

What This Bird Can Teach Us About Memory

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A tufted titmouse. (Steve Byland / Shutterstock)

The tufted titmouse, a songbird native to the eastern US, has long amazed ornithologists with its ability to remember thousands of locations where it has stashed away seeds for future consumption. Now a team of Columbia neuroscientists led by [Dmitriy Aronov '05SEAS](#) has discovered the secret to the bird's extraordinary powers of recall, finding that it has a specialized brain region for making mental maps of its physical surroundings. The researchers say that their work could one day be used to inform the treatment of neurodegenerative disorders that damage memory, including Alzheimer's disease.



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