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Title
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Publication Date
2021-08-02

Peer reviewed

More Charismatic

Less Charismatic

A Metric of Species' Charisma

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Background

Species are often targeted for conservation based on their "charisma". A comprehensive, quantitative metric for species charisma could improve conservation efforts and help ensure that even low-charisma species are protected.

Hypothesis

We investigated whether metrics based on Wikipedia (species article length, links to and from each species page, and Google's PageRank) could be used to assess the charisma of endangered species, evaluated using prior work on species charisma (Albert et al. 2018).

Results

We evaluated three Wikipedia-based metrics based on their ability to assess endangered species charisma. We found highly significant correlations for all three metrics, with article length the most significant (r_{pb}=0.57; p < .00001**).

All images from Wikipedia: Beluga whale; Lion; African wild dog; Sumatran rhinoceros; Silky sifaka; Talaud bear cuscus; Reig's tuco-tuco; Mexican agouti; Mexican spider monkey; Colombian woolly monkey.
Note: many of the least charismatic species (e.g., Mantiqueira Atlantic tree-rat, Sclater's shrew, Handley's slender opossum) do not have images on Wikipedia, in line with them being poorly documented on that site.