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Should I stay or should I go? Light Driven Choice Mechanisms in Flies and Mosquitoes

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ABSTRACT

Different species of animals occupy temporal niches separated by day and night. Light is among the most important cues for time of day behavior which is further enforced by the circadian clock. I will describe the interplay between recently discovered phototransduction systems that operate in central brain neurons that inform insects whether to be active during the day or night. Mechanisms for light driven choices are multilevel, ranging from molecules to neural circuits to animal behavior. This light driven choices allow animals to optimize their success in feeding, reproduction, and avoidance of predation.