

## Big-Brained Birds

**Find out which brain size is better prepared to cope with environmental changes**

POSTED: February 20, 2007, 5 a.m. EST

Parrots and other big-brained birds outlive their pea-brained cousins, such as ducks and ostriches, according to a study published in the UK journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* in January 2007.

A collaboration of researchers contributed to the study, which compared the brain size, body mass and mortality rates of more than 200 species of birds. "Parrots have the largest brains of all birds relative to their body size," said Louis Lefebvre, Ph.D., a co-author of the study and a professor of biology at McGill University in Canada. That brain power might help them survive despite life-threatening situations faced in the wild. "Our findings suggest that large-brained animals might be better prepared to cope with environmental challenges such as climate change and habitat destruction," said Tamas Szekely, Ph.D., of the University of Bath and a co-author of the study.