

# UK study shows seal singing 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star'

June 21 2019

---



In this undated image made from video provided by the University of St. Andrews, a seal copies the sounds of the song Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, in St Andrews, Scotland. Researchers at the University of St. Andrews say gray seals can copy the sounds of human words and songs including "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." The study showed that three trained seals were able to imitate parts of the lullaby and as well as other popular tunes. The research team released their findings on Thursday, June 20, 2019 including video footage of the seals. (University of St Andrews via AP)

Researchers in Scotland say gray seals can copy the sounds of human words and songs including "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."

The study by University of St. Andrews researchers showed that three trained seals were able to imitate parts of popular tunes.

The research team's findings were published Thursday, including video footage of the seals. The study gave the researchers a better understanding of the evolution of vocal learning and human language development.

It also suggested that [gray seals](#) could be a [new model](#) to study speech disorders since they use their vocal tracts the same way as humans.

**More information:** Amanda L. Stansbury et al. Formant Modification through Vocal Production Learning in Gray Seals, *Current Biology* (2019). [DOI: 10.1016/j.cub.2019.05.071](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cub.2019.05.071)

© 2019 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

Citation: UK study shows seal singing 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star' (2019, June 21) retrieved 13 March 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2019-06-uk-twinkle-star.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--