



# Second Nature: The Inner Lives of Animals (MacSci)

*Jonathan Balcombe*

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For centuries we believed that humans were the only ones that mattered. The idea that animals had feelings was either dismissed or considered heresy. Today, that's all changing. New scientific studies of animal behavior reveal perceptions, intelligences, awareness and social skills that would have been deemed fantasy a generation ago. The implications make our troubled relationship to animals one of the most pressing moral issues of our time.

Jonathan Balcombe, animal behaviorist and author of the critically acclaimed *Pleasurable Kingdom*, draws on the latest research, observational studies and personal anecdotes to reveal the full gamut of animal experience?from emotions, to problem solving, to moral judgment. Balcombe challenges the widely held idea that nature is red in tooth and claw, highlighting animal traits we have disregarded until now: their nuanced understanding of social dynamics, their consideration for others, and their strong tendency to avoid violent conflict. Did you know that dogs recognize unfairness and that rats practice random acts of kindness? Did you know that chimpanzees can trounce humans in short-term memory games? Or that fishes distinguish good guys from cheaters, and that birds are susceptible to mood swings such as depression and optimism?

With vivid stories and entertaining anecdotes, Balcombe gives the human pedestal a strong shake while opening the door into the inner lives of the animals themselves.

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