From the gut of worms

Caenorhabditis elegans is a popular model organism that lends itself well to a number of different research areas. That includes the microbiome. *C. elegans* may be small and the microorganisms that dwell within it even smaller still, but, combined with advancing technologies to manipulate all parties, the worm makes a powerful system to probe host-microbe interactions.

In a new Perspective this month, Cassandra Backes, Daniel Martinez-Martinez, and Filipe Cabreiro of the MRC London Institute of Medical Sciences review the worm as a model for studying the microbiome, describing what it has revealed so far and what we might expect to learn from it in the future.

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What's up with NHPs?

When it comes to understanding human health and disease, nonhuman primate models remain critical components of research pipelines. Interest in the animals has been growing for some time across a number of different fields...and then COVID-19 hit, followed by the Chinese government's decision to ban exports of nonhuman primates. With demand potentially outstripping supply, there might not be enough primates to go around.

In the United States, the National Institutes of Health support multiple nonhuman primate colonies. In the first of a series of Commentaries about nonhuman primate use and availability, representatives from the Office of Research Infrastructure Programs (ORIP) describe how different species have proved useful for studying COVID-19, emphasizing the need to consider alternatives to missing macaques.

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Published online: 28 April 2021

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41684-021-00773-4>

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