



Soulmates Within Primates

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Soulmates = Pair bonding

- Less than 5% of mammals are quote on quote soulmates, or what is known properly as pair bonding.
- This can be seen when overserving the Titi monkeys, Owl monkeys, Gibbons and sometimes Tamarins and Marmosets. Observations of the species have shown that the primates will choose a partner and pair with them for life, learning to depend on one another which helps to increase their chances of survival and maybe also for the simplicity of companionship.
- This specific focus of observation and study of the relationship between two bonded primates of the titi monkeys, owl monkeys, and the gibbons is something that needs much more research in order to be able to dive into the detail of what this bond entails and how it affects their lifestyle and daily interactions. The fact that there is a very limited number of animals that bond in comparison to the number that do not provides an interest in research focus. It's important to understand why these selected primates choose to bond and live a life that is different from other species of primate.



Fig 1: Titi Monkeys (credit: <https://theethogram.com/2017/12/12/creature-feature-titi-monkeys/>)

Pair bonding?

- Pair-bonding is when one individual chooses another to be in a monogamous relationship from the time of mating maturity till their end of their natural lifespan.
- This act of pair-bonding is seen as unusual within the primate world considering that many species of primates either consist of individual isolation until mating season and then back into seclusion, or bigger groups with the tendency or there to be one dominant male or sometimes females and the rest are there for breeding purposes being completely non monogamous, many in fact will practice polyamory.



Fig 2: Owl Monkeys (<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/article/130213-valentines-day-owl-monkeys-animals-love-science>)

Pair Bonding within Primates

- This way of life also includes some unique behavior like Duetting, which is one of the most active and complex ways of vocalizations within Primates!
- In the paper *Effects of Pair-Bond and Social Context on Male-Female Interactions in Captive Titi Monkeys*, it talks about the study, where they observed the titi monkeys that pair bond and seen how they would act toward other titi monkeys that they did not know compared to their pair bond that they knew. This is important to the study of pair-bonding because it shows how deep that connection between the two monkeys that are bonded goes. In their study they found that the way that titi monkeys would interact with one another before bonding was very interesting in the fact that the males would be more aggressive toward the same sex in an attempt to make themselves look more desirable toward the opposite sex and would be more highly aroused than the females (Duque, 2000, p.4).
- (Duque, 2000), observed acts of bonding like grooming, tail twining (where the titi monkeys will intertwine their tails, mom dad, and babies and cuddle like this), following and foraging together that did not die down after the birth of the offspring like it does in most primates. Gibbons differ in the fact that they do not intertwine their tails, but instead, according to (Arthur Palombit, 1996) in the paper *Pair bonds and monogamy in wild siamang (Hylobates syndactylus) and white-handed gibbon (Hylobates lar) in northern Sumatra*, they will perform an act called embrace which is essentially a hug, and also will perform agonistic gestures of opening their mouth and smacking lips at each other (pg.220).
- Owl monkeys are big proponents of grooming like the rest but will actually base the happiness of the female by the rate of which the male provides allow-grooming to the female and family as mentioned by (Wolovich, 2018)

Future research!!!

Given everything that has been stated and all that is known of pair bonding, there is still a lot to be gathered and studied. A deep dive into a conclusive report on all the pair-bonding primates and how they vary and how they are similar, and all the ins and outs is needed. From studying the young pair bonded to the oldest, to finding out what happens when one does not bond and how that primates' life looks compared to the others and to see what benefits are granted to those who bond and what negatives are also associated with is something much needed for this specific field of interest. This research would indeed take a lot of work over the course of years in order to be able to study each primate with enough time and also to collect data from other primates that are not so well known for theory of monogamy and also the ones that do not practice monogamy for comparison reasons. Even though all this will be needed, the outcome and statistics collected would be priceless and will provide one conclusion piece of work in order to study it all!



Fig 3: Owl Monkeys (<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2354278-male-and-female-gibbons-sing-duets-in-time-with-each-other>)

Thank you all for the wonderful time here at Cal Poly Humboldt and for the experiences and opportunities given to me and my fellow peers throughout the years. The future is bright and the hope to conduct research in this field is high. Thank you to all the amazing professors for all the wisdom and continuous support. Here to the class of 2023!

Sources

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