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**“Coalition formation in male Assamese macaques”**

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It has been shown in philopatric female baboons and male chimpanzees that cooperation and strong social bonds directly influence reproductive success. The formation of agonistic coalitions against other males, however, is also widespread among dispersing male baboons and macaques. In this study we link sociality to fitness outcomes in male macaques that cannot rely on same sex kin as social and cooperation partners. We present data on Assamese macaques (*Macaca assamensis*) from their natural habitat in Phu Khieo Wildlife Sanctuary, Thailand from October 2006 to January 2008. A fraction of males formed strong bonds with special partners characterized by above average association and grooming. The stronger the bond the more often the two partners formed a coalition against other males. The strength of the bond as well as the number of coalitions was poorly related to his current dominance rank. Instead, a males' sociality and coalitionary activity predicted his future dominance success, which in turn was a strong predictor of a male's fitness.

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