

Mathilde Lalot



PhD Student

(supervised by [Dalila Bovet](#))

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Research interests

Morality's natural origins: a difference between genders?

Morality is traditionally regarded as purely human and cultural, but recent researches show behaviours in animals that do not seem to be so far away from those called moral in humans (de Waal, 1997). These behaviours could be precursors of human morality. According to Flack & de Waal (2000), a moral system involves: altruistic behaviours, the ability to feel empathy for others, the establishment and respect of social rules and some kind of equity within a group, and the ability and desire to maintain good relations with other conspecifics. Several studies suggest the possibility that the conception and use of morality rules could be different both genders. It appears that, in some species (mostly primates), females tend to perform better than males in tasks involving altruism, sympathy and conflict mediation through reconciliation while males tend to be more sensitive in tasks involving a sense of equity and the respect for social rules.

This PhD aims to find in animals the precursors of morality and to identify environmental and/or evolutionary factors contributing to the emergence or maintenance of each of its components, and also to verify the existence of a difference between genders, particularly in species other than primates. So, behaviours of many species are studied, allowing a comparison of the level of some traits constitutive of morality according to the social group organisation (collective dominance by females or males, predominance of one sex or the other in parental investment, tendency to cooperate or not in the wild). Females would be empathic when providing parental care, while males would be more sensitive to inequity when cooperating in the hunt. When males participate as much as females in parental care (like birds), or when males and females cooperate to obtain food, these differences should disappear. It is also expected, in artificial tasks, to find more empathy and altruism in species cognitively most advanced and better cooperation capacity in species that already cooperate in the wild.

Collaborations

Dr. Michel Saint Jalme – *Ménagerie du Jardin des Plantes*, Paris

Dr. Fabienne Delfour – Dolphinarium of *Parc Astérix*, Plailly

Previous research interests

Perception attribution in canaries & budgerigars.

Cognitive bias use to evaluate optimism in canaries according to social context and temperament.

Audience effect in Guinea baboons.

Ability to exchange in Tonkean macaques & brown capuchin monkeys.

Cooperation and prosociality in African grey parrots & budgerigars.

Social information in canaries.

Space use in Siberian chipmunks.

Papers:

Péron, F., Rat-Fischer, L., **Lalot, M.**, Nagle, L. & Bovet, D. 2011. Cooperative problem solving in African grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*). *Animal Cognition*, 14(4), 545-553.

Oral communications:

Péron, F., **Lalot, M.**, Nagle, L. & Bovet, D. Do African Grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*) show prosocial behaviour? Transfer-of-knowledge conference of CompCog. Social genes, social brain and social minds. Budapest, HUNGARY. 13-16/05/2009.

Péron, F., Rat-Fischer, L., **Lalot, M.**, Simon, J., Duhautois, S., Maître, P., Heidocker, F., Nagle, L. & Bovet, D. Cooperation in African grey parrots: dealing with the apparatus and the partner. INCORE conference. Cooperation: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue. Budapest, HUNGARY. 17-18/09/2010.

Lalot, M., d'Etterre, P. & Bovet, D. Cognitive bias in canaries (*Serinus canaria*) according to environmental context and behavioural type. Meeting LECC-LEEC. Nanterre, FRANCE. 02/02/2011.

Lalot, M. & Bovet, D. Utilisation de biais cognitifs pour évaluer l'optimisme de canaris (*Serinus canaria*) en fonction du contexte social et du tempérament. Journées de la Recherche. Nanterre, FRANCE. 24-25/03/2011.

Colléony, A., **Lalot, M.**, Liévin-Bazin, A., Dollion, N., Malassis, R., Péron, F. & Bovet, D. Could African grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*) be prosocial to maintain cooperation in a token exchange task? 7th Meeting Ecology & Behaviour. Rennes, FRANCE. 2-6/05/2011.

Lalot, M. & Bovet, D. Perception attribution in canaries (*Serinus canaria*) and budgerigars (*Melopsittacus undulatus*). Symposium LECC. Nanterre, FRANCE. 14/09/2011.

Lalot, M., Demangeon, F., Rolland, C., Scotto di Covella, L., Jeannin, S., d'Etterre, P. & Bovet, D. Modulation of decision-making by affective state in domestic canaries (*Serinus canaria*). International workshop of LECC-Franco-German Symposium. Animal communication: mechanisms, consequences & social aspects. Nanterre, FRANCE. 4-5/10/2011.

