

From consensus to discovery: A new era of primate culture research

Thursday 2nd, 2:30 to 4:30pm

Speakers:

Claudio Tennie

Elisa Bandini

Dietrich Stout

Oscar Node-Langlois

Cathy Crockford

Roman Wittig

Mathieu Malherbe

Erica van de Waal

Caroline Schuppli

Edwin van Leeuwen

Erin Wessling

Overview:

This symposium consolidates current research on primate culture (variants of social learning and their products), both to understand the behavioural and socioecology of primates, and as a way to study human cognitive evolution.

Part I reviews the field's development, showing that many primates exhibit diverse social-learning abilities and stable traditions, while debates now focus on the specific mechanisms of social learning, and the 'depth' of culture that social learning can produce. Understanding these mechanisms is key to tracing the origins of human cultural capacity and identifying vital learned skills for wild survival.

Part II highlights cutting-edge methods that expose hidden cultural dimensions, revealing how culture shapes daily behavior, informs ecological theory, and guides conservation efforts.

Together, the sessions map a forward-looking agenda linking theory and empirical data, with practical implications for conservation and fruitful connections with human evolution.

Organizers: Claudio Tennie, Roman Wittig, Cathy Crockford, Elliot Howard-Spink, Lara Zanutto