

SEASONAL CHANGES IN PARTNERS AND INTERACTIONS DURING SOCIAL GROOMING AMONG ADULT FEMALE JAPANESE MACAQUES (*Macaca fuscata*) OF THE ARASHIYAMA E-GROUP

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Social grooming is one of the most important social behaviors in Japanese macaques (*Macaca fuscata*), a primate species characterized by a marked seasonality in its reproductive cycles. During the non-estrus period, females do not copulate with males; moreover, even during the mating season, females are not always in estrus. Social grooming in Japanese macaques has been intensively studied during the non-mating season. Females generally tend to choose high-ranking individuals as grooming partners to expect their support in the future. Because of estrus periodicity, the number and identity of available females differ between the mating and non-mating seasons. The aim of this study is to compare social grooming partners and interactions between the mating and non-mating seasons. Observations were conducted from October 2002 to September 2003 at the Arashiyama monkey park, Kyoto, Japan. Observation time was 222 hours during the mating season and 151 hours during the non-mating season. I sampled 10 adult female focal subjects of various social ranks. During the mating season, I observed the females in their non-estrus days. The observation revealed 2 remarkable findings. First, the frequency of social grooming with kin and non-kin females differed between the 2 seasons. Unlike in the non-mating season, the females tended to choose non-kin females during the mating season. Second, during the mating season, the frequency of grooming from dominants to subordinates was higher than that from subordinates to dominants, and dominant females groomed subordinates one-sidedly. Social grooming behavior might differ during the mating and non-mating seasons.

Keywords: Japanese macaques, social grooming, seasonal change, adult female