



Fascinating creatures

Some readable non-fiction about animals

An annotated booklist

MARGARET ISKANDAR

Book Selector

General

Downer, John. **Supernatural: the unseen powers of animals.** - BBC, 1999. (591.51 DOW)

Looks at the extrasensory powers of various animals and insects. Outstanding illustrations, most in colour.

Gill, Anton. **Extinct.** - Channel Four Bks., 2001. (560 GIL)

Reconstructs the lives of six extinct animals: the mammoth, the sabre-toothed tiger, the Irish elk, the dodo, the great auk and the Tasmanian tiger. The illustrations, mainly in colour, make good use of computer graphics and models.

Graham, Bernie. **Creature comfort: animals that heal.** - Simon, 1999. (636 GRA)

Looks at all aspects of animal-assisted therapy and at the health benefits of friendly contact with pets and other animals. Illustrated.

Lavers, Chris. **Why elephants have big ears: understanding patterns of life on earth.** - Phoenix, 2001. (591.38 LAV)

How and why animals have developed the way they have. Illustrated with some drawings but no photographs.

Marven, Nigel. **Incredible journeys: featuring the world's greatest animal travellers.** - BBC, 1997. (591.525 MAR)

Covers the migrations of six animals in readable style. Illustrated with vivid colour photographs.

Page, George. **The singing gorilla: understanding animal intelligence.** - Headline, 1999. (591.51 PAG)

Discusses the intelligence, minds and emotions of animals, from insects to primates. A few colour plates.

Sheldrake, Rupert. **Dogs that know when their owners are coming home, and other unexplained powers of animals.** - Arrow, 2000. (636 SHE)

An open-minded inquiry into the alleged paranormal powers of animals for the general reader.

Invertebrates

Conniff, Richard. **Spineless wonders: the joys of formication.** - Souvenir P., 1997. (592 CON)

Looks at such creatures as leeches, squids, dragonflies, tarantulas, fleas, earthworms and mosquitoes. Illustrated.

Spielman, Andrew. **Mosquito: a natural history of our most persistent and deadly foe.** - Faber, 2001. (595.771 SPI)

A Harvard professor who has dedicated his life to studying the mosquito offers a fascinating and readable look at this insect. Illustrated.

Birds

Attenborough, David. **The life of birds.** - BBC, 1998. (598.251 ATT)

Bird behaviour, with a wealth of interesting information presented in accessible and readable style. Illustrated with high-quality colour photographs.

Burger, Joanna. **The parrot who owns me: the story of a relationship.** - Sidgwick, 2001. (636.6865 BUR)

Ornithologist Burger describes her 15 years with her pet Amazon parrot. Combines scientific knowledge with warmth, humour and pathos in an enchanting book. Colour illustrations.

*Juniper, Tony. **Spix's macaw: the race to save the world's rarest bird.** - Fourth Estate, 2002.

Juniper, director of Friends of the Earth, describes the plight of this almost-extinct parrot and shows how human greed and other failings hamper conservation efforts.

Marine and aquatic animals

Allen, Thomas B. **Shark attacks: their causes and avoidance.** - Constable, 2001. (597.31 ALL)

A readable and interesting look at the subject. Illustrated with photographs.

Cahill, Tim. **Dolphins.** - National Geographic Soc., c2000. (Q 599.53 CAH)

Highlights in the field of dolphin research, attractively presented and illustrated.

Carpuzzo, Michael. **Close to shore.** - Review, 2002. (597.31 CAP)

An interesting and readable account of the series of shark attacks off the New Jersey shore in 1916 that sparked off a nation-wide panic.

Edwards, Hugh. **Shark: the shadow below.** - HarperCollins, 1997. (597.31 EDW)

An Australian diver and journalist provides factual information and recounts personal experiences and anecdotes about sharks. Illustrated with colour photographs.

*Martin, Stephen. **The whales' journey: a year in the life of a humpback whale, and a century in the history of whaling.** - Allan, 2001.

