

Study: Animals can make plans

Ape stashed rocks to hurl at zoo visitors

BY MALIN RISING
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

STOCKHOLM — A canny chimpanzee who calmly collected a stash of rocks and then hurled them at zoo visitors in fits of rage has confirmed that apes can plan ahead just like humans, a Swedish study said Monday.

Santino the chimpanzee's anti-social behavior stunned both visitors and keepers at the Furuviik Zoo but fascinated researchers because it was so carefully prepared.

According to a report in the journal *Current Biology*, the 31-year-old alpha male started building his weapons cache in the morning before the zoo opened, collecting rocks and knocking out disks from concrete boulders inside his enclosure. He waited until around midday before he unleashed a "hailstorm" of rocks against visitors, the study said.

"These observations convincingly show that our fellow apes do consider the future in a very complex way," said the author of the report, Lund University Ph.D. student Mathias Osvath. "It implies that they have a highly developed consciousness, including lifelike mental simulations of potential events."

Osvath's findings were



The Associated Press file

Santino, a chimpanzee at the Furuviik Zoo in Sweden, often gathered rocks in a cache that he could then retrieve to hurl at zoo visitors, a study found.

based on his own observations of Santino and interviews with three senior caretakers who had followed the chimpanzee's behavior for 10 years at the zoo in Furuviik, about 93 miles north of Stockholm.

Seemingly at ease with his position as leader of the group, Santino didn't attack the other chimpanzees, Osvath told *The Associated Press*. The attacks were only directed at humans viewing the apes across the moat surrounding the island compound where they were held.

However, he rarely hit visitors because of his poor aim, and no one was seriously injured in the cases when he did, Osvath said.

chimpanzees so the observation might not mean all chimpanzees are capable of the same planning.

"It could be that he is a genius, only more research will tell. On the other hand our research showed the same in orangutans and bonobos so he is not alone," Call said.

Osvath said the chimpanzee had also been observed tapping on concrete boulders in the park to identify weak parts and then knocking out a piece. If it was too big for throwing, he broke it into smaller pieces, before adding them to his arsenal.

"It is very special that he first realizes that he can make these and then plans on how to use them," Osvath said. "This is more complex than what has been showed before."

The fact that the ape stayed calm while preparing his weapons but used them when he was extremely agitated proves that the planning behavior was not based on an immediate emotional drive, Osvath said.

For a while, zoo keepers tried locking Santino up in the morning so he couldn't collect ammunition for his assaults, but he remained aggressive.

They ultimately decided to castrate him in the autumn last year, but will have to wait until the summer to see if that helps. The chimpanzees are only kept outdoors between April and October and Santino's special behavior usually occurs in June and July.

HOROSCOPES BY HOLIDAY MATHIS

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Romance and love are not necessarily intertwined. You'll feel so alive when you court your inner sense of romance by appreciating the beauty, art, poetry and sensual wonders around you.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You can't make anyone else change, but you can change something about yourself. Think small and temporary -- the extreme measures won't stick anyway.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You've been vigilant in an endeavor, though today it feels difficult to keep up the fight. Be kind to yourself. Find the no-stress route. Instead of taking on the world, go with the flow.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You are trying to make sense of a part of the world

Today's birthday

Though this year holds an abundance of joyful interactions with the world, you will also have bouts of peaceful isolation in which you become powerfully connected to the energy of the universe. Your lucky numbers are: 5, 2, 11, 49 and 17.

that is new to you. There is much to learn here, but don't ask questions aloud..

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). In case you need a reminder of your own intelligence, you will get it this afternoon. It will build your confidence to recognize that the way you think is unique.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You know what you want and you go for it. When you are not offered a role in someone's life you may take it upon yourself to steal the part.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). There comes a time to stop thinking. You'll notice your thoughts aren't helping you out, and in fact, they are keeping you from being decisive and confident.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). It feels like you are not going anywhere; rather, like the tide you keep moving back and forth. While your motion is constant, it never truly repeats itself.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You'll wonder whether a new endeavor is worth the effort. If it involves giving your time, talent and energy to others, it's

worthwhile.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You are a leader, but you don't want others to copy you exactly. You might feel as though someone is honing in on your territory or ripping off your personal style. Imitation is flattery -- it really is.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Going beyond the call is your aim now. You do what you have to do to excel. Try to remember that others might not feel the same drive as you.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Transitions can be difficult if they are being forced to happen at a different rate than what would naturally occur. You're in the middle of a change and would be wise to give it all the time it needs to unfold.

