Chat Log: Unit 9  Rearing the Young

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Wednesday, October 24, 2012 undergrads
8:02 PM: HOST: How can I help you with your learning activities this eve?
8:03 PM: Irene: I don't think I have too many questions so far, this week!
8:03 PM: HOST: want to practice some of the spotlight Q's?
8:04 PM: Irene: I must say though, I'm pretty excited about the BLOG questions about bird and mammal care. I'm excited to see all the examples people put down.
8:04 PM: Irene: Sure!
8:04 PM: HOST: have you had a chance to view the lecture videos yet?
8:06 PM: Irene: I'm afraid not, I haven't.
8:06 PM: HOST: Want to go watch 7.1, then we can chat about the Q's on alloparental care?
8:07 PM: Irene: On the Part 3 notes, there aren't any videos that are available for me to click, unfortunately!
8:07 PM: HOST: the clip about the elephants is too cute!
8:07 PM: HOST: when you go into the learning module on Part 3?
8:07 PM: HOST: the videos were working last time I checked
8:08 PM: Irene: Yes ma'am. Normally I can click on the individual videos, but right now, they're unclickable.
8:08 PM: Irene: Let me try a different browser really fast
8:08 PM: HOST: are you using the links inside elearning?
8:09 PM: Irene: Yes. I'm on the part 3 overview page.
8:10 PM: Irene has left the room.
8:10 PM: HOST: ok. those links will not work for you. Open up the Unit 7 learning module
8:10 PM: HOST: do you see where you can toggle the ikon on the left? (I think it is a +)
8:12 PM: Irene has entered the room.
8:12 PM: Irene: There we go, I found it. It just wasn't linked on the overview page, which is where I'm used to looking!
8:13 PM: HOST: OK. I will add in those links. I thought maybe they were not needed now that I hoped folks had found the learning modules. That also has the links to the Quiz and BLOG discussion activities.
8:15 PM: Irene: I figured that out too, haha. I think I'm just a little slow.
8:15 PM: Irene: Or rather, a creature of habit.
8:16 PM: HOST: habits are good as long as the environment stays the same ;-) 
8:16 PM: Irene: Haha, precisely. And when my environment changed, I was left going oh no!
8:16 PM: Irene: *left
8:17 PM: HOST: which reinforces our lesson about intelligence being an adaptation to a changing environment!!
8:17 PM: HOST: want to go watch video 7.1?
8:17 PM: Irene: Yes! Doing so now. I just finished the scrub jay clip.
8:18 PM: HOST: OK. let me know when you want to chat about Q7.1 & 7.2
8:19 PM: Irene: I think I'm ready for 7.1. Proximate Cause and Development on the scrub jay alloparenting?
8:20 PM: HOST: good, what are your thoughts?
8:20 PM: HOST: want to chat separately about the males and the females, since they differ?
8:21 PM: **Irene:** Yes! I was just thinking that.
8:21 PM: **Irene:** Like, for example, it's normally older, male siblings that stay behind to feed their younger siblings, because the females disperse.
8:21 PM: **HOST:** yes!
8:22 PM: **HOST:** do we have any evidence that the male alloparents actually help and are not a hindrance?
8:23 PM: **Irene:** Yes! It says that thirty percent of the food providing to nestlings come from these alloparents.
8:24 PM: **Irene:** So basically, this means there is more food for the nestlings with less work on the parents' part.
8:24 PM: **HOST:** good point!
8:25 PM: **HOST:** if we switch to a functional perspective (Q7.2), what are the fitness benefits to the male alloparents?
8:25 PM: **Irene:** Isn't it something like...
8:26 PM: **Irene:** even though the males themselves are not reproducing, by helping their younger siblings survive, they are increasing their own fitness?
8:26 PM: **Irene:** Since these are extremely close to themselves, genetically, so it's sort of the 'next best thing', as it were.
8:26 PM: **Irene:** Because, on their own, they might starve or be eaten by predators and not get to reproduce at all.
8:27 PM: **HOST:** yes, the genotype for helping is likely to be passed on through their parents lineage, even if not directly
8:27 PM: **HOST:** good point about natural selection "editing out" the dispersers
8:27 PM: **HOST:** do you remember any advantage related to acquiring a territory?
8:28 PM: **Irene:** Yes. I believe it's something like the older helpers will eventually 'inherit' the territory from their parents.
8:29 PM: **HOST:** yes, if the father dies, a son is likely to take over the breeding territory
8:29 PM: **Irene:** That's a really fascinating system that they have.
8:29 PM: **HOST:** it is! very similar to the wolves!
8:30 PM: **Irene:** Yes! And I wouldn't have necessarily assumed that, at first.
