with the loggers on (they forage and mate with the loggers
135 attached (Godfrey, pers. obs.), and are observed to gain weight throughout the season (at a
136 rate comparable to other lizards in the study area). At the end of the study, all lizards were
137 recaptured and we removed the units and released the lizards. We found no skin damage or
138 irritation where the units had been attached and lizards naturally shed their skin in the
139 following months. The lizards were treated using procedures formally approved by the
140 Flinders University Animal Welfare Committee in compliance with the Australian Code of

141 Practice for the Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes and conducted with a Permit to
142 Undertake Scientific Research from the South Australian Department of the Environment,
143 Water and Natural Resources.

144

145 *Network structure*

146 We developed a social network from incidents of spatial proximity of dyads of active lizards.
147 These were derived from synchronous GPS locations every 10 min for each of the 60 lizards.
148 Following Leu et al. (2010), we considered that two lizards within 2 m of each other at any of
149 the GPS location times had probably made, or would soon make a social contact. Allowing
150 for a median GPS precision of 6 m, we included each pair of GPS derived locations within 14
151 m of each other at the same time as a record of social contact. To construct the social network
152 we calculated the Simple Ratio Index (SRI) for each dyad, as the number of recorded contacts
153 divided by the number of observations when both lizards were active. This was a measure of
154 association strength, which on a biological level, represents the amount of time two lizards
155 spent together. This is an appropriate association measure because sleepy lizards have
156 infrequent contact with other lizards, which in some cases (especially male-male contacts)
157 can be brief. Thus, our measure captures the length and frequency of interactions, given the
158 cryptic nature of most sleepy lizard interactions. Higher SRI values represented more
159 frequent and stronger associations. The network consisted of 60 nodes, representing the 60
160 lizards. An edge was included for each pair of lizards that was recorded in contact at least
161 once ($SRI > 0$) over the study period. Edge weight was determined by the SRI, with a higher
162 weighting for pairs of lizards that were in close proximity more often. The network was non-
163 directional in that contacting lizards were assumed to have equal roles in a contact
164 interaction. Although that may not have been the case, for example if a more aggressive

165 lizard was more likely to initiate contacts, the data did not allow any inference of
166 directionality.

167

168 *Expected associations among lizards*

169 In order to account for the influence of spatial proximity on social associations, we developed
170 an expected association network using the ideal gas model (Hutchinson & Waser 2007),
171 which estimated expected association rates if individual lizards moved randomly within their
172 home ranges. For each dyad, we calculated f , the expected encounter rate per day, using the
173 formula [1] derived from Leu et al. (2010):

$$174 [1] f = \frac{8v(14)o}{\pi hr_i hr_j}$$

175 where v is the mean velocity of the two lizards (average distance (m) travelled/day), o is the
176 area of home range overlap between the two lizards, and hr_i and hr_j are the home range areas
177 of individual i and individual j , respectively. We included all GPS locations to derive, using
178 Ranges 6 (Kenward et al. 2003), both the 95% minimum convex polygon home range, and
179 the area of home range overlap between each dyad. We used the estimated f as encounter
180 rates to determine edge weights in expected association networks. We used the expected
181 association network in the MR-QAP analyses to test the influence of space use and
182 relatedness on social associations.

183

184 *Microsatellite DNA genotypes*

185 We collected blood onto a 3 mm² area of an FTA card by clipping the tip of one toe of each
186 lizard in the social network using a pair of sterilized, sharp, dog nail clippers. An analgesic
187 (Meloxicam) was administered orally prior to toe clipping to reduce pain and discomfort.
188 Lizards were gently restrained by hand during the procedure. About 30% of lizards flinched
189 briefly during the procedure with limb movement, but became calm again within 1 minute.