FOR YOUR HEALTH

Get informed about colorectal cancer

BY CHAINARONG LIMVARAPUSS, M.D.

Some of you may remember when newswoman Katie Couric had a colonoscopy on camera as a way to raise awareness after her husband died of colon cancer. But despite her efforts, colorectal cancer has still managed to keep a fairly low profile.

Screening for colorectal cancer

Screening for colorectal cancer is more cumbersome than procedures like mammographies and Pap tests. But even so, because the symptoms of colorectal cancer usually appear in the later stages, it's imperative that those most at risk get a colonoscopy at or immediately after the age of 50.

Who is considered at risk?

Once you celebrate your 50th birthday, you've moved into the higher-risk group for colorectal cancer and you should be screened every five to 10 years thereafter. Early screening is also suggested for those who have a family history, starting at an age that is 10 years before how old the relative was when diagnosed.

Are there symptoms to watch for?

Rectal bleeding, abdominal discomfort, lack of appetite, nonspecific bloating and anemia can all be symptoms of colorectal cancer. Those who are diagnosed based on symptoms, rather than through screening, are usually at least stage 3, but can even be stage 4. However the news is not all bad because stage 2 cure rates are about 80 percent and nearly half of those who reach stage 3 will survive with appropriate treatment.

How is colon cancer treated?

Surgery is usually how treatment begins, with removal of the primary tumor. Chemotherapy is usually prescribed, depending on the reoccurrence risk; it's necessary for stage 3 and 4 patients. Many but not all stage 2 patients who have

approximately 75-percent chance of being cured without chemotherapy do require treatment to raise their cure rate to 87 percent.

Relays for life celebrate survivors

Raising awareness about cancer and funds for research are the main goals of the Relay for Life, but it's also a forum to celebrate surviving cancer. The opening ceremony of the event honors cancer survivors and features an inspirational survivors' lap. For the next 24 hours, each participating team must have at least one member walking at all times, to denote the fact that cancer never sleeps.

The Vallejo Relay for Life will kick off at 9 a.m. on Aug. 1 at the St. Patrick/St. Vincent High School. Physicians and staff from the Sutter Solano Cancer Center, one of the event sponsors, will be on hand to provide cancer information.

Benicia will host its inaugural Relay for Life on May 30 at Benicia High School. Like the Vallejo event, it will run from 9 a.m. to 9 a.m. the following day. Both events will also feature activities, entertainment, refreshments, raffles and more.

The fund-raising aspect of the events occurs when the teams collect pledges from their sponsors, to be donated to the American Cancer Society. Team registration is available at relayforlife.org.

Learn more about colorectal cancer

Sutter Solano Medical Center will host a community lecture on prevention strategies, risk factors and colorectal cancer treatments. The event will be held in late March. Watch for more details in your local newspaper.

Chainarong Limvarapuss, M.D., board-certified medical oncologist and hematologist affiliated with Sutter Solano Medical Center, a member of the Solano Coalition for Better Health.

ANNIE'S MAILBOX

My social life vanished when I broke up with my boyfriend and I'm miserable

Dear Annie: I am a 17-year-old senior in high school. My boyfriend and I had been together for two years, but I broke it off a few months ago because I wasn't happy. However, I didn't realize I wouldn't find anyone new.

I am busy with extracurricular activities during the week, but every Friday and Saturday night I find myself sitting at home crying. I have looked into volunteering, but I'm not good with children or seniors. I don't know what to do, and all the stress about my social situation is ruining my life. Please help. — Miserable Girl

Dear Miserable: We know this is depressing, but it's not the end of the world. A lot of high-school seniors are sitting at home on a Saturday night. The first thing you have to do is stop feeling sorry for yourself. You wanted the breakup and you were probably right. Now you must find something that brings you a sense of satisfaction.

