**The evolution of social relationships: lessons from macaques**

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In a wide range of group-living species, individuals form social relationships that can help them cope with the social and ecological challenges they are facing. A growing number of studies show that socially connected individuals tend to live longer and/or have more offspring. A crucial outstanding question is what mechanism(s) link sociality to these fitness benefits. Importantly, different group members might be ideal partners under different circumstances, and different types of sociality might be beneficial to deal with different socio-ecological challenges. In this talk, I will present research looking into these two questions. I will first talk about the impact of kinship and competence in social bond partner choice in wild Assamese macaques. Next, I will introduce my current project, where I take a comparative approach across macaque species, looking at the socio-ecological drivers of variation in social structure. By exploring these questions, we can gain a better understanding of the underlying mecha- nisms generating fitness benefits, which in turn will allow us to derive informed predictions about the specific type of sociality that will be selected for in a given environment.