



Animals and Psychedelics: The Natural World and the Instinct to Alter Consciousness

Giorgio Samorini

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An Italian ethnobotanist explores the remarkable propensity of wild animals to seek out and use psychoactive substances.

- Throws out behaviorist theories that claim animals have no consciousness.
- Offers a completely new understanding of the role psychedelics play in the development of consciousness in all species.
- Reveals drug use to be a natural instinct.

From caffeine-dependent goats to nectar addicted ants, the animal kingdom offers amazing examples of wild animals and insects seeking out and consuming the psychoactive substances in their environments. Author Giorgio Samorini explores this little-known phenomenon and suggests that, far from being confined to humans, the desire to experience altered states of consciousness is a natural drive shared by all living beings and that animals engage in these behaviors deliberately. Rejecting the Western cultural assumption that using drugs is a negative action or the result of an illness, Samorini opens our eyes to the possibility that beings who consume psychedelics--whether humans or animals--contribute to the evolution of their species by creating entirely new patterns of behavior that eventually will be adopted by other members of that species. The author's fascinating accounts of mushroom-loving reindeer, intoxicated birds, and drunken elephants ensure that readers will never view the animal world in quite the same way again.

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