

Research Activity Report
Supported by “Leading Graduate Program in Primatology and Wildlife Science”

2017. 06, 19

Affiliation/Position	Primate Research Institute/D1
Name	Raquel Costa

1. Country/location of visit
WRC, Kyoto University
2. Research project
Asura Seminar
3. Date (departing from/returning to Japan)
2017. 06. 16
4. Main host researcher and affiliation
WRC, Kyoto University
5. Progress and results of your research/activity
<p>The speaker of the last Asura International Seminar was Dr. Anna Wilkinson from University of Lincoln, UK.</p> <p>This seminar was hosted jointly by Kyoto University Institute for Advanced Study, Unit for Advanced Studies of the Human Mind and the Leading Graduate Program in Primatology and Wildlife Science and it was held in the Wildlife Research Centre, Kyoto University.</p> <p>Dr. Wilkinson is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Life Sciences of the University of Lincoln. Her research targets animal cognition, more specifically, cold-blooded cognition and the systems of perception and categorization. For this seminar, Dr. Wilkinson focused in the first, cold-blooded cognition, presenting an overview of her research question, methods and conclusions. Her aim is to understand how reptiles and amphibians perceive and adapt to their environment. Reptiles have been neglected as subject species in cognitive research and Dr. Wilkinson is one of the pioneer researchers aiming to rectify that.</p> <p>In this seminar, I have learnt that reptiles do not have a hippocampus but instead an analogous structure which is related to space navigation. With her experiences using a maze and her turtle pet, Moses, Dr. Wilkinson explored how tortoises learn to use space cues, adapting their behavior to the different clues. Later, her team trained several tortoises to respond to a stimulus in order to get food, and discovered that these animals can indeed anticipate feeding time.</p> <p>Dr. Wilkinson performed also several cognitive tests on fire salamanders. One test in particular, has revealed that fire salamanders may remember a learnt skill for at least 100 days, even after brumation.</p>

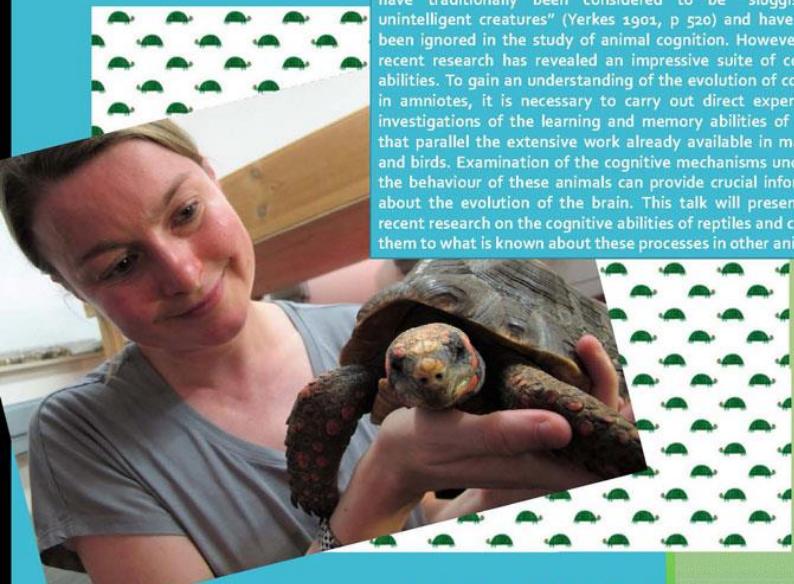
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This area of research is completely new for me and hence, this lecture provided me a great deal of new information.

Special Seminar by Dr. Anna WILKINSON
(第4回 高等研究セミナー)
(第7回 心の先端研究ユニットコロキアム)
(PWS Asura International Seminar)

This seminar will be hosted jointly by Kyoto University Institute for Advanced Study, Unit for Advanced Studies of the Human Mind, Kyoto University, and Leading Graduate Program in Primatology and Wildlife Science, Kyoto University.

Cold-blooded Cognition



Very little is known about the cognitive abilities of reptiles. They have traditionally been considered to be "sluggish and unintelligent creatures" (Yerkes 1901, p 520) and have largely been ignored in the study of animal cognition. However, more recent research has revealed an impressive suite of cognitive abilities. To gain an understanding of the evolution of cognition in amniotes, it is necessary to carry out direct experimental investigations of the learning and memory abilities of reptiles that parallel the extensive work already available in mammals and birds. Examination of the cognitive mechanisms underlying the behaviour of these animals can provide crucial information about the evolution of the brain. This talk will present some recent research on the cognitive abilities of reptiles and compare them to what is known about these processes in other animals.

Dr. Anna WILKINSON
(University of Lincoln / Kyoto University)

Date: June 16th 16:30-17:30
Venue: Seminar Room, Wildlife Research Centre
Registration: Free

For more info:
<http://www.wildlife-science.org/en/asura-seminar/20170616.html>



6. Others

I wish to express my gratitude to Prof. Anna Wilkinson for taking the time to present this Seminar and the organizing institutions. I wish to thank my supervisor, Prof. Hayashi for her guiding, patience and support. I'm very thankful to PWS for supporting my trip and stay in Kyoto.