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Habitat selection around nest sites by Hen Harriers *Circus cyaneus* in Ireland

Wilson, M.W., Irwin, S., Norriss, D., Newton, S.F.,
Collins, K., Kelly, T.C. & O'Halloran, J.

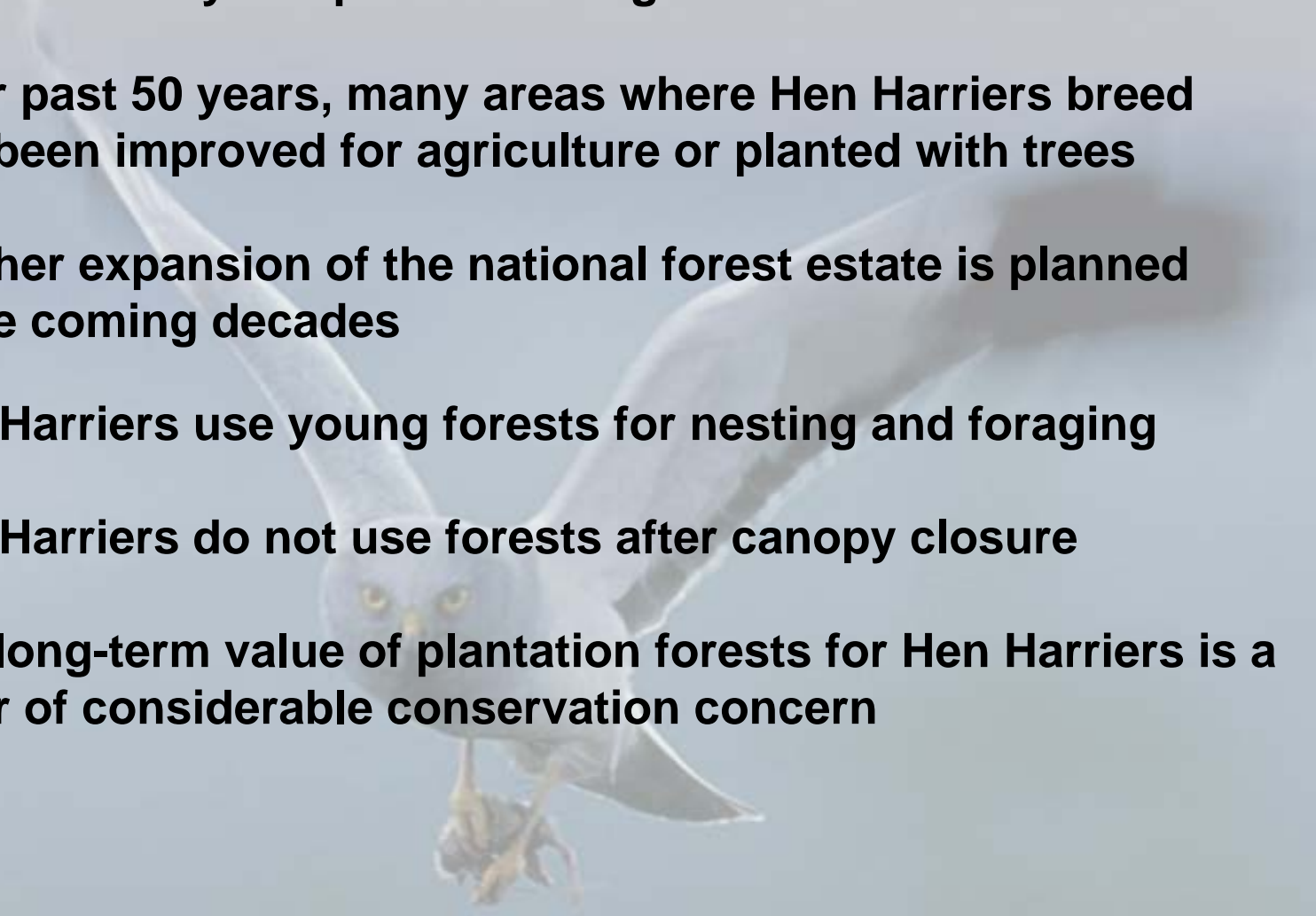




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HEN HARRIERS AND FORESTRY

- **Approximately 140 pairs breeding in Ireland**
- **Over past 50 years, many areas where Hen Harriers breed have been improved for agriculture or planted with trees**
- **Further expansion of the national forest estate is planned for the coming decades**
- **Hen Harriers use young forests for nesting and foraging**
- **Hen Harriers do not use forests after canopy closure**
- **The long-term value of plantation forests for Hen Harriers is a matter of considerable conservation concern**

