

HUMANS & ANIMALS

WHAT WE HAVE IN COMMON

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HUMANS & ANIMALS: WHAT WE HAVE IN COMMON



Albatros



We humans have long thought of ourselves as superior to animals, because of, for example, our ability to use tools, build complicated structures, use complex language, and experience diverse emotions. For ages, animals were seen as mere machines, driven purely by instinct.

In the 1960s, though, this view began to change. At that time, scientists observing animals in the wild started to notice that animals have some of the same abilities as us. Jane Goodall, for example, observed how chimpanzees caught food with tools such as sticks or stones.



Scientists not only began to observe in animals an increasing number of similarities to humans; they also began conducting different types of tests with them. One such test was the mirror test, which showed that many animals, just like young children, realize from a certain age that the reflection in the mirror is not someone else but themselves.



However, some very intelligent creatures, including octopuses, did not pass that test. What could it mean? Well, perhaps nothing at all. In tests, scientists often assess animals using criteria based on human standards, but many animals rely on different senses than humans and perceive situations differently.



INTRODUCTION



Let's focus on what unites humans, not on what makes us supposedly superior to other beings. Although it may seem that humans are a little more advanced in some ways, as no other animal has mastered space travel, written a book, or created a masterful work of art, there remain many areas in which animals are more proficient. Indeed, without animals, which have often served to inspire or assist us, we might not have accomplished some of these achievements.



Animals and humans live in shared communities. We communicate with each other, we form relationships with each other, and we also experience a variety of emotions. Animals feel joy and love and also argue, like humans do. Termites build huge structures in which the whole community lives and works together. Crows can fashion tools to help them overcome difficult situations. Elephants play together and show love for one another, and if a friend or relative dies, they mourn the loss.



Humans can both create the things around them and also destroy things forever. It would be a huge pity to lose the beautiful world of nature just because we consider ourselves superior to other creatures. So let's try to get to know the living beings around us better and treat them with more kindness and respect.



Agriculture has been an inseparable part of human life for many thousands of years. We are very skilled farmers and we grow a diverse range of crops that feed families all over the world. We have all kinds of assistance, from animals to really powerful machines, which give us lots of help with all the hard work. But humans are not the only creatures who can grow food. Among the creatures that have started using agriculture, humans are only in fourth place!

PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD MOST COMMONLY GROW CORN, GRAIN, AND RICE.



WE USE TOOLS THAT MAKE OUR WORK EASIER AND MORE EFFICIENT.



At first, humans had to rely on their hunting and gathering skills, so as not to go hungry. And when there was nothing to gather or catch, they had to journey to other places.



All that changed around 12,000 years ago, when prehistoric humans discovered that they could grow plants themselves. They began to settle permanently in one place. Thanks to the food supplies!



Gradually, humans learned to breed wild animals. They domesticated sheep, goats, and other cattle. Humans bred animals not only for meat and milk, but also for their help with work in the fields.

WE FARM



Humans are amateurs compared to ants of the genus *Atta*. These ant farmers perfected their skills over 50 million years ago! A convoy of ants carries pieces of leaves to an underground city, where they grow a fungus that they feed on. And it grows like crazy! No wonder—the ants fertilize it with a mixture of leaves chewed into a mushy pulp, ant saliva, and excreta. Besides ants, other creatures also enjoy gardening, farming, and even breeding cattle. Animal farmers are just as good as their human counterparts.

THE ANT WORKERS MAKE THIS TRIP SEVERAL TIMES A DAY.



INSTEAD OF TOOLS, ANTS USE THEIR MANDIBLES, WHICH CUT THE LEAVES UP IN NO TIME.



The dusky farmer fish lives on coral reefs. It maintains seaweed gardens, which it carefully tends by picking out any unwanted weeds. It bravely defends its garden against greedy thieves!

The yeti crab lives at in great depths where hot water escapes from the Earth's interior. It grows its food (bacteria) on its hairy claws and harvests it with its comb-like mouth.

Common ants breed aphids much like humans breed cattle. Aphids secrete honeydew, a sweet nectar that ants love. The ants provide protection to the aphids, so they can drink to their heart's content.



