

# The mystery of how people and birds communicate

Workers who collect honey often find and break into hives with birds.

Honey pickers often find and break into beehives together.



**Honey Helper** is a honey hunter in Mozambique, Africa. He always carried with him a small bird parked in his hand to lead the way to the hives.

A new study shows that these birds are often the guide for workers to go to the hives after hearing "command signal" before each trip. When asked for directions, the **bird who understands this language** will guide African honey hunters to the place to get the honey. All of them sound very loudly with strong vibrations of " *brrr-hm* " emitted.

Ecologist Claire Spottiswoode and her colleague at *Cambridge University* said that there is a bird known as a **guide** ( **guide** ) to hunters to get Mozambique honey to beehives after listening to the signaling signal. In the Science discussion held on July 22, the scientists named the birds that support people in finding hard-to-reach foods.

Recent research provides the first evidence of communication between humans and wildlife. In some parts of the world, dolphins often help fishermen fly fish into the net, but there is still no clear indication of special messages between fishermen and dolphins.

Spottiswoode said that these birds coordinate with hunters to distinguish between hunting signs and food search. These birds often respond to this announcement with a loud vibrato to warn people about their presence. After that, they fly from tree to tree until the honeycomb.

Spottiswoode said " *The bees in the nest can burn a bird to death* " but the birds that eat **beeswax** still regularly fly into that dangerous honeycomb area and bring the beeswax out.



The hunter named Yao chopped trees to preserve the intact honeycomb lying on the high slits and sucked them all out by burning tree branches and leaves. After taking the bees out of the nest, Yao removed the beeswax for his powerful assistant, and even put beeswax on the leaves to let the bird slowly enjoy.

In the previous text, it was reported that 1588 beehives were led by these birds. *Harvard University* biologist Richard Wrangham said that axes are like other stone tools and how to create fire was invented about 1 million years ago or more. Therefore, it is possible that humans and birds have hunted together for at least such a long time.

Spottiswoode said that other parts of South Africa also often responded to the local honey gathering group. Yale University biologist Brian Wood runs a team that proves that the person who took the Hadza honey in Tanzania whistled to call the guide birds, and the walkers also said or shouted to call those birds.

Unlike Yao, the Hadza often buried or burned many beeswax in their nests. Hadza honey hunters often let hungry birds and urged them to lead them to find other groups. Wood's team estimates that 8 to 10 percent of Hadza food is found by birds.

Wood talks about new research " *documents about traditional culture of people and birds* ".



Spottiswoode's team conducted fieldwork in October 2013 and September, October 2015. Researchers tracked the movement of six birds that were signaled. Overall, 73 out of 97 birds found honey to find at least one honeycomb. During the course of the study, about 112 beehives were found by the Yao with the help of birds.

In another experiment, Spottiswoode asked two Yao honey hunters to find 72 beehives, each took about 15 minutes. During a search, a person holding the recorder for about 7 seconds turned it on once or someone made a "brrr-hm" sound, and one would call them " *guide birds* " or proper names. Use pigeons' necklace or excitement calls.

The birds participated in the 30 research experiments, about two-thirds used " *brrr-hm* " to call for the help of those birds (although they often did not identify the bird's nest location). A quarter uses a tape recorder and a third uses pigeon sounds to announce help from birds.

Spottiswoode's team is estimated that honey *pickers* use three times more " *brrr-hm* " sound than people who use Yao language or pigeon sounds to be found within 15 minutes. .

Spottiswoode and Wood plan to investigate small birds learning how to identify workers' messages looking for honey from mature birds so they can lead them to places with honeycomb.

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