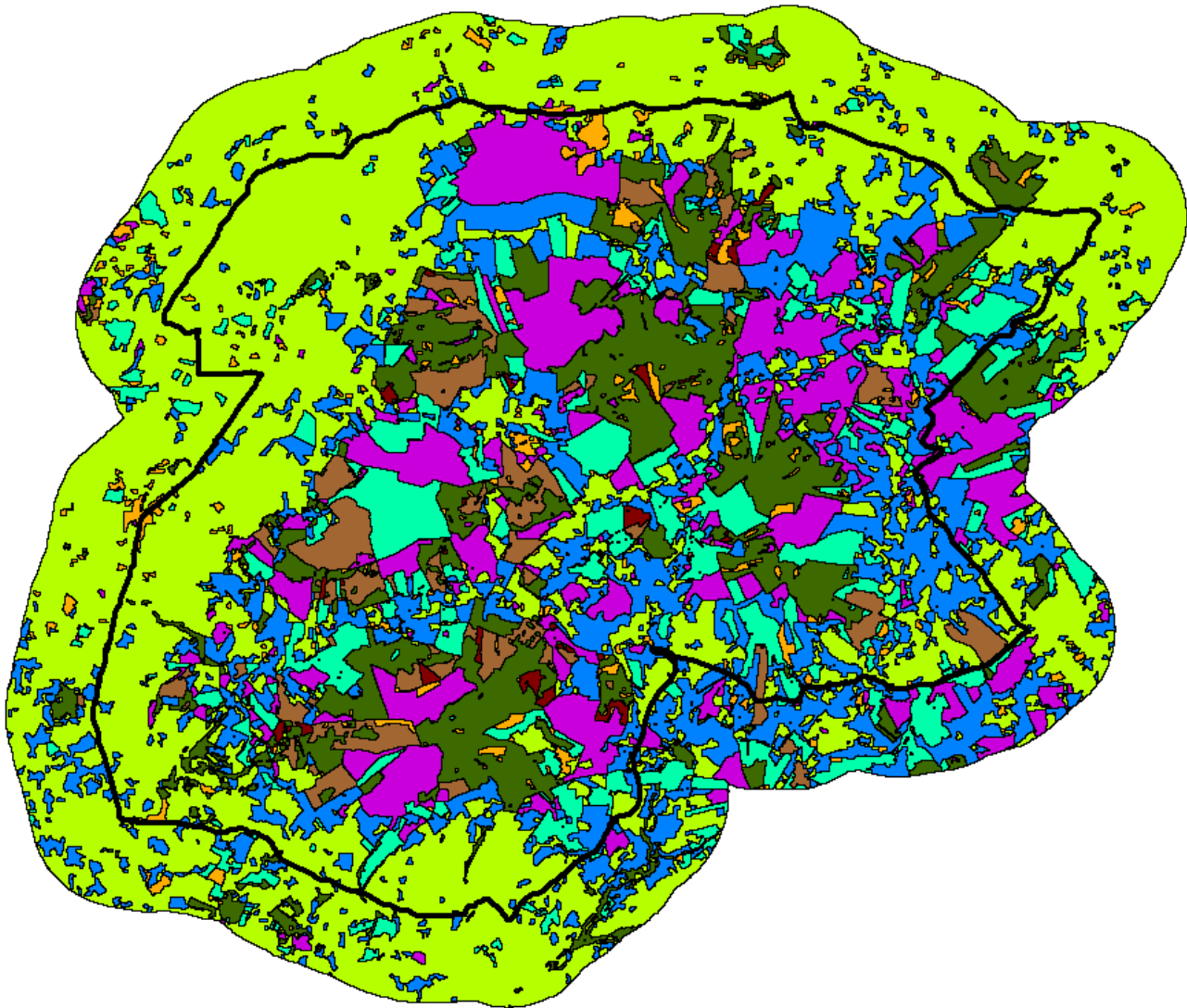


STUDY AIMS

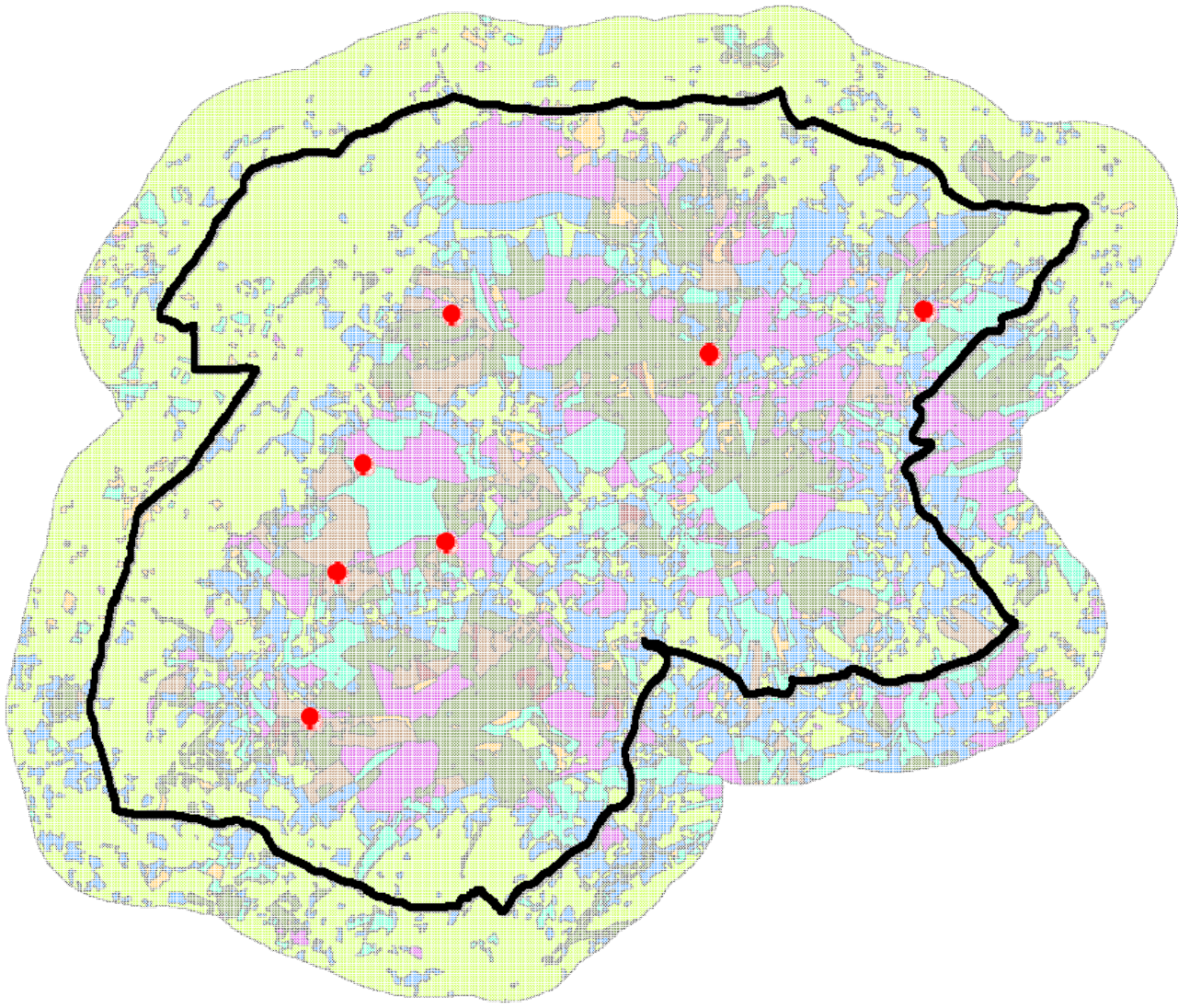
1. To determine how Hen Harrier distribution is related to landcover