190 We ensured bleeding had ceased before the lizard was released, and all lizards behaved
191 normally upon release. The persons conducting the surgery had at least a full-years'
192 experience in conducting the procedure. We recaptured all lizards 12 days later, and in all
193 cases the clipped area had healed and we could observe no signs of infection. We recaptured
194 all toe-clipped lizards throughout the duration of this study, and the method had no
195 observable impact on survival, movement or body condition, compared with other studies, or
196 with other conspecifics we encountered in adjacent sites. Sleepy lizards do not use their claws
197 for digging or climbing so toe-clipping should not affect their ability to seek refuge. They are
198 slow-moving reptiles so toe clipping should not affect their locomotor performance to the
199 detriment of the individual movement speed. Many lizards are found with natural toe loss,
200 and with no obvious loss of body condition. In other studies of the same species, several
201 hundred toe-clipped individuals, with several toe-tips removed for individual recognition,
202 have been recaptured over periods of up to 20 years (Bull and Burzacott 2006) with no
203 apparent loss of body condition compared with unmarked animals. Thus we consider there
204 were no short- or long-term adverse effects of removing the tip of a single toe on the lizards
205 in this study. Alternative methods of DNA collection are unreliable (caudal vein blood
206 sampling), impractical (tail tipping), or untested (buccal swabs) in this species. In particular,
207 caudal vein sampling can extend handling time because the vein is difficult to find in this
208 species.

209 We extracted DNA from blood samples on 3 mm² squares of the FTA cards following
210 the Whatman® FTA Elute card procedure (GE Healthcare, Buckinghamshire, UK). We then
211 used the procedures described by Gardner et al. (2008) to determine lizard genotypes at 15
212 microsatellite DNA loci (Trl1, Trl3, Trl9, Trl10, Trl12, Trl14, Trl16, Trl19, Trl21, Trl22,
213 Trl27, Trl30, Trl32, Trl36 and Trl37). Genotypes were successfully scored for 46 lizards (26
214 males and 20 females) using GENEMAPPER v4.0 and were checked manually.

215

216 *General patterns of relatedness within the population*

217 We used the program Coancestry (Wang 2010) to calculate coefficients of relatedness (r)
218 between pairs of individuals with a moments estimator that assumes there is no inbreeding
219 (Wang 2002). Allele frequencies used in the calculations were simulated from all genotyped
220 individuals in the sample. Additionally, we estimated mean relatedness values separately for
221 all male-male dyads, for all female-female dyads, and for all male-female dyads in the
222 sample. To test whether mean relatedness values differed among dyadic combinations, we
223 randomised the derived relatedness values with 10 000 permutations and determined if the
224 observed (absolute) differences in mean relatedness between two groups (e.g. male-male
225 dyads and female-female dyads), or between one group (e.g. male-male dyads) and the
226 population mean, were significantly greater than expected by chance. Node permutation tests
227 were performed using PopTools 3.2 (Hood 2010) in Excel 2007.

228

229 *Social networks, spatial relationships and genetic relatedness*

230 We explored how the spatial relationships and genetic relatedness of the 46 genotyped lizards
231 influenced their social associations. We used Multiple Regression Quadratic Assignment
232 Procedure (MRQAP) analysis (Krackhardt 1988), which regresses multiple predictor matrices
233 onto a dependent matrix, using semi-partialling, and then assesses, using permutation
234 procedures (permuting the dependent matrix), the significance of each regression while
235 accounting for the influence of other measured variables. Our dependent matrix was derived
236 from association strengths of the edges in the social network (pair-wise values of SRI), so
237 that the analysis asked what factors influenced the strength of social associations within our
238 lizard population. The predictor matrices came from the dyadic genetic relatedness estimates,
239 and from the dyadic expected association networks.

240 We structured our analyses into three components. First we asked, across the entire
241 study social network, what most influenced social association strength among lizards; genetic
242 relationships or spatial relationships. Second, because lizards further apart were less likely to
243 encounter each other and form social contacts, we restricted our analysis to lizards that had
244 home range centres within 200 m of each other (that is, analysing a subset of the dataset used
245 in the first analysis). We called these lizards neighbours, because 200 m is within the distance
246 across a normal home range for this species (Bull and Freake 1999; Kerr and Bull 2006), and
247 asked whether genetic relationships or spatial relationships influenced association strength
248 among all neighbouring lizards. Third, we conducted similar analyses separately for three
249 subgroups of neighbouring lizards, male-male, female-female and male-female dyads. Within
250 neighbouring male-female dyads, we also performed separate analyses for dyads we had
251 previously defined as paired (those with an SRI > 0.1) and for dyads we had previously
252 defined as having formed an extra-pair association ($0 < \text{SRI} < 0.1$), allowing us to distinguish
253 between strong pair bonds, and weaker links among males and females (Leu et al. 2010;
254 Godfrey et al. 2012). These analyses were performed to address specific hypotheses about
255 differences in what influences association strength within different sub-groups, and different
256 behavioural interactions in the population. We performed the analyses using UCINET 6.461
257 (Borgatti et al., 2002) and, in each case, ran 10,000 permutations to assess the significance of
258 the relationships.