Describes the migration patterns and behaviour of the humpback whale, and looks at how and why it has been hunted.

Montgomery, Sy. **Journey of the pink dolphins: an Amazon quest.** - Simon, c2000. (599.538 MON)

A nature columnist combines travel, natural history, and myth and legend in an account of a trip to the Amazon to follow a rare freshwater dolphin species. Illustrated.

Sharks. - Reader's Digest, c1998. (Q 597.31 SHA)

Covers all aspects of sharks. Informative, accessible and well illustrated.

Smolker, Rachel. **To touch a wild dolphin.** - Souvenir P., 2001. (599.53 SMO)

A fascinating book about dolphins, which young American scientist Smolker and her

colleagues studied in a remote bay in Western Australia. Colour photographs.

Weinberg, Samantha. **A fish caught in time: the search for the coelacanth.** - Fourth Estate, 1999. (597.46 WEI)

Describes the coelacanth, often called a living fossil, and its discovery by South African chemistry lecturer and amateur ichthyologist JLB Smith. Illustrated.

Mammals

*Attenborough, David. **The life of mammals.** - BBC, 2002.

An overview of unusual mammals from around the world. Well illustrated with colour photographs.

Carnivores and predators

Bothma, J du P. **Larger carnivores of the African savannas.** - Van Schaik, 1999. (599.7409 BOT)

This introduction to the larger African carnivores includes recent research presented in accessible style. Well illustrated with colour photographs and drawings.

Bright, Michael. **Man-eaters.** - Robson, 2000. (591.53 BRI)

Looks at animals that prey on humans, from man-eating lions and tigers to sharks and crocodiles. Colour photographs.

Mills, Gus. **African predators.** - Struik, 2001. (Q 599.7409 MIL)

Covers 14 of the larger African predators, with sections on cats, hyenas and dogs. Beautifully produced and lavishly illustrated with colour photographs.

Cats (Domestic)

*Dibra, Bash. **Cat speak: how to communicate with cats by learning their secret language.** - New American Library, 2003.

Explains how to get the most out of human-feline relationships through understanding the cat's behaviour, body language, vocalisations and facial expressions.

Jay, Roni. **The kingdom of the cat.** - Apple, c2000. (Q 636.8 JAY)

Includes the history of the cat, and cats in art and literature, as well as a complete guide to cat breeds. Attractively presented and illustrated. (Note: This title is only available in the Central Collection.)

Tabor, Roger. **Roger Tabor's cat behaviour: the complete feline problem solver.** - David & Charles, 1997. (Q 636.8 TAB)

A naturalist and biologist looks in detail at feline behaviour and at the human-cat

relationship, and makes practical suggestions for coping with problem behaviour in pet cats. Colour photographs.

Wren, Christopher S. **The cat who covered the world: the adventures of Henrietta and her foreign correspondent.** - Orion, 2002. (636.88 WRE)

New York Times foreign correspondent Wren writes about his pet cat, who accompanied him and his family on his various postings around the world.

Dogs

Budiansky, Stephen. **The truth about dogs: an enquiry into the ancestry, social conventions, mental habits and moral fibre of canis familiaris.** - Phoenix, 2002. (636.7 BUD)

A scientist and dog-lover explains canine behaviour. Based on scientific and genetic research and presented in readable and entertaining fashion. Some illustrations.

De Bernieres, Louis. **Red Dog.** - Secker, 2001. (636.78 DEB)

This slim volume of anecdotes about a dog that attained legendary status in a remote area of Australia evoked mixed critical reaction for the author of the acclaimed **Captain Corelli's mandolin**.

Fennell, Jan. **The dog listener: [learning the language of your best friend].** - Harper-Collins, 2000. (636.7088 FEN)

Describes how the author developed her own unique system of training, based on the dog's natural instinct to defer to the pack leader and the canine rituals involved. Readable, with many interesting anecdotes. Some photographs.

*Gallant, Johan. **The story of the African dog.** - University of Natal P., 2002.