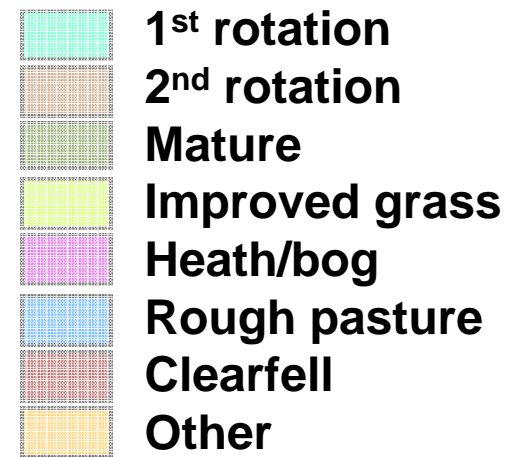
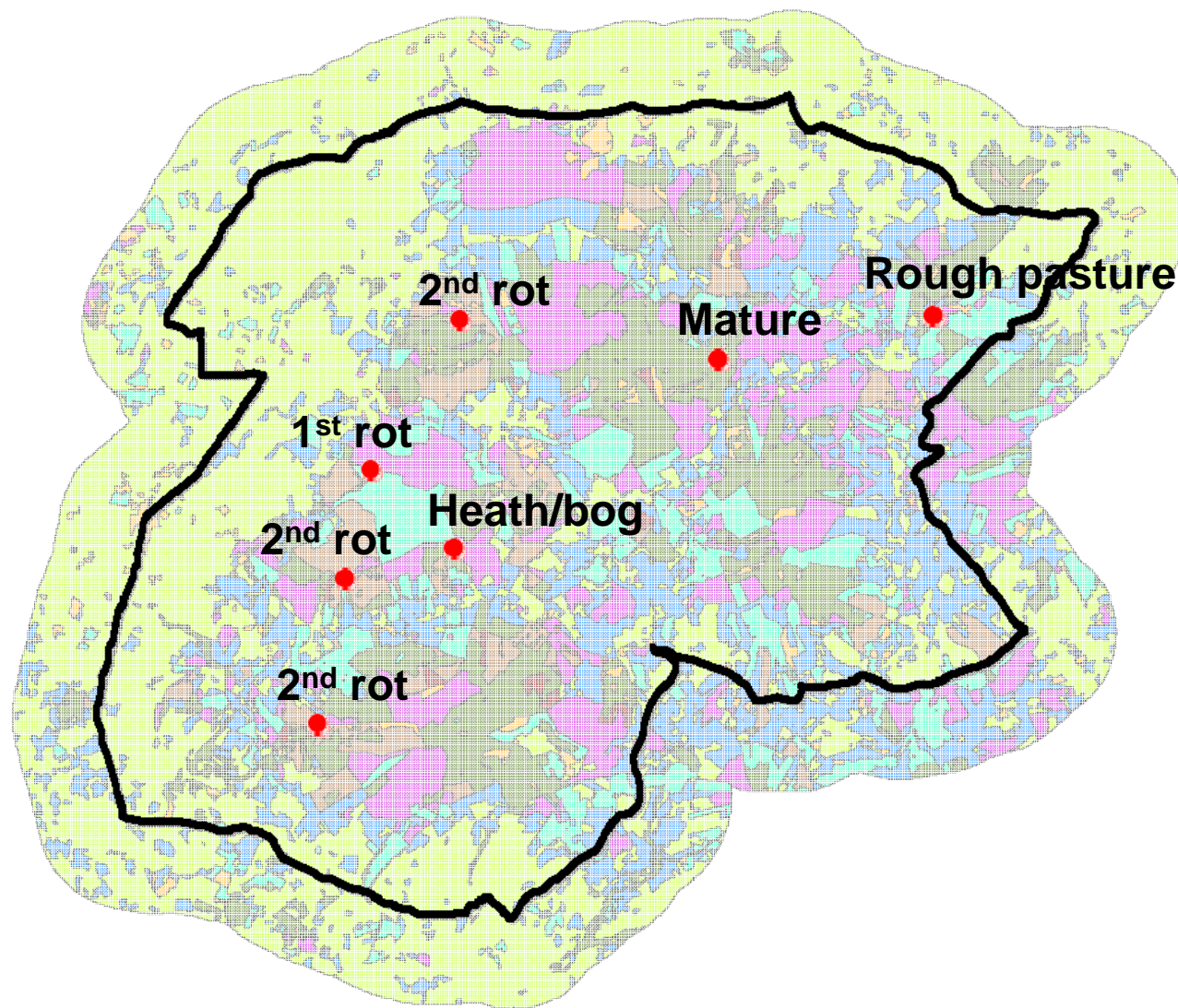
2. To identify whether Hen Harriers avoid landscapes with high percentage cover of improved grassland or closed canopy forest

