SEX AND AGE BASED DIFFERENCES IN SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND SPACING IN THE MANTLED HOWLER MONKEY (*ALOUATTA PALLIATA*)

Authors: Erika Favela and Paul Garber

Department: Dept. of Anthropology, UIUC

Are there any sex or age based differences in the activity budgets of mantled howler monkeys? What are the patterns of social spacing in the study group? Do these patterns vary by activity? Do juveniles and adults differ in frequency of social interactions? These are the questions that I addressed as I studied the mantled howler monkeys at the Beach Forest on La Isla de Ometepe, Nicaragua. The group that I studied was made up of 5 females, 3 juveniles, and 1 male. Data were collected on the activity budget, social interactions, and patterns of social spacing using an instantaneous focal animal time sampling technique. The information collected consisted of the identity of the focal animal, its activity (feed, forage, rest, travel), whether any social interaction occurred, what it was, who the initiator and recipients were, the identity of the nearest neighbor, the distance between them, and the activity of that neighbor. These data were collected at 2-minute intervals between the hours of 6am and 2 pm. In mantled howler monkeys I found there to be very few social interactions (most occurred between a mother and her offspring). Juveniles and females with juveniles had higher rates of social interaction (huddling) than males or females without juveniles. All howlers, irrespective of age and sex, rested more than 70% of the time, with males resting the most. Males, females, and juveniles all preferred to position themselves next to a female, across all activities, over 80% of the time.