8:30 PM: **HOST:** except we do not have any evidence with the wolves that alloparents actually help
8:30 PM: **Irene:** This is true. Don't jays have more fledglings with helpers compared to those who don't, too?
8:30 PM: **HOST:** yes, the nests with helpers had a higher fledging success
8:31 PM: **HOST:** Want to move on to video 7.2?
8:32 PM: **Irene:** Yes! Let me find it real fast
8:34 PM: **Irene:** Aww, I love elephants so much
8:34 PM: **HOST:** the clips about the calf are sooo cute!
8:35 PM: **Irene:** They are, oh my gosh. He's so little!
8:35 PM: **HOST:** I love it the way he moves his trunk like a baby trying it out for the first time
8:36 PM: **Irene:** I love how the females all want to fuss over him. Aww, that was so cute.
8:37 PM: **HOST:** "fussing" fits so well, we need to make that a technical term!
8:37 PM: **Irene:** Haha! That's the only thing I could think of when I was watching it!
8:37 PM: **HOST:** the females all rushed over to the baby when it got too close to teh male
8:38 PM: **Irene:** Omg, yes! And how he squealed when he fell over and they were so defiant about it.
8:38 PM: **Irene:** And the male was like, I have no clue what is going on and I want no part of it.
8:38 PM: **HOST:** looked to me like he actually tried to sidestep and avoid hurting the baby...or was that my imagination?
8:39 PM: **Irene:** I think he was side-stepping, and the baby tripped over itself.
8:40 PM: **HOST:** and those females don't reproduce until 6-8 years, so they have plenty of practice
8:40 PM: **Irene:** Yes, exactly. So I imagine a baby is an exciting/novel thing to have in the family!
8:41 PM: **HOST**: good point!
8:41 PM: **HOST**: so in video 7.2, which did you like best, the possum, kangaroo or elephant seal?
8:42 PM: **Irene**: I am unnaturally fond of elephant seals, so I have to go with them.
8:43 PM: **HOST**: wasn't the baby expressive with those big eyes?
8:43 PM: **Irene**: Yesss, oh my goodness, they are just so cute!
8:43 PM: **Irene**: To be fair, most babies are cute.
8:44 PM: **HOST**: I'm not sure cute is the word for a 100 pound "slug"!
8:44 PM: **Irene**: Hahaha, I am the girl who thinks crocodiles are cute, so to be fair, my tastes are a little strange.
8:45 PM: **HOST**: baby crocs are cute! alligator nestlings are even cuter when they"yurk" for mom when picked up...I used to help out with catching them when I was in FL
8:45 PM: **Irene**: Oh my gosh, that's so cool!
8:45 PM: **Irene**: My sister and I like to mimic baby alligator noises and freak out our dogs. Random piece of knowledge, but that reminded me, haha.
8:46 PM: **HOST**: LOL!
8:47 PM: **Irene**: Hahah, we are sort of a weird family.
8:48 PM: **HOST**: so what do you remember from the developmental stages of the elephant seal pups? how would you describe the transitions between each stage?
8:50 PM: **Irene**: Well at first, the seal nurses for around two weeks, I think it is. The milk is very rich at this point of time.
8:50 PM: **HOST**: yes, they gain fat quickly
8:50 PM: **Irene**: The pups grow really quickly because of this. I think the moms go into heat soon after, as well.
8:50 PM: **Irene**: Post-partum estrous, I believe.
8:51 PM: **Irene**: Then the mom leaves for a week or so to feed herself, she comes back regularly to nurse the pup...
8:51 PM: **Irene**: Annd then, around 6-12 weeks, the mom abandons the baby after its weaned!
8:51 PM: **HOST**: yes, good point! we saw in the video that the male was chasing the female, running over the pups
8:51 PM: **Irene**: Yes, oh my goodness, that made me wince. Poor baby!
8:52 PM: **HOST**: poor baby does not have anyone to follow to learn where to eat, like the possum and kangaroo babies
8:52 PM: **Irene**: Yeah, I was really surprised at how they're basically left to fend for themselves so quickly!
8:52 PM: **Irene**: You'd think, since they grow up to be such big animals, they'd stay with their mothers a lot longer.
8:53 PM: **HOST**: those that store blubber can explore on their own, the sources of food change so quickly in the marine environment
8:53 PM: **Irene**: Yeah, that's a very good point.
8:54 PM: **HOST**: So, the last two Q's are about "which parent works"
8:54 PM: **HOST**: Want to do Q7.5 based on the scrub jays?
8:54 PM: **Irene**: Sure!
8:55 PM: **Irene**: For the scrub jays, not only do the parents help out with feeding, but the older offspring/alloparents help out, too.
8:55 PM: **HOST**: so both mom and dad feed the nestlings?
8:56 PM: **Irene**: Hmm. I'm not sure about the father.