Humans are playful creatures, and children especially love to play. Playing is not only fun; it's also extremely important for their development. Through play, we learn new skills, cultivate relationships with others, and get to know the world around us. In the course of our lives, the games change and we develop in all kinds of ways. We are lucky that our childhood is unusually long compared to that of other creatures. It means we have a lot of time to play different games!

WE PLAY



CHILDREN LIKE PLAYING CHASE AND HIDE-AND-SEEK.



EVERY CHILD NEEDS TO PLAY, JUST LIKE THEY NEED FOOD AND SLEEP.

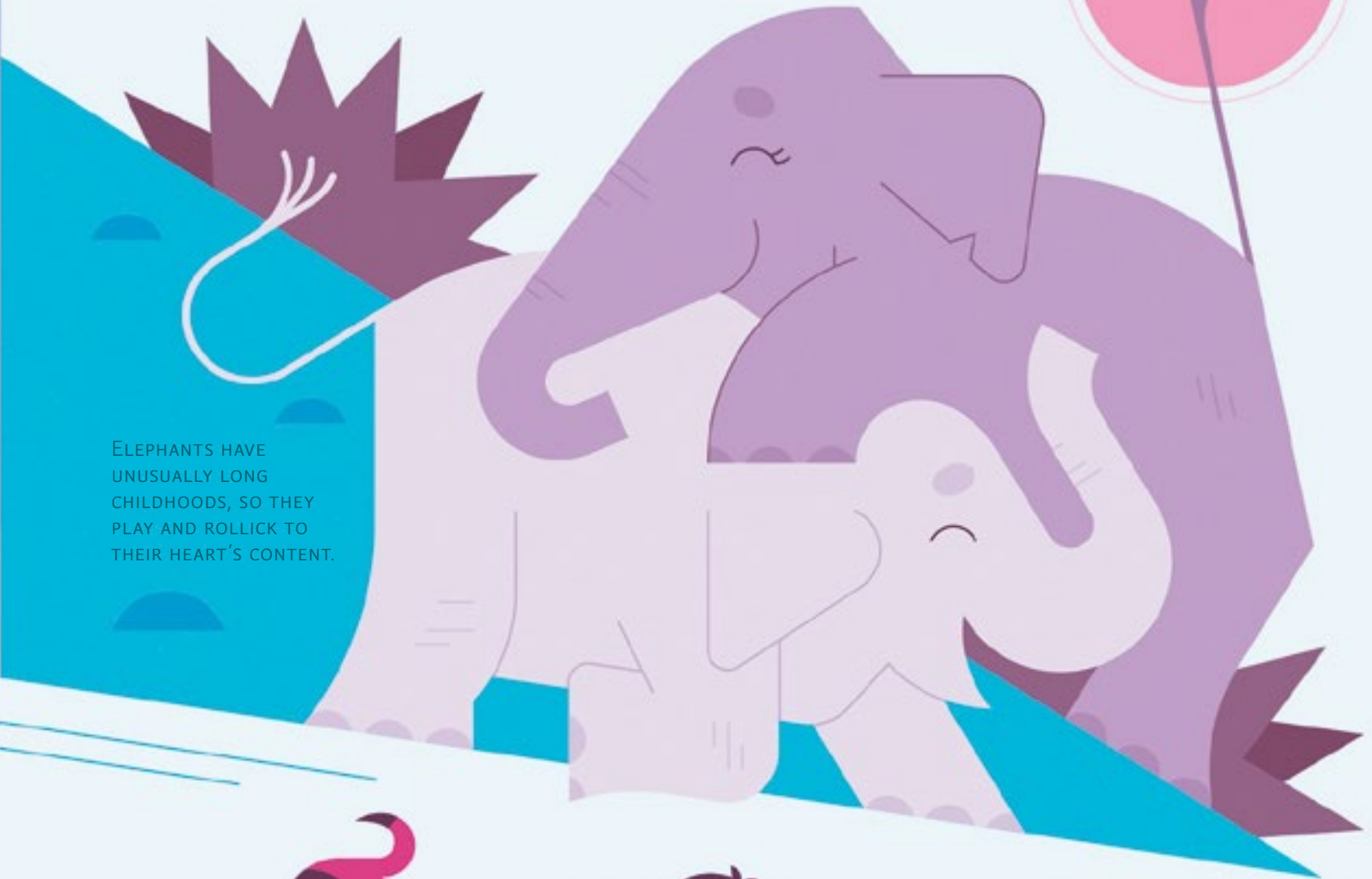


You are most likely to see young mammals engrossed in play, but birds and reptiles are no exception. Animals spend a lot of time playing different kinds of games. Animals sometimes play alone, or with their parents and friends. The most common form of play is fighting or chasing. Young ones explore their surroundings and face unfamiliar situations while playing. It engages and strengthens their bodies and brains. What's more, it's such a good time!

ELEPHANTS CAN COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER. A SHAKE OF THE HEAD IS AN INVITATION TO PLAY!



ELEPHANTS HAVE UNUSUALLY LONG CHILDHOODS, SO THEY PLAY AND ROLLICK TO THEIR HEART'S CONTENT.



Parents play with their children from a very early age. When playing, children use all of their senses, which helps them to develop in all kinds of ways.



Older children use their imagination in their games, because they have more developed brains. A stick can be a sword for fighting a dragon and a soft toy is a great companion for a tea party.



Even adults still like playing games. They are just a bit different from the ones they used to play. Adults like to play board games or card games with their family or friends.



Kittens are excellent at playing the hunter. Almost anything can draw their attention. They often catch their prey and then release it for fun. Perhaps they are practicing hunting for the future.



Some chimpanzee girls collect sticks or pebbles to use as dolls. They look after them, cuddle them, carry them around, and put them to bed. They will certainly make excellent moms!



Adult dolphins like to play a clever seaweed game. They pass it to each other in the pod like a ball. It's a fun game and it also helps strengthen relationships between the dolphins.