An informative and readable study of the African dog. Colour photographs.

Gonzalez, Philip. **The dog who rescues cats: the true story of Ginny.** - Simon, 1997. (636.78 GIN)

Poignant true-life account of a young disabled Puerto Rican industrial worker and his dog, Ginny. Illustrated.

Martin, Peter. **A dog called Perth: the voyage of a beagle.** - Orion Bks., 2002. (636.78 MAR)

The story of the Martin family and their much-loved dog. Well written and readable.

Masson, Jeffrey Moussaieff. **Dogs never lie about love: reflections on the emotional world of dogs.** - Vintage, 1998. (636.7 MAS)

An engaging look at dogs and their emo-

tions, based in part on the author's observations of his own dogs. Illustrated.

Van Deventer, Hennie. **'n Vriend vir altyd: honderde hondestories.** - Human, 2000. (636.78 VAN)

A collection of stories about dogs, chosen from items that have appeared in the press over the years.

Elephants

Balfour, Daryl. **African elephants: a celebration of majesty.** - Struik, c1997. (Q 599.61 BAL)

A beautifully-produced tribute to these magnificent animals, profusely illustrated with colour photographs.

Groning, Karl. **Elephants: a cultural and natural history.** - Konemann, c1999. (Q 599.61)

A quite comprehensive work, lavishly illustrated with colour photographs.

MacPherson, Malcolm. **The cowboy and his elephant: the story of a remarkable friendship.** - Headline, 2001. [Paperback edition: Headline, 2002.] (599.61 MAC)

A moving true story about an unusual human-animal friendship and a man who cared for a traumatised baby elephant. Illustrated.

Payne, Katy. **Silent thunder: the hidden voice of elephants.** - Ball, 1998. (599.61 PAY)

The author starts with a study of elephant communication, but progresses to wide-ranging ideas about elephants and their social life, the evils of culling, and the nature of animals and people.

*Watson, Lyall. **Elephantoms: tracking the elephant.** - Norton, 2002.

A blend of natural history, memoirs and musings in which the elephant plays a central role.

Horses

*Goodfellow, Adam and Golding, Nicole. **Whispering back: [tales from a stable in the English countryside].** - Ebury P., 2003.

A couple who specialise in helping problem horses using the methods pioneered by Monty Roberts tell of their experiences in very readable style. Some colour photographs.

Midkiff, Mary. **She flies without wings: how horses touch a woman's soul.** - Hodder, 2001. (636.1001 MID)

The bond between women and horses, as seen through reminiscences, social history, biology, and literature. Illustrated.

Morris, Desmond. **Illustrated horse-watching.** - Ebury P., 2000. (636.1 MOR)
 Explanations of equine behaviour and characteristics, focusing on puzzling aspects that people ask about, are presented in the author's usual accessible style. Appealing colour illustrations.

Roberts, Monty. **Shy Boy: the horse that came in from the wild.** - HarperCollins, 1999. (636.1088 ROB)

The famous 'horse whisperer' demonstrates his training methods with a wild mustang. Enjoyable read, attractively illustrated with colour photographs.

Lions

Eloff, Fritz. **Hunters of the dunes: the story of the Kalahari lion.** - Sunbird, 2002. (Q 599.7442 ELO)

Eloff, Fritz. **Jagters van die duine: die storie van die Kalaharileeu.** - Van Schaik, 1999. (Q 599.7442 ELO)

The author studied lions in the Kalahari Gemsbok Park for 40 years. He describes his experiences, including using San trackers and his own observations of the lions. Many colour photographs.

Kat, Pieter. **Prides: the lions of Moremi.** - Southern Book, 2000. (Q 599.7442 KAT)
 Describes research done on four prides of lions in the Moremi Game Reserve in the Okavango area of Botswana, providing fresh insights into lion biology, behaviour and conservation. Lavishly illustrated with superb colour photographs, it is also a wonderful browse.