8:56 PM: **Irene**: He may be defending the territory from other jays. I know the mother does, for sure.
8:57 PM: **HOST**: yes, both, remember the young males care for the nestlings
8:57 PM: **Irene**: Oh okay, gotcha.
8:58 PM: **Irene**: Birds sometimes mix me up with what the male does or doesn't do, depending on the species.
8:58 PM: **HOST**: yes, but 80% of the species are monogamous
8:58 PM: **HOST**: So how about the mammals? (Q7.6)?
8:59 PM: Irene: With mammals, I think it depends on if they're social or not.
8:59 PM: Irene: Not social mammals meet up to mate, and then the male and female go their separate ways. The female raises the young.
9:00 PM: HOST: actually, it is more related to lactation
9:00 PM: Irene: Oh, is it?
9:01 PM: HOST: in species where the male can contribute little to the care of the young, like the kangaroos, seals, antelope....no cost to those who abandoned their mates
9:01 PM: HOST: females are better equipped with the "plumbing" to raise the babies
9:01 PM: Irene: Oh, that does make much more sense. Huh.
9:02 PM: HOST: so why are wolves so special?
9:02 PM: Irene: It's so simple, I don't know why I thought otherwise. Whoops!
9:02 PM: HOST: most of the textbooks present the information from the male point of view
9:02 PM: HOST: that is why I assign the chapters in reverse order
9:02 PM: Irene: Makes sense now!
9:03 PM: HOST: once you understand which parent works, then you understand which sex competes for the other
9:03 PM: Irene: Well, is it because wolves are such highly social pack animals? I know the females pick out 'dens' that they sort of hang around until the pups are old enough to travel.
9:03 PM: Irene: And the male will bring food to the female while she's nursing the pups
9:04 PM: HOST: wolves are pack animals because the father provisions the mom, then the pups
9:04 PM: HOST: females protect their mates from other females
9:04 PM: HOST: males protect their females from other males
9:05 PM: HOST: look like our chat time is at an end....
9:05 PM: Irene: Oh, wow. these hours fly by.
9:05 PM: HOST: anything else before we sign off?
9:05 PM: Irene: No, this was very helpful! Thank you very much, Dr. P~
9:05 PM: HOST: have a good evening!
9:05 PM: Irene: You too!

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Wednesday, October 24, 2012 grads
7:52 PM: HOST: Howdy!
7:57 PM: Ivan has entered the room.
7:57 PM: HOST: Hi John!
7:58 PM: Ivan: Hi Dr Packard, how are you
7:58 PM: HOST: fine thanks, how about you?
7:58 PM: Ivan: pretty good here
7:59 PM: HOST: I am having fun with converting the videos from Fossil Rim and uploading them to vimeo
8:00 PM: Ivan: having technical difficulties?
8:00 PM: HOST: I got a new camera, made sure it was the same model as the previous, and wouldn't you know it has some sort of proprietary software
8:01 PM: HOST: I got the conversion program, but it is now a 2-step process rather than 1-step
8:01 PM: Ivan: sounds like it was made by microsoft lol
8:02 PM: HOST: JVC
8:02 PM: HOST: I owe you some comments on your open inquiry
8:02 PM: Ivan: seems like sometimes it would be best for technology companies to just leave things alone if they're working well. don't fix it if it ain't broke philosophy
8:03 PM: HOST: not a growth strategy for corporate advancement!
8:04 PM: Ivan: i haven't submitted the draft yet, what i had submitted a couple weeks ago were the sources. i saw on the calendar we were to submit sources, then an outline. I'm just about done with a rough draft, so not much need to submit an outline at this point
8:05 PM: **Ivan**: oh, i just saw i have the option to 'take submission back to inbox'. So I'll just do that and then submit my rough draft in a day or two
8:05 PM: **HOST**: sounds like a good plan.. I will go in and respond after chat
8:06 PM: **HOST**: Have you had a chance to view the lecture videos for Unit 7 yet?
8:07 PM: **Ivan**: the ones for 7.1 i have. i haven't watched 7.2-.3 yet
8:08 PM: **HOST**: Did you like the elephant clips?
8:08 PM: **Ivan**: probably going to do that after this
8:08 PM: **Ivan**: very interesting!
8:09 PM: **Ivan**: i found some info about sperm whales and alloparenting
8:09 PM: **HOST**: want to chat about Q7.1? How does alloparenting develop into parenting?
8:09 PM: **HOST**: sperm whales is a good example
8:10 PM: **Ivan**: calves in the social groups will often be 'babysat' by alloparents in the group while the mother and other adults and subadults go on foraging dives
8:10 PM: **Ivan**: for 7.1 i found some info on prairie voles
8:11 PM: **HOST**: are the alloparents pre-reproductive, or are they other breeding females?