We have long thought that using tools is a privilege strictly for humans. Thanks to the evolutionary changes in the bodies of our ancient ancestors, such as walking upright on two feet and having skillful hands and a more developed brain, we mastered the skill of tool-making. However, we now know that animals are also able not only to use tools, but to make them as well. Even so, we are still one step ahead of them, as we think in much more complicated ways. And we have invented so many things that have made our lives much easier.

MAN-MADE TOOLS ARE LITERALLY ALL AROUND US.



WE USE TOOLS

TOOLS ALLOW US TO PREPARE MUCH TASTIER MEALS.



From an early age, we learn to use different tools. Gradually, we get better at using them. For example, we first learn to eat with a spoon. Then we move on to using a knife and a fork.



At first, our ancestors weren't too good at using tools. Their abilities were comparable to those of other primates. But as their brains developed and their hands became more skillful, things began to change.



Humans are able to make complex tools, which can make other tools! From simple devices, such as a potter's wheel, to complex machines in factories that churn out thousands of tools each day.



There are quite a few animals in the wild that use tools. And it's not just mammals: the use of simple tools has been mastered by birds, and also fish, crabs, and certain species of octopuses. So, why do people and animals actually do this? Well, they do it to get food, to make their lives easier, and to protect themselves from the dangers of the world around them. Some creatures use tools instinctively; others have watched and learned how to use them. But only the cleverest can make, modify, and refine tools by themselves.

A TWIG IS GREAT FOR CATCHING TERMITES. LEAVES CAN BE USED FOR DRINKING OR, ALTERNATIVELY, FOR TOILET PAPER.



CHIMPS BREAK THE HARD SHELLS OF NUTS OR FRUITS WITH STONE TOOLS.



The little veined octopus lives near the ocean floor, where there is nowhere to hide. So, it often carries coconut half-shells with it. When in danger, it uses them to build a fort, which protects it.



Do we need arms to use tools? Of course not. When many birds and fish find a difficult-to-open treat, they simply take it in their mouth and whack it on a hard surface until it opens.



