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SÉMINAIRE

Male violence and sexual intimidation in wild chacma baboons

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Sexual intimidation is frequent in humans, but its evolutionary origin remain speculative because few animal studies have investigated comparable, long-term forms of sexual violence. In our study, we focused on a population of wild chacma baboons and showed that males intimidate females to mate with them, and that sexual violence is the main source of injuries for females. Aggression and matings were found to be decoupled temporally, which may explain why some forms of sexual violence have been largely overlooked in well-studied animal populations. This study suggests that long-term sexual coercion may be widespread across mammalian societies, with important implications for understanding the evolution of mate choice and sexual conflict in mammals, as well as the origins of human sexual violence.