

Follow Us: Like 218k

Follow @livescience



Search

[Home](#) [Space](#) [Animals](#) [Health](#) [Environment](#) [Technology](#) [Culture](#) [History](#) [Strange](#)
[News](#) [Quizzes](#) [Video](#) [Images](#) [Topics](#)



[Creative Creatures: 10 Animals That Use Tools](#)



[World's Cutest Baby Wild Animals](#)



[In Photos: Top 10 Deadliest Animals](#)
[Article:](#)

Creative Hyenas Make Better Problem-Solvers

FOLLOW US

Megan Gannon, News Editor

Date: 08 August 2012 Time: 04:00

Like 218k

PM ET

SHARE

Like 42

Tweet 15

2



A wild spotted hyena tries to open a steel puzzle box with meat inside.

CREDIT: MSU

[View full size image](#)

For humans, cracking a complicated puzzle often involves more than persistence — it requires thinking creatively and testing many possible solutions. A new study suggests the same holds true for hyenas.

Researchers from Michigan State University (MSU) studied wild spotted hyenas trying to open a steel puzzle box containing raw meat in Kenya. The box could be opened by sliding a bolt latch, but just nine out of 62 hyenas successfully opened it. The hyenas that solved the puzzle tested more potential solutions — including biting, flipping

or pushing the box — than the ones that failed, the researchers said. However, sheer persistence didn't pay off.

"While those who gave up quickly were more likely to fail, some hyenas that spent more time with the puzzle box appeared to get stuck in a rut and would often try the same solutions over and over again," zoology graduate student Sarah Benson-Amram said in a statement from MSU.

The wild hyenas had never seen the puzzle box before the experiment. But those that quickly approached the foreign object were more likely to get the box open than the hesitant hyenas, suggesting that risk-taking has some benefits, the researchers said.

Spotted hyenas have relatively large brains and they have been shown to [outperform chimpanzees on cooperative problem-solving tests](#).

"A likely benefit of large brains is the ability to think flexibly about new situations and come up with solutions to novel problems," Kay Holekamp, an MSU zoologist and co-author of the new study, said in the statement.

The research was published in the Proceedings of the Royal Society B.

SHARE Like 42
 Tweet 15
 2

- [Creative Creatures: 10 Animals That Use Tools](#)
- [World's Cutest Baby Wild Animals](#)
- [In Photos: Top 10 Deadliest Animals](#)

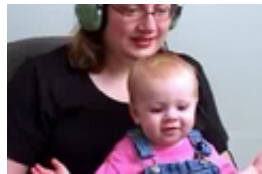
MORE FROM LiveScience.com



Image Albums



Countdowns



Topics



Infographics

MORE ARTICLES





Add a comment...

Post to Facebook

Posting as Danielle Whittaker ([Change](#))

[Comment](#)

Facebook social plugin

Find us on Facebook



LiveScience

Like

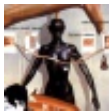
218,105 people like LiveScience.



Joan



Cher



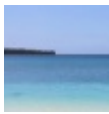
Karen



Adam



Lynn



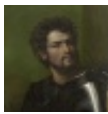
Celyn



Sheryl



Mary



Manfredi At

Facebook social plugin

MOST POPULAR ARTICLES



Conspiracy Theorists: UFO Over Antarctica?

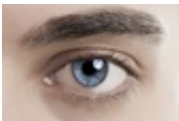
88,625



Severed Hands Discovered in Ancient Egypt Palace

views

23,835 views



Eyes Reveal Sexual Orientation

21,997 views



New Nessie Photo: 'Convincing' Proof of Loch Ness Monster?

15,583 views



Massive Meteorite Crater Found in Canadian Arctic

14,385 views



Evelyn Rynkiewicz shared [Gallery: Dazzling Photos of Dew-Covered Insects](#). · about a month ago



[Severed Hands Discovered in Ancient Egypt Palace](#)

1,336 people recommend this.



[Seeing the Milky Way Spiral in a Coffee Cup](#)

2 people recommend this.



[Porn May 'Shut Down' Part of Your Brain](#)

1,246 people recommend this.



[Common Soap Chemical May Impair Muscle Function](#)

8 people recommended this.

Facebook social plugin



FACEBOOK ACTIVITY



TWITTER ACTIVITY



LiveScience Two boa constrictors named Larry and Juliet & the medial mystery that uncovered a new virus. oak.ctx.ly/r/aae

12 minutes ago · reply · retweet · favorite

LiveScience Source of Mysterious Pumice 'Raft' in Pacific Found, #NASA Says oak.ctx.ly/r/a8a

2 hours ago · reply · retweet · favorite

LiveScience Why Mass Killers Aren't Necessarily #Psychopaths oak.ctx.ly/r/a4f

12 hours ago · reply · retweet · favorite



Join the conversation

Company Pages

[Company Info](#)

[About the Site](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Advertise with Us](#)

[Using our Content](#)

[Licensing & Reprints](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Sitemap](#)

TechMediaNetwork Brands

[TechMediaNetwork](#)

[iPadNewsDaily](#)

[TopTenREVIEWS](#)

[BusinessNewsDaily](#)

[LAPTOP](#)

[MyHealthNewsDaily](#)

[SPACE.com](#)

[SecurityNewsDaily](#)

[LiveScience](#)

[InnovationNewsDaily](#)

[TechNewsDaily](#)

[IT TechNewsDaily](#)

[Newsarama](#)

[Herman Street](#)

[Life's Little Mysteries](#)

[North Orion](#)

[OurAmazingPlanet](#)

Join our Mailing List

Join our community

FOLLOW US ON...



Copyright © 2012

TechMediaNetwork.com

All rights reserved.