259

260 **Results**

261 *All dyads in the social network*

262 Mean values of network edge weight (SRI), distance between home range centres, percentage
263 home range overlap, and relatedness (R) among dyads of the 46 genotyped lizards in the
264 social network are shown in Table 1. The mean relatedness differed significantly among

265 different dyadic groups, with male-male dyads more related than male- female dyads, and
266 with female-female dyads the least related (Fig. 1).

267 Association strength was strongly positively correlated with expected associations
268 (derived from the spatial overlap among dyads), although observed association strength was
269 substantially lower than expected association rates (Fig. 2). Association strength was not
270 significantly influenced by genetic relatedness at this spatial scale (Table 2).

271

272 *Among neighbouring dyads (< 200 m apart)*

273 Most (75%) social network edges (dyads with SRI > 0) occurred between neighbouring
274 lizards that had home range centres less than 200 m apart (Fig. 2). For this subset of dyads,
275 association strength was also positively correlated with expected association rates (Fig. 2,
276 Table 2), although again, observed associations were substantially lower than expected
277 association rates. Note also, that among dyads of neighbouring lizards, 84.6% had very low
278 association strength (SRI < 0.01) and 40.9% never contacted each other (SRI = 0). Close
279 proximity did not necessarily mean strong social association. In these analyses, there was no
280 effect of genetic relatedness on social association strength (Table 2).

281

282 *Neighbouring lizards of the same sex*

283 Among genotyped neighbouring lizards, there were 64 male-male dyads and 48 female-
284 female dyads (Table 1). The mean values of association strength of neighbouring male-male
285 dyads and female-female dyads did not differ significantly (Table 1, mean difference =
286 0.0002, 95% CI = 0 – 0.002, $P = 0.928$). Nor were there spatial differences between these
287 two dyadic groups. For instance mean home range overlap was similar between neighbouring
288 male-male dyads and female-female dyads (Table 1, mean difference = 0.031, 95% CI = 0 –
289 0.055, $P = 0.219$). However, there was a significantly higher mean genetic relatedness

290 between neighbouring males than between neighbouring females (Table 1, mean (absolute)
291 difference = 0.055; 95% CI = 0 – 0.034; $P < 0.001$).

292 Again, social associations were positively correlated (but lower) than expected
293 association rates for both male-male and female-female dyads (Table 3, Fig. 3a). Genetic
294 relatedness had a significant negative effect on male-male social associations, but no
295 significant effect on female-female associations (Table 3). Males had a higher association
296 rate with other neighbouring males when they had lower genetic relatedness (Fig. 3c).

297

298 *Neighbouring lizards of the opposite sex*

299 Among genotyped neighbouring lizards, there were 128 male-female dyads (Table 1).
300 Neighbouring male-female social associations were significantly stronger (mean SRI
301 difference = 0.028, 95% CI = 0.009 – 0.024, $P < 0.001$), and had a significantly higher
302 percentage of home range overlap (mean overlap difference = 18.4%, 95% CI = 14.2 –
303 18.1%, $P = 0.012$) than for other neighbour dyad types (male-male and female-female dyads).
304 However, relatedness among neighbouring male-female dyads was not significantly different
305 from the mean for other neighbour dyad types (mean difference = 0.044, 95% CI = 0.039 –
306 0.055, $P = 0.741$).

307 Social association strength was positively correlated with expected association rates,
308 both overall, and for pairing and extra-pair associations (Table 4, Fig. 4a). Genetic
309 relatedness also had a significant effect on the strength of social association among pairs
310 (with the analysis using home range overlap), and among extra-pair associations (for analyses
311 using either spatial parameter). In each case social association was stronger among less
312 related individuals (Fig. 4b).

313

314 **Discussion**

315 We noted three major results from our study population. The first concerned genetic structure
316 within the population. Among the adult lizards in our social network, there were generally
317 low levels of relatedness, and only a small number of dyads had relatedness values that
318 exceeded 0.25, a level that would indicate close familial relatives. This implies that the social
319 structure among adult lizards was not based on associations of close kin. Rather, the results
320 suggest that dispersal that separates related individuals is the normal strategy in this species.
321 Furthermore, both at the level of the whole study population, and at the level of neighbouring
322 lizards, female-female dyads were significantly less related to each other than were male-
323 male dyads (Table 1). An implication is that related females disperse further from their natal
324 sites and from each other than males. Sex biased dispersal has been widely reported among
325 many animal groups, with a common explanation that inbreeding is avoided if one sex
326 disperses more than the other (Greenwood 1980; Pusey 1987). Our data confirm that most
327 neighbouring males and females that are potential mating partners are only distantly related.

