

# Exploring why males are larger than females among mammals

April 8 2020

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Credit: Marcelo H. Cassini, PhD

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In most animals, females are larger than [males](#), but in most mammals, males are larger than females. A new analysis published in *Mammal Review* examines the potential drivers of these differences, calling into question the theory that only [sexual selection](#) is at play in mammals—that males compete to mate with females, and bigger males are more likely to win.

The analysis suggests that, alongside sexual selection, [natural selection](#) may be an evolutionary driver of sexual size differences in mammals. Males and females may have evolved to differ in size so that they could exploit resources such as food.

**More information:** Marcelo H. Cassini, Sexual size dimorphism and sexual selection in primates, *Mammal Review* (2020). [DOI: 10.1111/mam.12191](#)

Provided by Wiley

Citation: Exploring why males are larger than females among mammals (2020, April 8) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2020-04-exploring-males-larger-females-mammals.html>

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