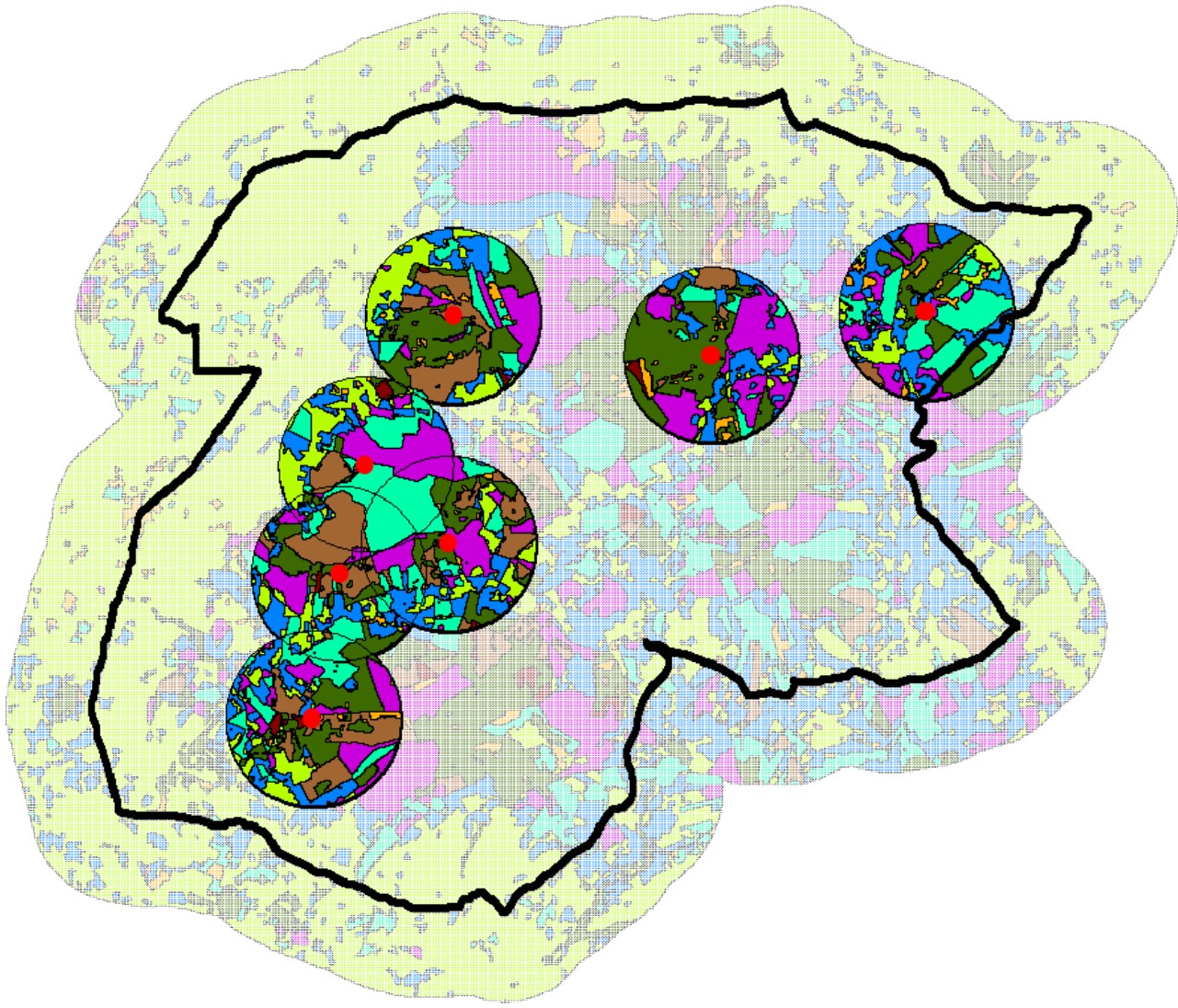


- 1st rotation
- 2nd rotation
- Mature
- Improved grass
- Heath/bog
- Rough pasture
- Clearfell
- Other

