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# TRAVEL MAKES CHIMPS MORE EFFICIENT TOOL USERS

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Chimpanzees who travel are more frequent tool users, indicating that travelling may have played an important role in the acquisition of early technological innovations by humans, say researchers.

"Our results show that travel fosters tool use in wild chimpanzees and it may also have been a driving force in early technological evolution by humans," said Thibaud Gruber from University of Geneva.

In an experiment, scientists found that a wild chimpanzee from the Budongo Forest in Uganda burned up a lot of energy travelling, which he learned to replenish with a dose of honey.

However, another chimpanzee made less of an effort to roam and did not acquire the skills needed to enjoy this high-energy treat.

This pattern was repeated in other members of the study group over seven years of observation, according to the study published in the journal eLife.

The team studied 70 individuals of the Sonso community of chimpanzees, *Pan troglodytes schweinfurthii*, known for its limited tool use behaviour. This made them ideal subjects to study how tool use emerges.

The only feeding-related tools they use are folded leaves, usually to collect water,



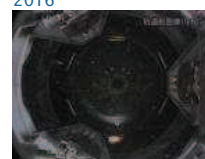
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and moss to soak up mineral deposits from a clay pit. Fifty-two of them engaged with the experiment.

"After seven years of field work, I had a massive amount of data and there was clear variation in how chimpanzees engaged with the experiment. I thought it would be interesting to analyse why," Gruber said.

The team found that travel created an extra need for high-energy food while the challenge of inaccessible honey created an opportunity for innovation.


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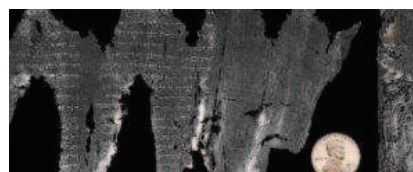
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