New Caledonian crows modify things around them to solve various problems. Worms hiding in wood are best pulled out using a twig with a hook at the end. They use their beaks to make the hooks.



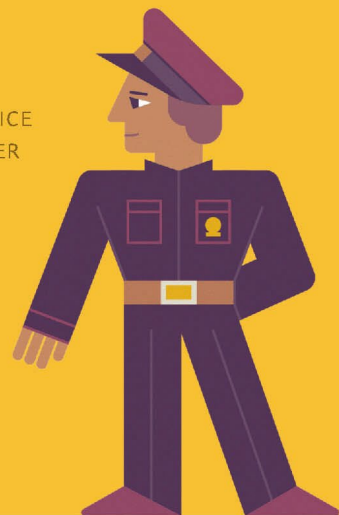
Every day, millions of adults leave their homes and go to work. Some of them work in buildings and others work out in the open air. If you look around you, you will see all kinds of different professions. All of them are useful and important, because thanks to them, we make a great community. It doesn't matter if you work as a teacher or a mail carrier. The best is when people enjoy their work. What would you like to do when you grow up?



A HOT-DOG VENDOR

WE WORK

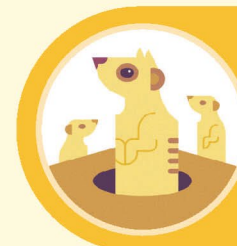
A POLICE OFFICER



A STREET CLEANER



Wild animals may not work in the same sense that humans do, but that certainly doesn't mean they don't work at all. So, what do they do? Usually they look for food for themselves and their families and try to protect themselves from danger. Many animals also have important roles that contribute to the proper functioning of their environment. In the water and on land, you will find inspectors, cleaners, security guards, and gardeners everywhere. If their home happened to be damaged or destroyed, all that work would have been for nothing.



ANIMALS THAT LIVE IN GROUPS, SUCH AS MEERKATS, ALL HAVE THEIR SPECIFIC ROLES.

A SECURITY GUARD



A NANNY



A SUPPLIER



We go to work to earn money and provide our families with food, shelter, and security. We spend a lot of time at work, and that's why we cherish the time we spend with our families.



Many people work helping others. Some people have highly demanding jobs, such as doctors. Before they can start work, they have to become experts in their field.



In creative professions, people's ideas and visions can take shape. Architects can transfer their designs from paper right onto the street and their buildings rise up in every city.



Bird moms have very important jobs: day after day, they provide food and protection for their chicks. They have to do their job really well; otherwise their young wouldn't survive.



Going inside a moray eel's mouth takes a lot of courage. Cleaner wrasse fish operate stations where they give their customers a healthy cleaning. In return, their customers don't eat them!



Beaver dams are not just opulent homes. They contribute to the health of the neighborhood. The dams prevent flooding and drought, and ensure the well-being of other living creatures.



How are human babies different from those of animals? Once we are born, we are totally dependent on our parents, and without them, we wouldn't survive. This is because we are not born fully developed—we have to grow and mature once we have arrived in the world. Our muscles get stronger, our brains get larger, and we develop all kinds of skills. We gradually learn everything that is important. Human parenting is unique in the natural world, as no other creature looks after its young for as long as humans do.

NEWBORNS FEEL SAFE AND SECURE IN MOM'S ARMS.

NEWBORN BABIES ARE HELPLESS. THEY ARE UNABLE TO MOVE OR EAT ON THEIR OWN AND THEY CAN'T TALK.

WE HAVE FAMILIES



A mother carries her baby in her belly for nine months before giving birth. After the little one is born, it is looked after primarily by its parents, while friends and family help out.



At first, human babies need the help of their parents for everything. Their parents protect, feed, and carry them, and gradually teach them to become independent.



Some couples are unable to have children, even when they really want them. The solution is to adopt a child who doesn't have any parents. This way they create a new loving family!



