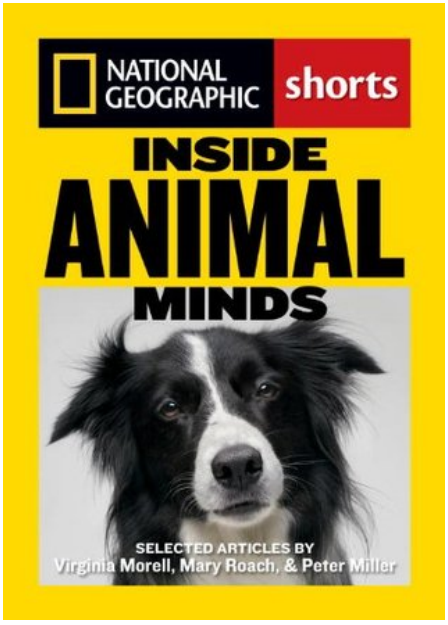

Inside Animal Minds: The New Science of Animal Intelligence

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The Animal Intelligence Bundle:

“Minds of Their Own” by Virginia Morell (March 2008)
“Almost Human” by Mary Roach (April 2008)
“The Genius of Swarms” by Peter Miller (July 2007)

In “Minds of Their Own,” Virginia Morell provides an overview of the science of animal intelligence. She introduces you to an African gray parrot named Alex, a bonobo named Kanzi, and a border collie named Betsy. Each of these animals tells us something interesting about the way they perceive and manipulate their world. The article also looks at what scientists are learning about the intelligence of dolphins and crows, beyond mere communication.

In “Almost Human,” Mary Roach takes us to the savannahs of Senegal to meet a group of 34 chimpanzees, whose behavior and social structures have given scientists some important clues about the nature of their communication and intelligence.

In “The Genius of Swarms,” Peter Miller looks at the collective behavior of ants, bees, and other insects for what they can tell us about social organization and how sometimes intelligence lies outside of the individual brain. This article served as the basis for his book, *The Smart Swarm: How Understanding Flocks, Schools, and Colonies Can Make Us Better at Communicating, Decision Making, and Getting Things Done*.

Inside Animal Minds: The New Science of Animal Intelligence Details

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From Reader Review Inside Animal Minds: The New Science of Animal Intelligence for online ebook

Elizabeth says

Very interesting

Rakesh says

nice articles from the Natgeo. The swarm intelligence article and ita application to human context make a interesting read. Short book can finish over a long cofee break.

Andrew says

We know that animals think, but what do they think and how would we know? And what does animal thinking mean to our relationship to animals? Are they more kindred to us than we are accustomed to thinking? If we knew more about what animals thought, would we be more concerned about their lives and conditions?

What I enjoyed about the book is that it showed how murky the lines are between animal thinking and human thinking, but doesn't overstep to suggested that animals think like humans do in a complete sense. We meet many people doing difficult and fascinating research on animal minds.

Morell's affection for animals and science come through quite clearly. This isn't a science text. It is a lay person's book, written in a very approachable way with a genuine desire to better understand animals. I think most people will gravitate toward the chapters on monkeys, dolphins, and dogs, but I thought all the chapters were interesting.

Kathleen says

Three different perspectives on three different aspects of animal intelligence. A collection of three well-written and accessible articles from *National Geographic* that highlight newer developments in human understanding of how other animals' minds work. Found this ebook collection because I was searching for Mary Roach material (author of *Stiff* and *Gulp*). Very interesting and, of course, completely supportive of all those things animal lovers seem to know about our companion species. I of course bored my spouse with chatter about all these "new" ideas for hours on our road trip last weekend (in between listening to CDs of lectures on the American Presidency in the 20th century).

Fernanda Carrascosa says

Nice, if you're interested in birds, monkeys or swarms. I guess I was just expecting something else.

Linden says

While the idea that rock ants teach each other, that dolphins pass the MSR (mirror self-recognition) test as well as using collaborative behavior socially, and that rats laugh offered an unimagined view of creature life. But it was the chapter about dogs that interested me the most.

Hungarian researcher Vilmos Csanyi (pronounced Chai-nee) proposed a hypothesis for research that the "transformation of the wolf to the dog was a better model for understanding the evolution of the human mind than the transformation of chimpanzee to human."

Interesting points within the chapter:

* Dogs can copy behavior of their owner (turn in a circle, jump, etc.) which means they have a sense of self.

* A dog's bark is often directed to us to convey the dog's inner state.

* Indoor-dwelling dogs hesitate to solve problems wolves and outdoor dogs do easily, checking with owners to make sure it is acceptable behavior.

* Border collies have a special auditory talent, able to associate speci?c sounds (a word spoken once) with an object to retrieve. Great apes are not able to do this.

One more bonus: In this book, Morrill recounts more examples of what I found so captivating in Bernd Heinrich's *The Mind of the Raven*--how researchers design experiments to answer questions about aspects of cognition.

Those five stars are big ones!

Alfred Haplo says

Well, thank goodness. This book reaffirms something I’ve known intuitively my entire life * - that animals are smart, and their intelligence is more evolved than we think. Every animal lover knows that without needing irrefutable evidence. Many studies have been conducted - is being conducted - to delve into the minds of animals because to understand them, is to understand ourselves. What might we gain from their evolution that we can adapt for our own? If we can see through their eyes, what might we learn about us as humans?

Humans are inherently selfish in what we seek to understand, so we try to understand animal-psyche in our language. We benchmark animal intelligence against human standards, human speech, human behaviors. How many words can a border collie recognize? What will a New Caledonian crow do given limited choices

A or B, or will it improvise? Can African gray parrots respond to words, and respond back with words? Can we teach chimpanzees, gorillas and bonozos to communicate with us? How can we apply the swarm intelligence of ants and bees into our corporate culture? Scientific quest for knowledge is always, first and foremost, for the benefit of the more superior species.

Oh, don’t get me wrong. I applaud the research to understand animal cognitive abilities. Just how exactly it serves to benefit the animals, I am not sure. Certainly it does them no harm. What the animals learn about the humans studying them is probably much less insightful contrariwise.

This is a quick and enjoyable read of really, a collection of articles with just enough information to whet the appetite. The blurb summarizes the book well, so I'll dispense with the repetition.

* (view spoiler)

Patricia Jacobs says

aS fascinating look inside animals minds

I have always thought animals more intelligent than scientists have previously thought. The language was clear and concise and never boring.

Ram says

That was a wonderful and a quick read. The information packed in it were very interesting and the learning that humans could take from life around them. Nature has shaped them over the years to be more efficient and effective at what they are and they offer us more to learn from them, rather than to look at them with disdain and treat them as inferior to the human species

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