

Baboon-like social structure creates efficiencies for spotted hyena

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As large, carnivorous mammals, spotted hyenas are well known for their competitive nature; however, recent work suggests that their clan structure has similarities to some primate social systems such as those of the baboon and macaque.

San Diego Zoo Global researchers have documented relatedness between individuals and how this factor appears to influence their social behaviors.

"Understanding how animal social systems work is an important part of learning what we need to know to conserve them," said Russell Van Horn, researcher with the [San Diego Zoo](#) Institute for Conservation Research. "In the case of [spotted hyenas](#), understanding how they manage available resources can be very important as resources become less available due to human habitat encroachment."

The study, which was recently published in *Molecular Ecology*, shows that spotted hyenas show strong kinship relationships that are affected by resource reduction.

Provided by Zoological Society of San Diego

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