There are different kinds of animal parents. Sometimes, it is only the mother who takes care of the young, and sometimes it is both parents. In some cases, the newborns never even meet their parents. Mammals, who take very good care of their little ones, are among the most devoted parents. And it's no wonder, as the mothers feed their young on milk, so they can look after them longer and teach them everything they need to know. These young mammals are often among the cleverest, like apes. Some offspring of other animals are fully developed and self-sufficient almost as soon as they are born and are able to begin independent lives right away.

AFTER IT IS BORN, THE BABY ORANGUTAN HOLDS ONTO THE HAIRS ON ITS MOTHER'S CHEST AND LETS ITSELF BE CARRIED, FED, AND PROTECTED.



THE MOTHERS TAKE CARE OF THEIR YOUNG FOR EIGHT YEARS. ONLY WHEN THEY ARE COMPLETELY INDEPENDENT DO THEY HAVE ANOTHER OFFSPRING.



Seahorse dads certainly stand out in the crowd. First, the mom lays eggs into a pouch on the dad's belly. He then carries the eggs until it is time to give birth to teeny-weeny seahorses!



Many animals can take care of themselves soon after they are born. They wouldn't survive in the wilderness otherwise. Young giraffes can run an hour after being born!



Animals also adopt abandoned offspring. This is usually done by mothers who have lost their own young or who have not yet had their own. Adoption is common among northern elephant seals.



Humans like talking to each other. Thanks to language, we can express our thoughts, feelings, desires, and needs, and pass on information about ourselves and our surroundings. Human language consists of words with meanings, which are composed into sentences that follow certain rules. We are unable to speak from birth and we wouldn't be able to learn our mother tongue without help from others. At first, our language is clumsy, but we soon learn to speak like real experts!

WE COMMUNICATE

WE CAN TALK ABOUT THINGS BEYOND WHAT IS HAPPENING RIGHT HERE AND NOW, AND WE CAN ALSO TALK ABOUT THINGS THAT ARE NOT REAL.



All our words are accompanied by body language: we use gestures, we have a particular posture, and our face reflects our feelings. This helps us understand what others mean by what they say.



We can communicate just as well in writing as we do by speaking. Thanks to written language, we can send letters, emails, and text messages to people we can't see in person.



Some people are deaf, yet they have no trouble communicating with each other. They use sign language. They "talk" with their hands and read people's lips.



You will often read that what separates people from animals is language and the ability to communicate with it. Yet animals communicate proficiently with one another, and they do so without the need for words. Using a combination of sounds, facial expressions, and gestures, they convey everything they need to. It seems, however, that the themes discussed by animals are somewhat limited. They mostly talk about what's going on in the moment. But who knows? Perhaps animals do have complex languages of their own but we have not yet managed to decipher them.



BIRD LANGUAGE VARIES ACCORDING TO THE SITUATION.

SHARP SHRIEKS ARE A WARNING.



CHICKS CHIRP LOUDLY WHEN THEY WANT FOOD.



MELODIOUS SONGS ARE USED IN COURTSHIP.



Many animals use facial expressions, postures, and gestures to show how they are feeling. For example, the facial expressions of horses can show whether they are scared, happy, or feeling curious.



Animals have very highly developed senses. Some rely on smell to communicate, others on touch. Koalas use both; they send messages by means of smell and say hello by rubbing noses.



Some creatures can communicate even in the dark. Fireflies, for example, call out to potential partners by lighting up their bottoms. The message is clear: let's get together!



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THINGS WE
HAVE IN
COMMON!

They can construct majestic buildings that provide shelter for many families. They can also communicate with their companions and do all kinds of different jobs. Do you know who we're talking about?

If you guessed humans, you are mistaken. No, in this case we're talking about termites! Humans have much more in common with them and other creatures than it might seem at first glance. And that's exactly what this book is about. Enter a world where we shine a light on the similarities between ourselves and other living beings. Like us, many animals learn and can use tools.

They experience emotions, have friends, and show their love for one another. Open your mind and your heart, and learn to treat the living creatures around you with the respect and reverence they deserve.

They have much to teach us!

ISBN 978-80-00-06357-7



9 788000 063577

5 1 6 9 5



\$ 16.95

Printed in Ukraine by Unisoft.
www.albatrosbooks.com