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# **Phylogenetic map of vocal learning in parrots**

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## **Abstract**

Vocal learning is considered a crucial component of human language. The ability of vocal learning is rare and among birds has been detected only in songbirds, hummingbirds, and parrots. Parrots are probably the most advanced vocal learners who learn new vocalisations throughout their lives and are known for their ability to imitate human speech. Thus parrots present an intriguing model to shed light on how human language evolved. However, only little is known about how widely vocal learning is distributed in Psitticaformes, an avian order comprising 399 species. In the past decade, surveying behaviour from online video repositories have become a promising research tool to investigate animal behaviour. In this study, we conducted a YouTube survey and provided an overview of the phylogenetic distribution of (allospecific) vocal learning in parrots to enhance our understanding of the evolution of language. We discuss why some parrot species are better imitators than others.