328 Our second result was the strongly significant influence of expected association rates
329 on observed social associations. Our expected association rates were derived from the extent
330 of home range overlap between each dyad, and assumed that lizards moved randomly within
331 their home ranges. Thus, this suggests that a component of lizard interactions can be
332 explained by their spatial ecology. However, even among neighbouring lizards with home
333 range centres less than 200 m apart, or with overlapping home ranges, a proportion of dyads
334 showed very low levels of social association, and observed social association strength was
335 much lower than the expected association rates (Fig. 2). This observation confirms previous
336 analyses from this species showing social structure is characterised by individuals apparently
337 deliberately avoiding contact with some close neighbours (Leu et al. 2010; Godfrey et al.
338 2013).

339 Our third result, and the result that directly addresses the questions we asked in this
340 study, was that genetic relatedness influenced the strength of social associations among
341 neighbouring male-male dyads, and male-female dyads. But, contrary to a kin association
342 hypothesis, the significant results showed a negative effect, with the strongest associations
343 among the least related individuals. Even with the low level of genetic relatedness that we
344 recorded in our study population, close neighbours were more likely to associate if they were
345 less related to each other, and the neighbours that were avoided were the ones that were
346 genetically more related.

347 We considered four possible explanations for this pattern. One is that the lack of
348 association among more related individuals reflects the lack of any general cooperative
349 behaviour in this species. We have never observed cooperative foraging, or collaboration in
350 defending resources in this species, so there would be little opportunity for kin-selection to
351 favour associations of closer relatives, as reported in species which form social aggregations
352 (e.g. Kurvers et al. 2013). And while kin selection may favour higher tolerance of related
353 lizard individuals, for instance by a greater level of overlap of home ranges, this would not
354 necessarily result in more social contacts. A second explanation concerns parasite
355 transmission. We have already shown for this species that gut bacteria are transmitted along
356 social network connections rather than among spatially adjacent individuals (Bull et al.
357 2012). Similarly ectoparasitic ticks are transmitted along network pathways (Leu et al. 2010;
358 Wohlfiel et al. 2013). Thus more socially connected lizards are more likely to transmit
359 parasitic infections among themselves. Other studies have demonstrated that higher genetic
360 variability, particularly at MHC (major histocompatibility complex) loci, confers higher
361 resistance to pathogens (Coltman et al. 1999; Penn 2002; Bonneaud et al. 2006). If infection
362 is influenced by host resistance genotype, then transmission from one host to another is likely
363 to be more successful if host genotypes are similar (Shykoff & Schmid-Hempel 1991). Thus

364 to reduce the risk of infection from parasites that are transmitted along network pathways, it
365 would be advantageous to prefer social contacts with more distantly related individuals.

366 The third explanation comes from our analyses of male-male dyads. Males often
367 interact aggressively with each other (Kerr and Bull 2002; Murray and Bull 2004; Godfrey et
368 al. 2012), so that the social contacts we detected between dyads of males may have been
369 primarily agonistic. Bull (1990) previously suggested that younger males may fight for home
370 range positions and access to females. The inclusive fitness of an individual male may be
371 increased by directing aggressive encounters, and thus stronger social associations, towards
372 less related males. The result for males may be further enhanced by the generally higher
373 levels of relatedness among males, meaning that differentiating between related and unrelated
374 individuals may have more impact on inclusive fitness for males than for females, where
375 relatedness is generally very low.

376 In a fourth explanation, social contact among male – female dyads may be
377 predominantly related to courtship, with a sustained association between monogamous
378 partners that extends over some weeks before mating (Bull 2000). Even within the low levels
379 of relatedness among lizards in the study population, they appeared to associate most often
380 with less related potential partners, a result that confirms previous analysis of inbreeding
381 avoidance in these lizards (Bull and Cooper 1999).