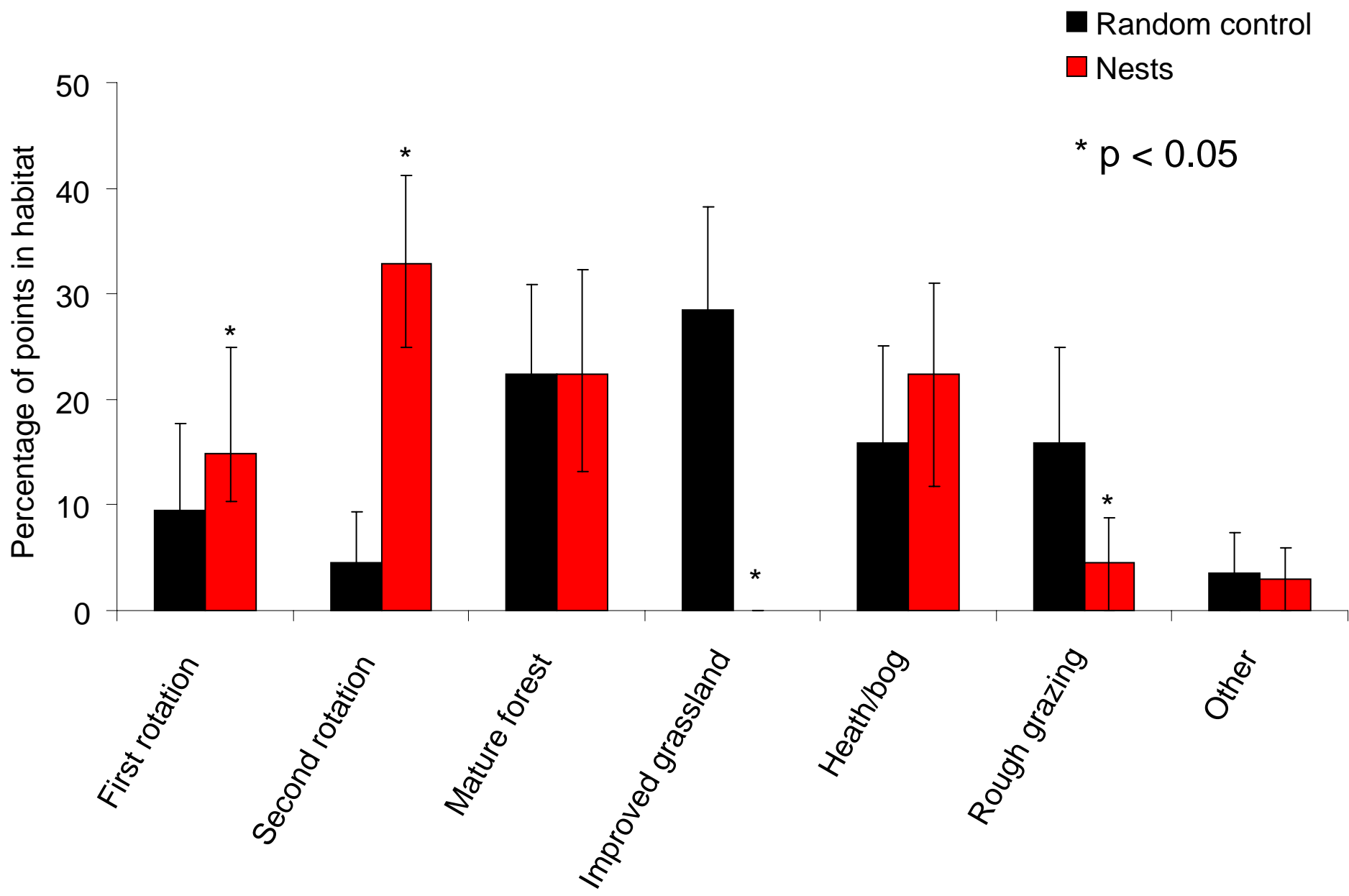


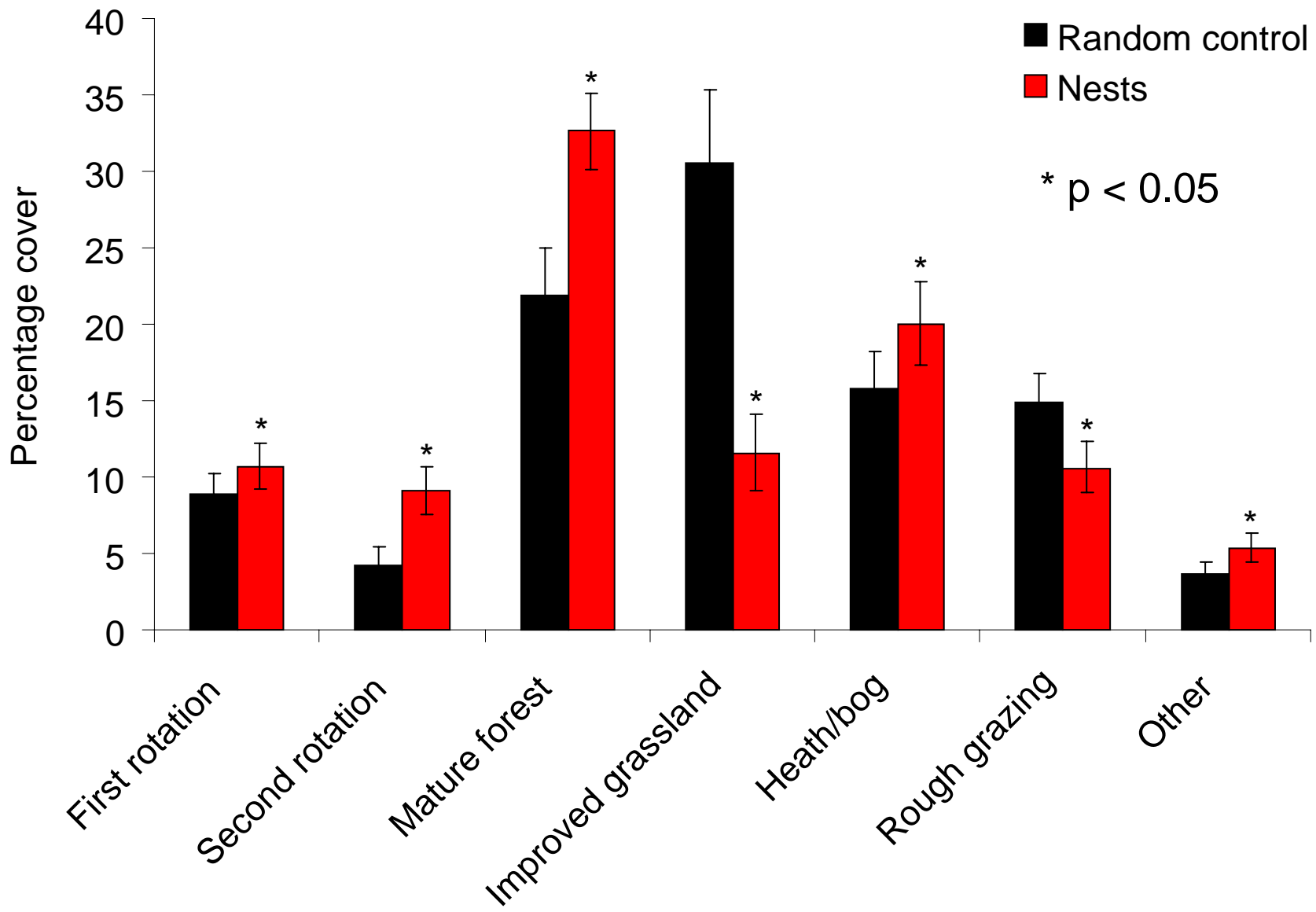
