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SEXUALLY ACTIVE FEMALE INFLUENCE ON MALE FEEDING SELECTION AND BEHAVIORS IN WILD JAPANESE MACAQUES

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A trade-off relationship between mating and feeding effort is important when considering feeding and reproductive strategies of long-lived species. Social influence on feeding selection and behaviors are necessary to consider feeding strategy in the social animals. The influence of male mating tactics, the feeding menu and feeding duration were compared among five males in a group of wild Japanese macaques in Yakushima Island. The 1st-ranking male more frequently approached sexually active females, spent less time feeding than subordinate males and spent more time mounting series. The 1st-ranking male stayed within visible range of sexually active females for a median of 93.8 % of the time observed each day. The 1st-ranking male tended to start and finish feeding after the sexually active females who he followed within 5 m. The male selected same menu and feeding patches as the sexually active females. Only the 1st-ranking male transported foods when he followed sexually active female out from feeding trees. Feeding time of subordinate males did not vary between the days on which they copulated and the days they did not. They tended to feed alone or far from the 1st-ranking male and the sexually active females. The subordinate males were less aggressive to and from others than the 1st-ranking male, which means less cost of energy for aggression to obtain foods. These findings demonstrated that mate guarding in the 1st-ranking male brought a high cost on his feeding while opportunistic mating in subordinate males brought a low cost on their feeding.

Keywords: Feeding behavior, Food selection, Mating tactics, Female-male conflicts