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CHIMPANZEE STUDIES IN THE LAB AND THE ZOO

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In comparative cognitive science, chimpanzee studies have played an important role to reveal the evolutionary basis of the human mind. At the same time, by deepening the understanding of chimpanzees, we could improve their environment in captivity. In this talk, I will introduce our latest activities in the lab and the zoo. In both facilities, we are making various efforts to understand chimpanzees' cognitive abilities through behavioral experiments and observations. New findings would help us to understand them further and sometimes may give us suggestions as to how we could improve their captive environment. Additionally, cognitive testing itself could serve as enrichment for them because it would increase their foraging time. The studies conducted in the lab enable us to tackle the leading-edge questions in comparative cognitive science. In the zoo, on the other hand, we exhibit chimpanzees engaging in cognitive tests and show visitors how they progress from the very initial training. One of our main purposes here is to advance public education in the zoo, where the public can learn about human evolution as well as the captive animals' welfare. These newly gained perspectives will hopefully become an additional driving force to promote the animals' welfare in the zoo.

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