McNeice, Travers. **The lion children.** - Orion, 2001. (916.819 MCN)

The five McNeice children moved with their mother to Botswana and ended up living in the bush at a lion research camp. Here three of the children write of their experiences and of studying lions. Illustrated with drawings, paintings and colour photographs by the children. There is also a chapter of facts about lions.

Primates

Attwater, Helen. **My gorilla journey: living with the orphans of the rainforest.** - Sidgwick, 1999. (599.8846 ATT)

A wild-life adventure story that tells of the work done by the author and her husband with orphaned gorillas in the Congo, and their struggle to continue the work amid fighting and political strife. Black-and-white photographs.

Dunbar, Robin. **Cousins: our primate relatives.** - BBC, 2000. (Q 599.8 DUN)

A wide-ranging look at the primates - prosimians, monkeys and apes (including humans). Well illustrated, mainly with colour photographs. Attractive, popular-level presentation but authoritative and with some substance.

Lindsey, Jennifer. **Jane Goodall: 40 years at Gombe: a tribute to four decades of wild-life research.** - Stewart, Tabori, 1999. (Q 599.8844 LIN)

Looks at the life and work of dr Jane Goodall, leading chimpanzee researcher, and at the natural history of the animals to which she has devoted her life. Lavishly illustrated with good-quality colour photographs.

Russon, Anne E. **Orangutans: wizards of the rain forest.** - Hale, 1999. (599.8842 RUS)

An associate professor of psychology, who has been studying learning and intelligence in orangutans since 1989, looks in particular at the minds and behaviour of orangutans, and at conservation efforts. Lavishly illustrated with colour photographs.

Sapolsky, Robert M. **A primate's memoir: love, death and baboons in East Africa.** - Vintage, 2002. (599.8209 SAP)

Combines popular science, travel and autobiography in describing the author's 20 years of studying baboons in East Africa.

*Weber, Bill. **In the kingdom of gorillas: the quest to save Rwanda's mountain gorillas.** - Aurum P., 2002.

Includes accounts of working with Dian Fossey, later developments in Mountain Gorilla Project, the effects of the civil war in Rwanda, and the natural history of the gorillas themselves. Illustrated with colour and black-and-white photographs.

The platypus

Moyal, Ann. **Platypus.** - Allen & Unwin, 2001. (599.29 MOY)

The story of Australia's strange mammal, the platypus, and the scientists who studied it.

Veterinarians' memoirs, animal anecdotes and reminiscences

Grant, David. **Just practising: early days as a country vet.** - Simon, 1999. (636.089 GRA)

The author looks back to the 1960s when he started out as a vet and tells stories of his early experiences working with animals.

Grant, David. **Tales from the animal hospital.** - Simon, 1997. (636.089)

Based on a popular BBC television series. Grant, director of the RSPCA Veterinary Hospital in Harmsworth, gives a readable, behind-the-scenes account of some of the animals featured in the programme.

Karesh, William S. **Appointment at the ends of the world: memoirs of a wildlife veterinarian.** - Warner Bks., 2000. (636.089 KAR)

Karesh is based at the Bronx Zoo, headquarters for the wildlife Conservation Society, but travels all over the world in this work as a wildlife vet. Here he writes about his adventures and unusual patients.

*Kelleher, Donna. **Angel and other miracles of animal healing.** - Rider, 2003.

Stories and anecdotes about holistic veterinary medicine and an explanation of the principles that underlie it.

Sharp, Chrystal. **If the cat fits --: stories of a vet's wife.** - Penguin, 2001. (636.089 SHA)

An animal-lover married to a vet offers anecdotes and reminiscences that focus largely on the animals in her life. Funny, moving and readable.

*Sharp, Chrystal. **Dog in my footsteps: more stories of a vet's wife.** - Penguin, 2002.

More engaging animal stories and personal reminiscences from this local author, following **If the cat fits --: stories of a vet's wife.**

Note: Titles marked with * were still on order or are being processed at the time of writing.