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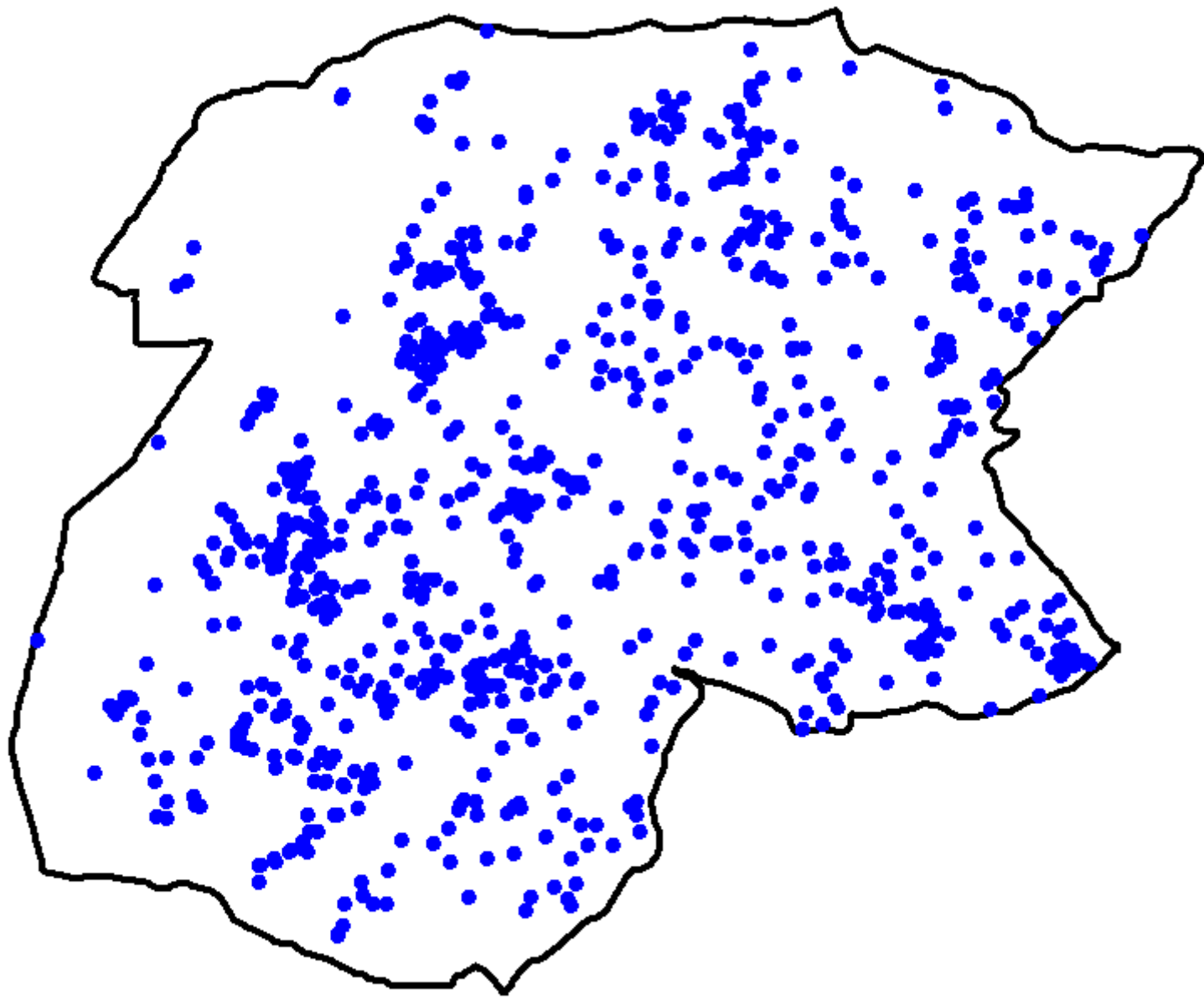