8:11 PM: **Ivan**: pre-reproductive
8:12 PM: **HOST**: so does that fit the hypothesis that alloparenting is a developmental stage, occuring before all the hormones are "in line" for parental care?
8:12 PM: **Ivan**: yes
8:13 PM: **Ivan**: according to the study, alloparenting tended to decline around the average age of dispersal. They didn't get into hormones, but one would think there is a correlation there
8:14 PM: **HOST**: So for the sperm whales, Q7..2 what is the function of alloparenting?
8:15 PM: **Ivan**: increased survival of calves and increased freedom to forage for mothers, also inclusive fitness of alloparents since group members are related
8:15 PM: **HOST**: good! nice example!
8:15 PM: **HOST**: want to go view the 7.2 video, then work on Q7.3 and Q7.4?
8:15 PM: **Ivan**: sure
8:16 PM: **Ivan**: i'll go do that now
8:16 PM: **Ivan**: has left the room.
8:17 PM: **Ivan**: has entered the room.
8:17 PM: **Ivan**: just fyi, it kicks me out of chat when i go to the video, so i'll be back after
8:18 PM: **Ivan**: has left the room.
8:36 PM: **Ivan**: has entered the room.
8:36 PM: **HOST**: back again?
8:36 PM: **Ivan**: i finished 7.2
8:37 PM: **Ivan**: baby opossums sure are cute
8:37 PM: **HOST**: aren't they! have you ever held one?
8:38 PM: **Ivan**: never have. seen several in the wild, just around my house and what not
8:39 PM: **HOST**: Sybille brought me one, seemed very dead, but the next morning it was gone from where we left it
8:39 PM: **Ivan**: had a very young skunk living in my back yard for about a year. It was quite small when I first started seeing it back there. and it had no fear of me at all. would steadily approach me over and over
8:39 PM: **Ivan**: guess it was a convincing actor lol
8:40 PM: **HOST**: so how would you describe the developmental stages in the possum babies soliciting care from mom?
8:42 PM: **Ivan**: after birth the instinct is to head to the pouch and find a teat, after some time and growth they detatch and ride around on mother's back, after 4 months they disperse
8:42 PM: **HOST**: bingo!
8:43 PM: **HOST**: and how does mom respond to those developmental changes?
8:44 PM: **Ivan**: by a reduction in parental care with each successive stage. then dispersal is influenced by the mother if i remember correctly
8:46 PM: **HOST**: different type of milk produced when the baby is attached to the teat compared to the transitional stage when they ride her back?
8:46 PM: **Ivan**: so some sort of hormonal response going on there
8:47 PM: HOST: yes, the suckling results in oxytocin release and milk let down
8:47 PM: HOST: in other mammals, suckling may inhibit the estrogen and development of egg follicles, but not in marsupials
8:48 PM: Ivan: question .... on the spotlight questions, are we to use unique examples (e.g., different ones than from the notes) or is that not a concern?
8:48 PM: Ivan: i read about oxytocin involved with prairie vole alloparenting
8:49 PM: HOST: unique examples are not expected, only if you do not like the examples in lecture and readings
8:49 PM: HOST: to practice scholarly writing skills, just dig for the science behind the popular examples
8:49 PM: Ivan: oh, good to know lol
8:50 PM: HOST: you may cite your textbook for the concept, and use the example from lecture
8:50 PM: Ivan: i've mostly tried to find 'unique' examples except for a few times where I didn't find any that 'fit'. In the long run, it was probably beneficial since I've read so many articles this way
8:52 PM: HOST: yes, you have been preparing yourself really well!
8:55 PM: HOST: The last two spotlight Q's are about "which parent works"
8:55 PM: HOST: Want to do Q7.5 based on the scrub jays?
8:55 PM: Ivan: sure
8:56 PM: HOST: there are two great examples in the video: geese (precocial) and terns (altricial)
8:56 PM: Ivan: in scrub jays, they exhibit biparental care along with helpers if i remember correctly
8:57 PM: HOST: bingo!
8:57 PM: HOST: And how does that differ from the mammals? (e.g. elephant seals,, saiga antelope)?
8:58 PM: HOST: elephants?
8:58 PM: Ivan: the father is absent in the mammalian examples
8:59 PM: HOST: I agree. Why are wolves so special?
8:59 PM: Ivan: the males are actively involved in food provisioning of young (and female while she's nursing in the den)
9:01 PM: HOST: yes, regurgitation makes a big difference, since the male can also provide
9:03 PM: HOST: anything else before we sign off tonight?
9:04 PM: Ivan: i think i'm good for now. Thank you for the help
9:04 PM: Ivan: have a good rest of the evening. Hasta Lunes
9:04 PM: Ivan has left the room.
9:04 PM: HOST: have a good weekend!
9:04 PM: HOST has left the room.