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Visual neurons in the pigeon brain encode the acceleration of stimulus motion.

Cao P, Gu Y, Wang SR

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NEUROSCIENCE

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The authors present first-time evidence that visual neurons in the avian pretectum encode the acceleration of stimulus motion. Such property, previously postulated in models of smooth pursuit eye movements, has never before been observed in the activities of individual neurons. These acceleration-sensitive cells, which comprise one-third of pretectal neurons, are characterized by plateau-shaped speed-tuning curves and show transient responses to the offset of motion.

Competing interests: None declared

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