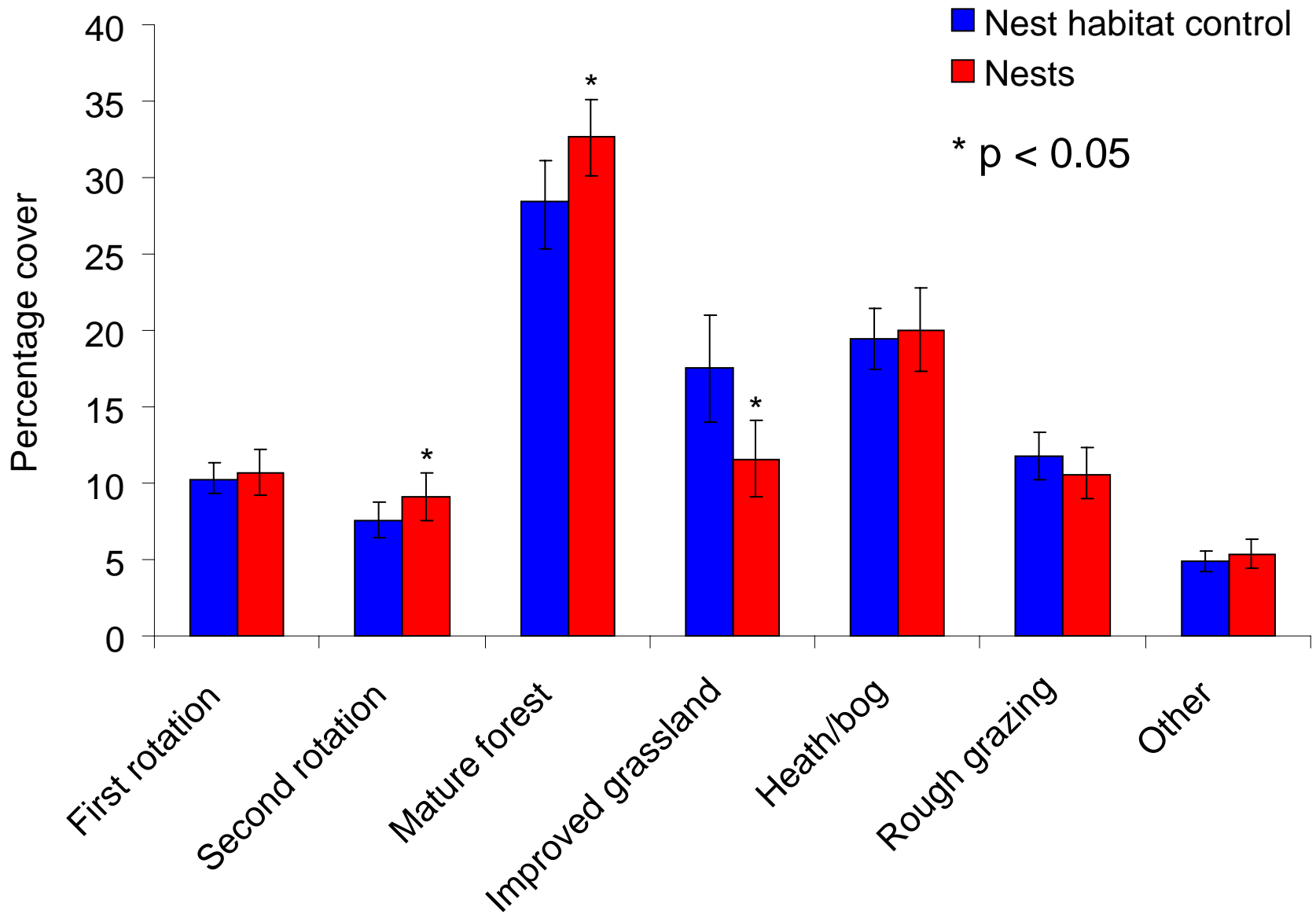


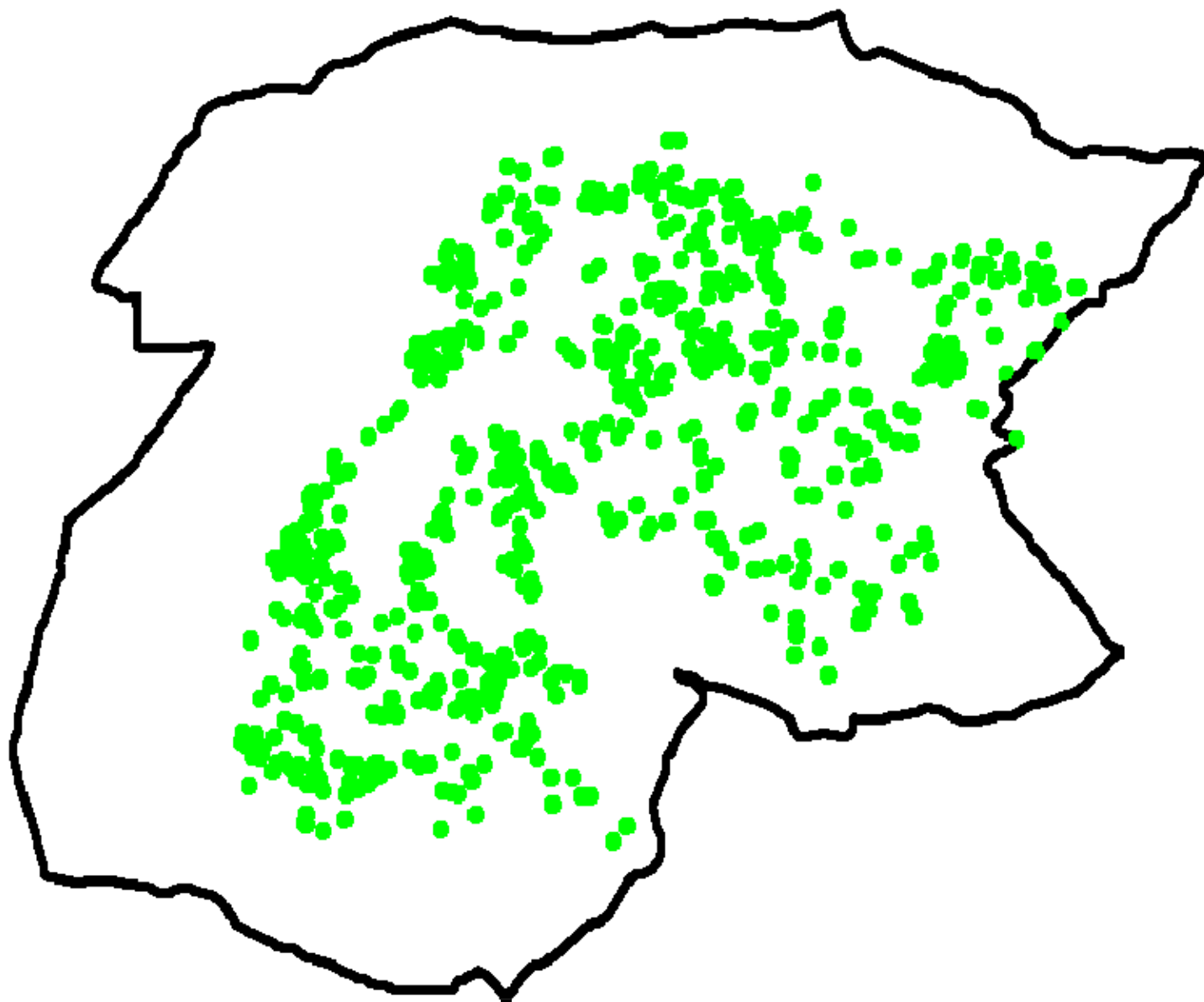
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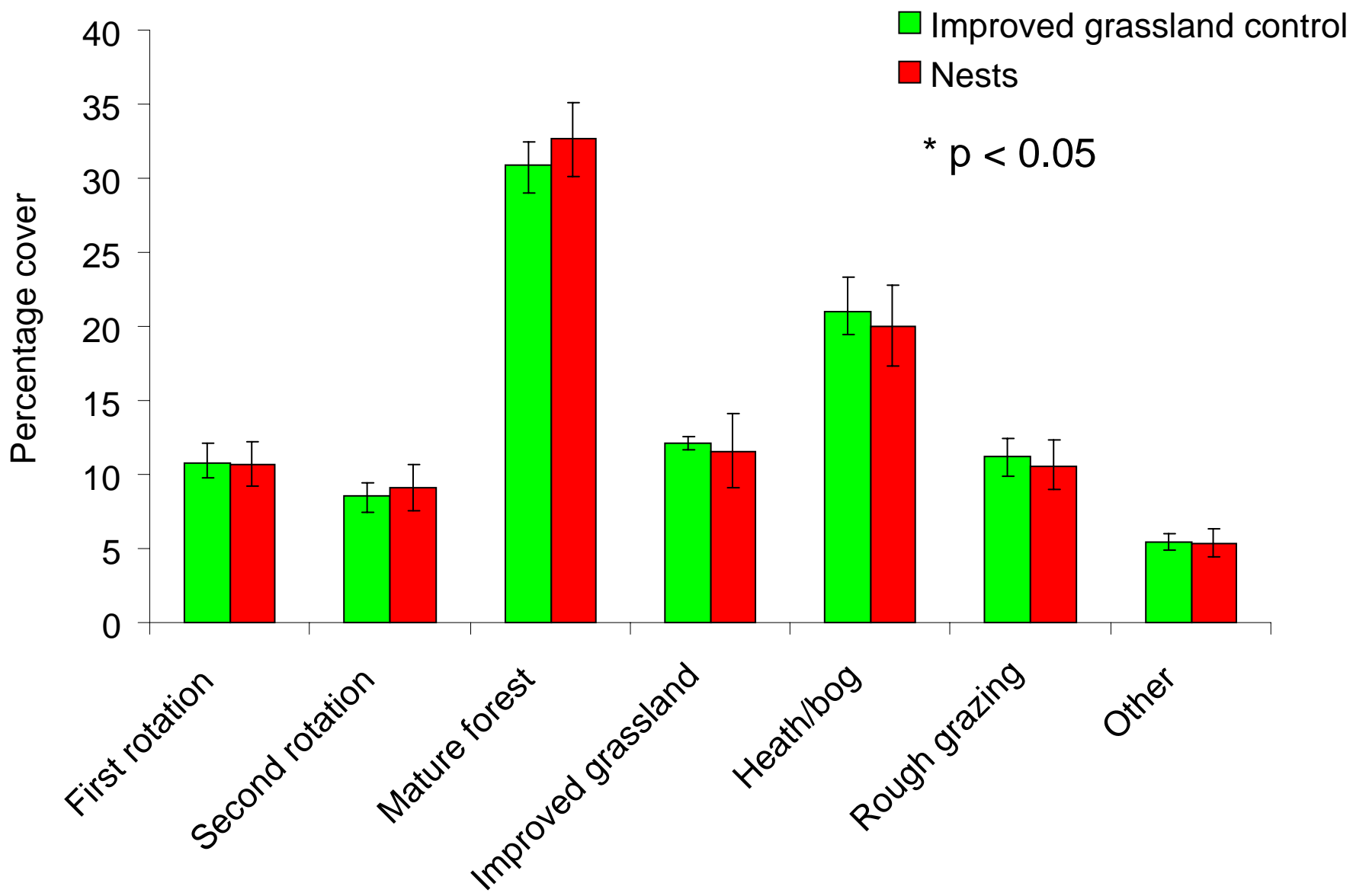














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CONCLUSIONS

- **Hen Harriers clearly avoid intensively managed agricultural land**
 - **No evidence that Hen Harriers avoid forest plantations**
 - **Long-term co-existence with forestry may be possible...**
 - **... but should be cautious about assuming forestry has no negative consequences for Hen Harriers.**
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1. How will changes in forest estate affect Hen Harriers?



2. How does habitat affect breeding productivity?



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