382 Independent of the mechanisms that might explain why there are stronger social
383 interactions among less genetically related lizards, the results suggest a remarkable ability in
384 this species for individual lizards to detect small differences in the degree of relatedness. We
385 have previously suggested that olfactory signals are used by scincid lizards to differentiate
386 among familiar and unfamiliar adult (Bull et al. 1999; 2000) or neonate conspecifics (Main
387 and Bull 1996), and among siblings and non-siblings (Bull et al. 2001). The current result
388 extends those conclusions to suggest that differentiation of the degree of relatedness even

389 among distantly related conspecific lizards can form the basis of a social structure. Wolf and
390 Trillmich (2008) reached a similar conclusion in their study of Galapagos sea lions, where
391 individuals associated more strongly with genetically more similar conspecifics, even with
392 low levels of relatedness among neighbours in a colony.

393 In sleepy lizards, other analyses have shown that this social network structure remains
394 stable across time and across a range of ecological conditions (Godfrey et al., 2013). Here we
395 show that social structures in this lizard population are not random with respect to genetic
396 relatedness, but are based largely on avoidance of genetic relatives, particularly among males
397 and between males and females. We suggest that this might be a more common form of
398 social structure in species where cooperative behaviours are infrequent and where selection
399 favours directing attention away from more related individuals, for instance in acts of
400 aggression or in mating. This represents an alternative social structure to the more commonly
401 reported kin associations in species where individuals are more likely to aggregate.

402

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409

410 **References**

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561 **Figure list**

562 **Figure 1.** Mean genetic relatedness among male-male dyads, male- female dyads, and
563 female-female dyads, for adult lizards in our study area. *P* values correspond to those
564 comparing the differences in means between each pair of groups using a randomisation test
565 with 10,000 permutations.

566

567 **Figure 2.** Relationships between social association strength in the network (SRI) and
568 expected association rates (calculated using the ideal gas model) for neighbouring lizards
569 (dyads < 200 m apart, black symbols) and for dyads > 200 m apart (grey symbols).

570

571 **Figure 3.** Relationships between social association strength in the network (SRI) and (a)
572 expected association rates for neighbouring male-male (black symbols) and female-female
573 (grey symbols) dyads, and (b) relatedness among neighbouring male-male dyads.

574

575 **Figure 4.** Relationships between social association strength in the network (SRI) and (a)
576 expected association rates, and (b) relatedness, for neighbouring male-female dyads. Pairing
577 associations (SRI > 0.1) are represented with grey symbols, and extra-pair associations (SRI
578 < 0.1) are represented with black symbols.

579

580

581 **Table 1.** Summary of mean values of network edge weight, distance between home range centres, home range overlap and relatedness
 582 among dyads of lizards in the social network.

	N	Network edge weight (SRI)		Distance between home range centres (m)		Home range overlap (%)		Relatedness (R)	
		Mean (SE)	Range	Mean (SE)	Range	Mean (SE)	Range	Mean (SE)	Range
All dyads	1035	0.004 (0.001)	0 - 0.495	377.4 (6.7)	0 - 1024.1	4.2 (0.3)	0 - 83.2	0.052 (0.002)	0 - 0.661
<i>Neighbouring dyads</i>									
All dyads	240	0.017 (0.004)	0 - 0.495	131.7 (3.1)	0 - 198.8	16.2 (1.1)	0 - 83.2	0.047 (0.004)	0 - 0.618
Male-male dyads	64	0.004 (0.001)	0 - 0.024	138.7 (5.7)	7.1 - 198.1	14.9 (1.6)	0 - 56.5	0.074 (0.013)	0 - 0.618
Female-female dyads	48	0.004 (0.001)	0 - 0.063	131.9 (6.6)	5.8 - 197.4	11.9 (1.9)	0 - 61.9	0.019 (0.006)	0 - 0.199
Male-female dyads	128	0.028 (0.008)	0 - 0.495	128.2 (4.5)	0 - 198.8	18.4 (1.7)	0 - 83.2	0.044 (0.004)	0 - 0.247

583 **Table 2.** Results of MRQAP analyses of the effects of spatial relationships (expected
 584 associations) and genetic relatedness on social network structure among all lizards, and those
 585 within 200 m of each other.

	All lizards		Within 200 m	
	Regression Coefficient	<i>P</i>	Regression Coefficient	<i>P</i>
Expected associations	0.659	<0.001	0.686	<0.001
Relatedness	-0.002	0.485	-0.012	0.361

586

587

588 **Table 3.** Results of MRQAP analyses of the effects of spatial relationships (expected
589 associations) and relatedness on social network structure among males and among females
590 within 200 m of each other.

