

Jeanne Altmann

Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
Ph.D. University of Chicago, 1979



Research Interests

Altmann's research program focuses on the interaction among behavior, ecology, physiology, and genetic structure and the implication of this interaction for adaptation to changing environments. The empirical components of Altmann's research are conducted primarily with a wild population of savannah baboons, a highly adaptable and intensely social species that shares many biological and social characteristics with humans. For over three decades, Altmann and her team have conducted detailed behavioral and life-history research on individuals and their descendants in a population that has been adapting to a changing environment in southern Kenya at Amboseli National Park.

Current research centers on the magnitude and sources of variability in primate life histories, parental care, and behavioral ontogeny. For baboons, Altmann is analyzing sources of variability within groups and examining patterns in their stability among groups and populations and across time. In one series of studies Altmann's team is interested in the extent to which various life-history and developmental parameters are food-limited. In others, they are examining empirically and theoretically the effects of social structure within groups on demographic processes within and among groups and across generations. Recently, Altmann and her collaborators have been conducting studies that relate endocrine and genetic data to demographic and behavioral information for the same individuals in the Amboseli baboon population.

Areas of Expertise

Conservation Biology

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