Lalot, M., Prager, N., d'Etterre, P. & Bovet, D. Decision-making under ambiguity in domestic canaries (*Serinus canaria*), a novel measure of welfare. European Conference on Behavioural Biology. Essen, GERMANY. 20-22/07/2012.

Lalot, M. & Bovet, D. Altruism & Prosociality in budgerigars & capybaras. Symposium LECC. Nanterre, FRANCE. 18/09/2012.

Lalot, M., Prager, N., Schaffner, P., Liévin-Bazin, A. & Bovet, D. Prosociality in mammals & birds: a difference between genders? International Workshop - Franco-German Symposium. Telemetric approaches in behavioural and physiological measurements. Seewiesen, GERMANY. 03-04/12/2012.

Lalot, M., Liévin-Bazin, A., Serrÿn, C., Penfrat, S. & Bovet, D. Etude de la Prosocialité chez des Caviidae. Symposium of Ménagerie du Jardin des Plantes. Paris, FRANCE. 24/04/2013.

Lalot, M., Liévin-Bazin, A., Bonnafe, W., Bloch, C., Barhoumi, C. & Bovet, D. Prosocial behaviours in Mammals. International Workshop - Franco-German Symposium. Interactions, communications and learning: from invertebrates to humans. La Défense, FRANCE. 02-04/10/2013.

Posters:

Péron, F., **Lalot, M.**, Simon, J., Duhautois, S., Froc, C., Aubrun, R., Nagle, L. & Bovet, D. Testing prosociality in psittacids. INCORE conference. Cooperation: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue. Budapest, HUNGARY. 17-18/09/2010.

Lalot, M., Baconnais, M., Prager, N., Demami, N., Dupuis, A. & Bovet, D. Utilisation de biais cognitifs pour évaluer l'optimisme de canaris (*Serinus canaria*) en fonction du contexte environnemental et social. SFECA Conference. L'animal dans tous ses sens. Tours, FRANCE. 17-19/05/2011.

Lalot, M., Baconnais, M., Prager, N., Demami, N., Dupuis, A., Ung, D., Péron, F., d'Etterre, P. & Bovet, D. Influence of social context and behavioural syndrome on cognitive bias in domestic canaries (*Serinus canaria*). 2nd Transfer-of-knowledge conference of CompCog. Current challenges and applications of comparative cognition. Prague, CZECH REPUBLIC. 25-27/05/2011.

Lalot, M., Demangeon, F., Ung, D., d'Etterre, P. & Bovet, D. Influence of behavioural syndrome on cognitive bias in canaries (*Serinus canaria*). SEB Annual Main Meeting. Glasgow, SCOTLAND. 1-4/07/2011.

Lalot, M., Demangeon, F., d'Etterre, P. & Bovet, D. Modulation de la prise de décision de canaris domestiques (*Serinus canaria*) en fonction de leur état émotionnel. SFECA Conference. Le comportement animal : questions proximales et évolutives. Saint-Etienne, FRANCE. 9-11/05/2012.

Lalot, M., Liévin-Bazin, A., Serrÿn, C., Le Ray, S., Bento Da Costa, L. & Bovet, D. Prosocial behaviours in Psittacids, rodents & dolphins. Journées de la Recherche de l'UFR. Nanterre, FRANCE. 11/04/2013.

Lalot, M., Liévin-Bazin, A., Serrÿn, C., Le Ray, S., Bento Da Costa, L. & Bovet, D. Prosocial behaviours in Psittacids, rodents & dolphins. Fondation IPSEN conference: New Frontiers in Social Neuroscience. Paris, FRANCE. 22/04/2013.

Liévin-Bazin, A., Serrÿn C., Feret, A-S., **Lalot, M.** & Bovet, D. Prosociality in capybaras and budgerigars. 3rd Transfer-of-knowledge conference of CompCog. Vienna, AUSTRIA. 3-5/07/2013.

Lalot, M., Liévin-Bazin, A., Caré, S., Sagne, S., Bocquet, C. & Bovet, D. Prosocial behaviours in Mammals. Colloque de la SFECA. Dijon, FRANCE. 19-22/11/2013.

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