

# Sibling rivalry is so natural

IT is perfectly normal to bite your brother's head off, according to new research by scientists.

For years parents have told their children to be nicer to their sisters and brothers. But a group of scientists have found it is very natural for siblings to fight.

Dr Stuart West, of Edinburgh University's Institute of Cell, Animal and Population Biology, carried out the research with scientists from Rutgers University in the U.S. and Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama.

They examined the fighting between mating male fig wasps that hatch and live inside fig fruits.

Fights between related males were just as violent as among the less related males – brothers even grew huge jaws to chop off each other's heads, they found.

Dr West said of the findings, reported in this month's Nature magazine: 'Under certain circumstances you might not have to be as nice to your relatives.'

'There has been a lot of theory, but we have come up with the first real test with an organism.'