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## Incest puts an end to sexual violence among animals

**London, Dec 3 : A new study has revealed that incest among animals helps put an end to sexual violence.**



In some species, competition between males can mean that females are harmed during copulation.

Male cowpea weevils, for instance, have spiky penises that puncture the female's insides and are thought to help anchor the male inside her, ensuring that he delivers his sperm and out competes other

males.

But another evolutionary pressure comes into play—closely related individuals share many of the same genes, so if a male harms a relative, fewer copies of its genes survive.

Daniel Rankin of the University of Zurich wondered what happened when the competitive and family forces conflict.

He used a computer model in which males were more or less aggressive towards females, and males and females were more or less related to each other.

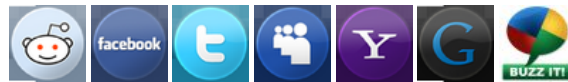
The experiment found that in populations of closely related individuals, males that harmed females less were more successful at spreading their genes, reports New Scientist.

In the long run, this could influence the evolution of the community. In a group where animals are closely related, evolution will push males to be less aggressive towards females, said Rankin.


The findings were reported in the Journal of Evolutionary Biology.

—ANI

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