

2024_47_DoLS_VS: Same-sex sociosexual behaviour in nonhuman primates: causes and functions

Supervisors: Prof Vincent Savolainen (<mailto:v.savolainen@imperial.ac.uk>); Dr Lindsay Murray, Primate Society of Great Britain

Department: Department of Life Sciences

Same-sex sociosexual behaviour is common in animals and humans, but the biological bases of homosexuality in nature are still poorly understood. Our primary focus is on a colony of 1,700 pedigreed animals that reside freely on the 15-hectare tropical island. Remarkably, a daily census of every animal on the island has been conducted since 1956. Furthermore, all infants undergo an annual trapping process during which they are tattooed for identification and genotyped to establish maternity and paternity. This extensive dataset provides us with invaluable long-term records, making it the most comprehensive demographic and genetic pedigree database of any free-ranging primate population globally. The student will conduct a highly multidisciplinary research project combining fieldwork (3-6 months annually in the Caribbean) with genetic data. There are opportunities for theoretical and analytical work using our extensive long-term data. The students will also be expected to present their work at conferences and outreach events and write-up their findings as high-impact scientific publications. We are looking for a highly motivated students with strong quantitative skills and ideally field experience. For more background information, we invite you to review our latest paper published in Nature Ecology & Evolution, titled 'Same-sex sociosexual behaviour is widespread and heritable in male rhesus macaques.' If you would like to get involved or have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Vincent at v.savolainen@imperial.ac.uk.

For more information on how to apply to us please visit: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/grantham/education>



For more information on how to apply to us please visit: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/grantham/education>