	Among males		Among females	
	Regression Coefficient.	<i>P</i>	Regression Coefficient	<i>P</i>
Expected associations	0.570	<0.001	0.387	<0.001
Relatedness	-0.146	0.002	0.005	0.367

591

592

593 **Table 4.** Results of MRQAP analyses of the effects of spatial relationships (expected
 594 associations) and relatedness on social network structure among males and females, and
 595 separately for pair associations and extra-pair associations, for dyads within 200 m of each other.

	Males and females		Among pairs		Extra-pair associations	
	Regression Coefficient	<i>P</i>	Regression Coefficient	<i>P</i>	Regression Coefficient	<i>P</i>
Expected associations	0.743	<0.001	0.278	0.002	0.305	0.001
Relatedness	0.034	0.105	-0.177	0.005	-0.078	0.002

596

597

598

Figure 1

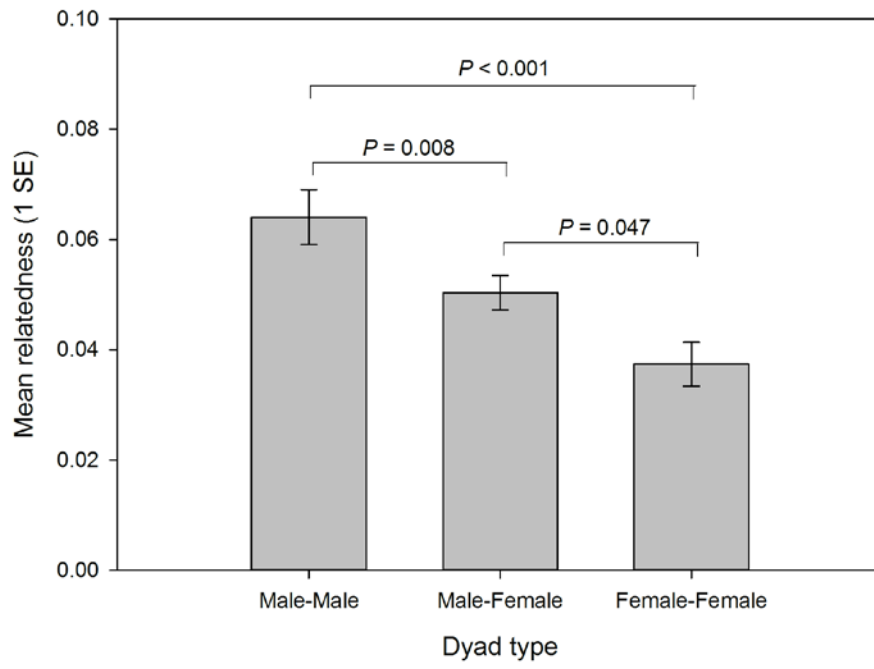


Figure 2

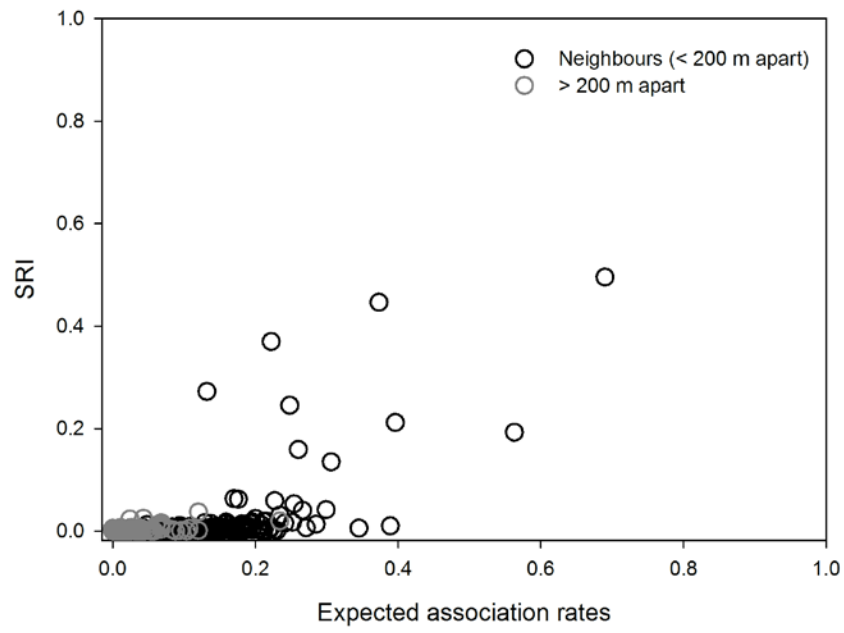


Figure 3

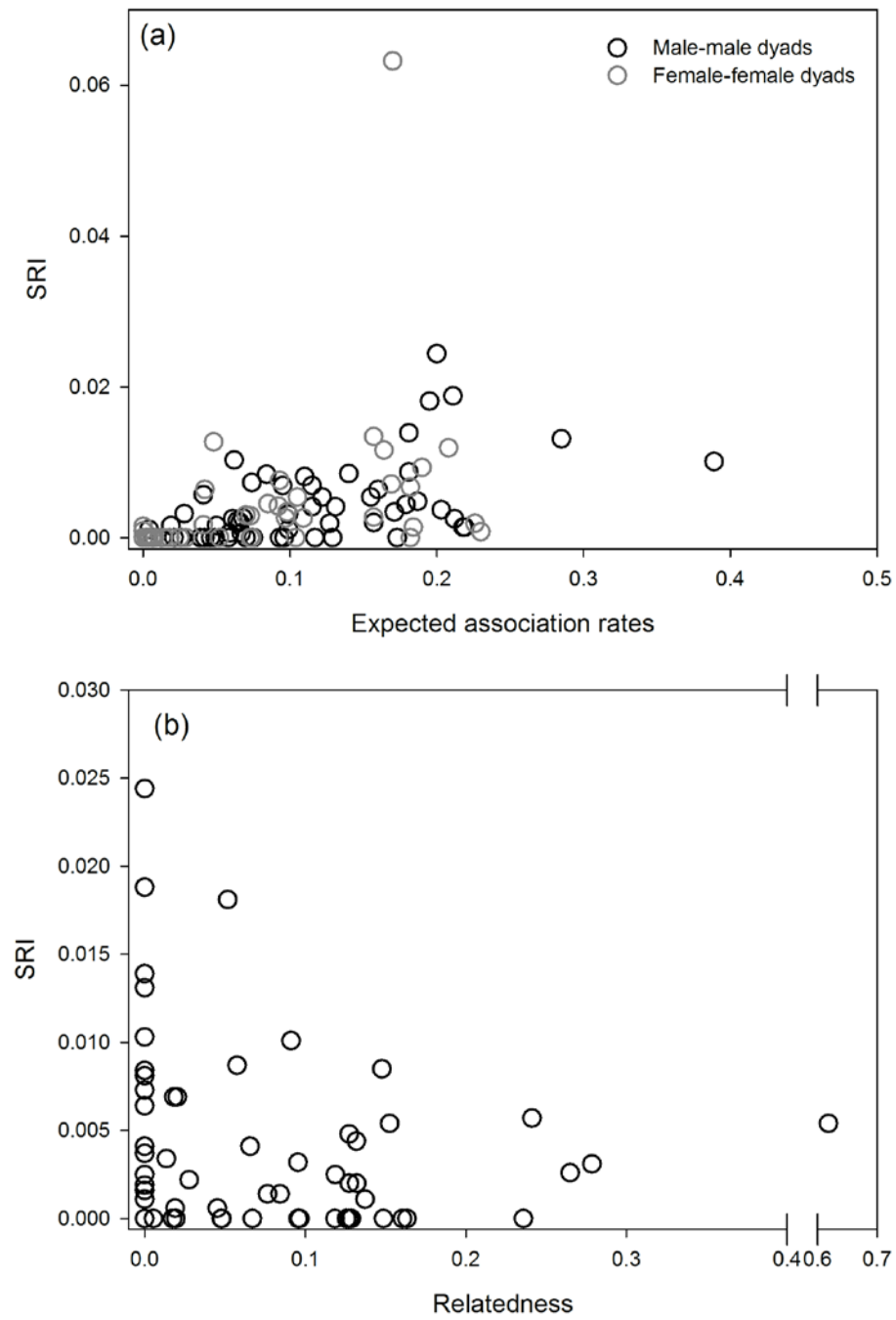


Figure 4

