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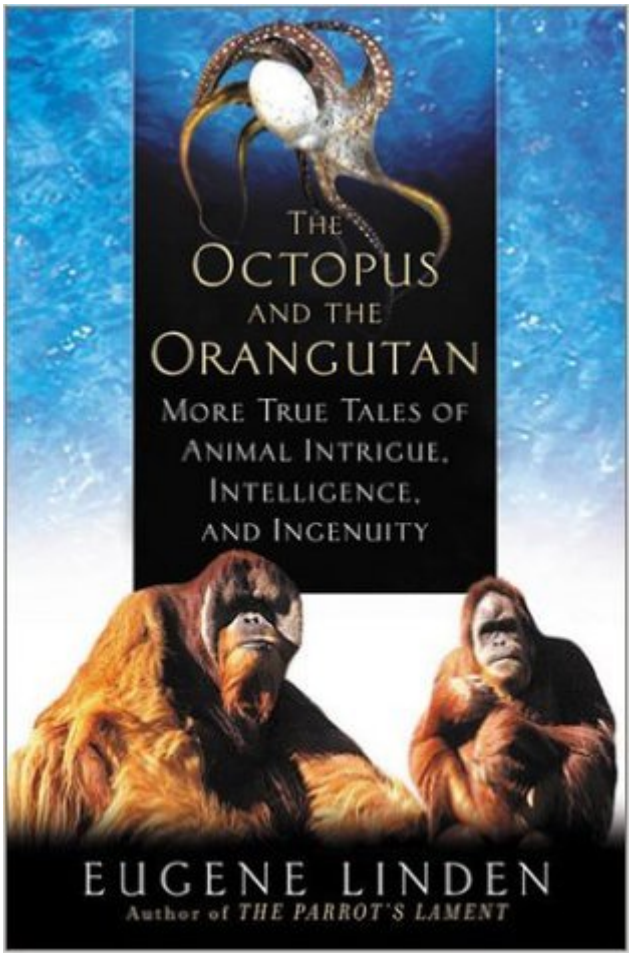
The Octopus And The Orangutan: More True Tales Of Animal Intrigue, Intelligence, And Ingenuity



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Synopsis

In The Octopus and the Orangutan, Eugene Linden takes readers on another unforgettable journey into the minds and hearts of animals. The Parrot's Lament, his acclaimed previous book, featured extraordinary true stories of animal consciousness and intelligence. Linden's latest book goes beyond our everyday encounters with animals at home and in the zoo in a wide-ranging collection of real-life anecdotes that offer further compelling evidence of their higher mental capabilities and their awareness of the needs and feelings of others. The Octopus and the Orangutan reveals extraordinary new details about animals introduced in The Parrot's Lament, and then finds intelligent behavior in surprising new places, ranging from the octopus's garden to the crow's nest. Amazing feats of stealth, deception, and larceny accompany unexpected acts of kindness and friendship. Animals show they are cagey bargainers and tough negotiators both with their human keepers and with one another. The animals themselves are our guides in this fresh look at the question of animal intelligence. From the beloved pets we think we know to the remarkable survival skills of creatures in the wild, Eugene Linden once again shares his wonder and joy at the infinite variety of animal behavior that continues to inform, amaze, and touch us all.

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Customer Reviews

I purchased and read the Parrot's Lament by the same author. I gave it away at some point and ordered this one because the topic of non human intelligence is in my field. I remember now why I didn't keep the PLament. This author covers some fascinating animal stories and refers to research

all in one volume that could be a great reference. But says things like "an octopus holding a shell over it’s head for protection from predators is wishing to be a mollusk" because it misses it’s evolutionary shell.I understand it may be a cute way to explain a complex issue, but I don’t need the ideas dumbed down and there is a risk that people reading will actually believe any of that can be known because an octopus is smart enough to understand other animals might bite or eat him.

It is of no dispute that animals display varying levels of intelligence. Occasionally, many creatures seem to display human-like emotions and temperaments. Our pets’ eyes sometimes seem to sparkle with an attentive knowledge and other animals, such as dolphins and apes, display a level of intelligence that leaves us in a state of wonderment. `The Octopus and the Orangutan - More True Tales of Animal Intrigue, Intelligence and Ingenuity’ by Eugene Linden offers glimpses into these telling displays and actions which occasionally bridge the gap between human and animal. It is an eye-opening and touching read, sprinkled with humour and amazing insights into the brains of not only octopus and orangutan but elephants, bonobos, cats, orcas and many more. `The Octopus and the Orangutan’ is creatively researched and warmly written. Eugene Linden has taken his wonderful book `The Parrots Lament’ and taken it further with new reports and insights into animal activities that will amaze and astound you. `The Octopus and the Orangutan - More True Tales of Animal Intrigue, Intelligence and Ingenuity’ by Eugene Linden explores the activity inside the not so simple minds of creatures that often don’t behave like animals at all.

With the publication of THE OCTOPUS AND THE ORANGUTAN, Eugene Linden has firmly established himself as a fine documenter of engaging animal behavior. In this, following the publication of his popular The Parrot’s Lament, Linden explores more instances of possible signs of higher level thinking in animals. He tells of - and refers to often - the remarkable ability to escape and overcome obstacles by the smartest invertebrate, the octopus, perhaps the most surprising instance of adaptability. But he doesn’t rely on stories involving the octopus and the orangutan, the two creatures in the title; he supplies examples of the intelligence of elephants, chimpanzees, dolphins, and squirrels, to name the most prevalent in these pages. Linden is always cautious not to attribute too much intelligence to possibly hard-wired behavior. His attitude seems to be, "Here’s the evidence - this is what it might be, this is what it might not be."Because Linden describes, albeit briefly, some of the examples described in his earlier book, I felt this one to be a little thinner in terms of content. Yes, he elaborates and supplies new details, but still, I felt somewhat cheated at times. Some paragraphs feel like filler as he states, and re-states, the obvious.Despite the above

flaws, this is a worthwhile read for animal lovers and those interested in popular science. The writing is simple and straightforward, an easy read all in all. It makes a good companion book to Linden's previous work on animal intelligence.

I would not go so far as to call the author credulous. He points out areas where the science is "iffy" at best and the evidence is all anecdotal.The way to read this book is as an entertaining collection of possibilities.Only arrogant people would suppose that other animals are not sentient, or that we can understand what life would be like in the body of (for example) an octopus. But the scientific method starts with observations and hypotheses. This book contains both of these in full measure, related in an entertaining way.

I bought this book because primate intelligence, specifically great apes, is of great interest to me. This book certainly had a couple new tales I had never heard about before in that realm, but most interestingly, was the other animals species it mentioned.Intelligence in not just apes, but dogs, dolphins, elephants, and more.At times the reading got a bit tedious and occasionally dull, but it usually picked back up before I got ready to shelve the book in favor of more exciting reads.The final chapter was very interesting. It was somewhat reflective on humanity, as we have declared ourselves the smartest of the smart, yet we also determine and judge what defines intelligence to begin with. Also, despite all those brains, we still make some very, very dumb decisions about how we treat one another, how we treat the other animals we share the planet with, and indeed how we treat our planet to begin with. That was probably the most thought provoking part of the book.

While reading this book, I was amazed at the understanding that animals have. I have seen this type of understanding with some of my own animals, but I was entertained by what orangutans will do when they have too much free time on their hands!

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