



Distinct Inhibitory Spatial Scales Improve Information Transmission in the Retina

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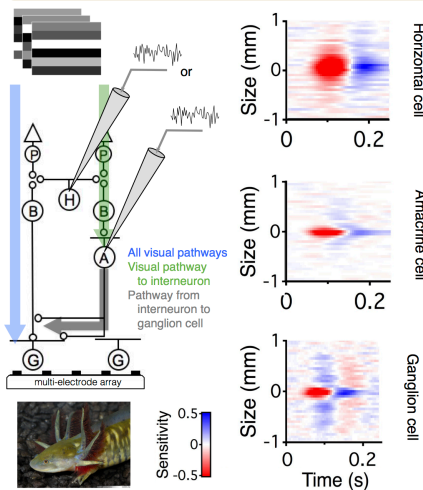


Introduction

The linear – or classical – receptive field is the stimulus dimension encoded with the highest average sensitivity, giving a compact description of the neural code. In ganglion cells, the linear receptive field encodes natural scenes efficiently, maximizing the information transmission given a constraint on the output firing rate. Despite decades of investigation, the spatiotemporal properties of the linear receptive field surround have not been quantitatively assigned to interneurons.

Our experimental results show that horizontal and narrow-field amacrine cells contribute synchronously to the retinal ganglion cell linear receptive field surround, but they do so at different spatial scales. What benefit is there for two interneuron pathways to combine linearly to create the receptive field surround?

Methods



References

- Atick and Redlich, "Towards a Theory of Early Visual Processing", Neural Computation 2: 308-320 (1990).
- Tkacik G et al. "Natural images from the birthplace of the human eye", PLoS ONE 6: e20409 (2011).

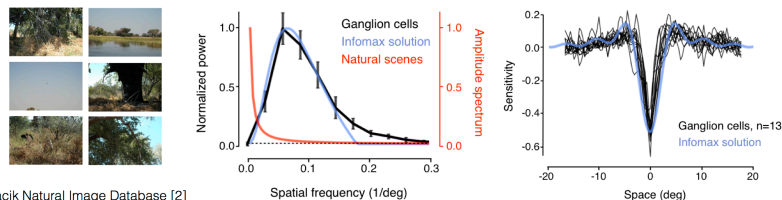
More information



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Efficient coding

Efficient coding solution matches the ganglion receptive field.



Tkacik Natural Image Database [2]

In a linear system

$$r = F(s + N_{\text{input}}) + N_{\text{output}}$$

where the statistics of s are drawn from natural scenes.

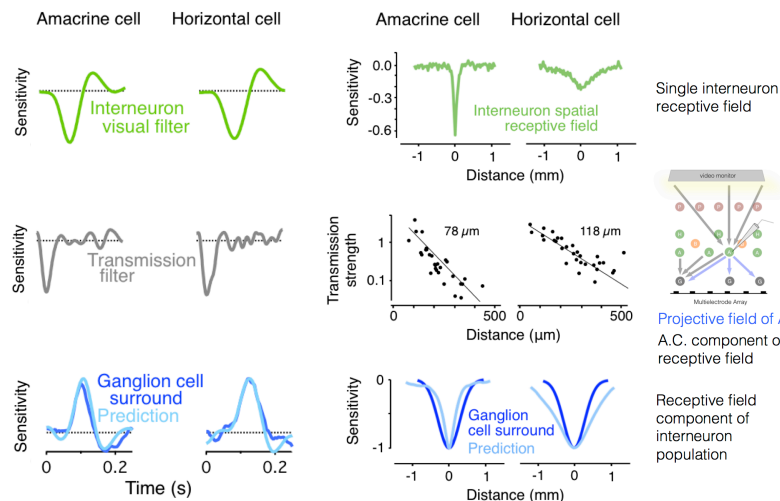
Maximize mutual information

$$I(r; s) = H(r) - H(r|s)$$

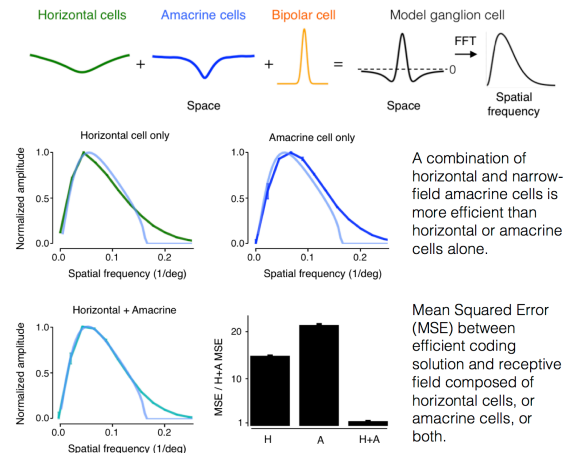
over all possible filters F , while constraining the output variance.

Analytically find the optimal filter as a function of the input power spectrum, input noise variance, and output noise variance. [1]

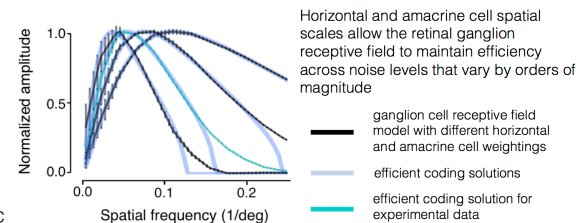
Interneuron Contributions to the Receptive Field Surround



Efficiency of receptive field surrounds composed of one or two interneuron pathways



Flexibility of receptive fields from two interneuron pathways with different scales



Conclusions

- A combination of horizontal and amacrine cells is more efficient than using either cell type alone.
- Two inhibitory pathways with synchronous temporal properties but different spatial scales allow efficient information transmission under a wide range of conditions.

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