Surely you have interests other than boys. Find some unattached friends and go

out together. Sign up for a community theater production that will involve lots of weekends. Take a college-level class online. Tutor high-school freshmen. You also can volunteer at your local hospital, library or church, or with an environmental or community organization. Check out Youth Service America (servenet.org) for more opportunities, and you'll be too busy to focus on Friday nights.

Dear Annie: I consider myself a good Christian and try to instill strong moral beliefs in my 11-year-old son. Two weeks ago, I picked up my mail and was furious to see a subscription advertisement for *Playboy* with a nearly naked woman on it.

These people have no right sending this type of trash to my address. What if my son had picked up the mail? I am really careful who I give my name and address to, and can only think the sports magazine I subscribed to this morning is the source of this mailing. What can I do? — Boiling Mad in Indiana

Dear Indiana: If you believe this came through your sports magazine subscription, go to their online site and see if they have a mailing preference section that will enable you to stop receiving offers from marketing partners. You also can contact the Direct Marketing Association (dma-choice.org) at 1120 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036-6700, and ask that your name be removed from these lists. It may take awhile, however, so in the meantime, start thinking about how to discuss such issues with your son. Your mailbox isn't the only place where he will come into contact with pictures like these.

Dear Annie: I feel compelled to weigh in on the vast number of letters from men who aren't getting enough sex. I love my wife of eight years, but about four years ago she went through menopause and her whole outlook on our physical relationship changed.

She now is satisfied with two quick kisses per day, one in the morning and one at night. She no longer

dresses up or wants to go out. She works three days a week, but I do all the laundry and shopping. Any sexual contact is initiated by me and is just another chore for her. She refuses to see a doctor or counselor and says I should get a girlfriend.

I love my wife, but there must be touching, caressing, holding and, yes, even sex to maintain the emotions I need for a good marriage. I am torn between divorce, adultery or lifelessness. Thank you for allowing me to put my feelings on paper. It seems there are a lot of us with the same problem. — Lonely at Home

Dear Lonely: We're sorry to say there are indeed a lot of men -- and women -- whose spouses neglect intimacy. Show your wife this letter and ask her to work on it with you. We hope she values her marriage enough to do so.

Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, P.O. Box 118190, Chicago, IL 60611.

Warning: Don't wear medical patches during an MRI

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Need an MRI scan? Tell the doctor if you use a nicotine patch or any other medication patch -- or you'll risk a burn during the MRI.

Patches that ooze medication slowly through the skin are becoming more popular, from over-the-counter nicotine patches to prescription patches that deliver estrogen, pain medication, Alzheimer's or Parkinson's drugs, even an anti-nausea drug for chemotherapy recipients.

But the Food and Drug Administration just discovered that some are missing a key safety warning about MRI compatibility.

More than a quarter of the 60 different drug patches sold contain traces of aluminum or other metals in their backing, the part that makes them stick to the skin, estimated Dr. Sandra Kweder, the FDA's deputy drug director.

You can't see the metal; the patch even may appear completely clear.

But affected patches contain just enough metal to conduct electricity, meaning a patch worn during an MRI scan can overheat and cause a skin burn similar to a bad sunburn.

The FDA recently learned of a few patients who suffered patch burns, none severe.

In January, tracking the source of one burn, officials found that Teva Pharmaceuticals' fentanyl painkiller patch lacked the MRI warning.

The FDA then found a variety of other drug patches also lacked the warning.

On Thursday, the FDA issued a public health advisory: Tell your doctor about any medication patches, so the professional can decide which should be removed before an MRI, how soon before the scan, and when it can be reapplied.

"If there's any uncertainty, just don't wear it in the machine," Kweder said.

As for patch makers, FDA is reviewing every product's label to be sure ones that are supposed to carry the safety warning do. Some may be missing because a patch was reformulated to add metal after its label was written; other times FDA acknowledged it just didn't ensure the warning was present in the first place.

Now the agency is considering having an MRI warning somehow be put on the individual patch, not just the box it comes in.