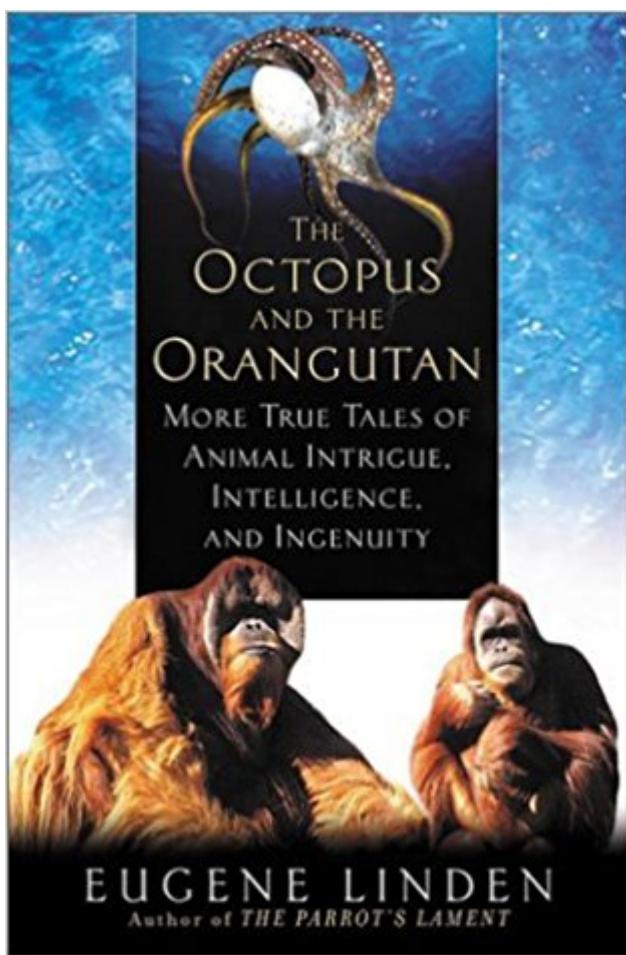


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# The Octopus And The Orangutan: More True Tales Of Animal Intrigue, Intelligence, And Ingenuity



## **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.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Eugene Linden, writer for *Time* magazine, revisits the territory of his *Parrot's Lament*, delving deeper into the animal world, and reemerges with *The Octopus and the Orangutan: More True Tales of Animal Intrigue, Intelligence, and Ingenuity*. From the observations of trainers and handlers

as well as experiences in the wild, Linden presents anecdotes that illustrate the workings of the minds of both domestic and wild creatures-how they use tools, play games and adapt to change. In "When Elephants Cheat," Linden explores animal deception; in "The Starling that Charmed Mozart," the composer's bird is thought to have sung his music. Linden brings readers closer to an understanding of intelligence in general and an appreciation of these creatures with whom we share the earth. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Although admittedly not a scientist, Linden, the author of several books and articles about animal intelligence and environmental issues, infuses this sequel to his successful *Parrot's Lament* with important scientific concepts and interesting conundrums relating to animal intelligence. Entertaining and captivating anecdotes about sly octopuses, orangutan escape artists, and penguins mimicking football-playing scientists in Antarctica leaven Linden's graceful musings and also make his discussion of potentially daunting concepts such as convergent evolution or Morgan's Canon more digestible to the lay reader. In the end, elements of intelligence such as empathy, deception, communication, cooperation, and imitation between animals and their human keepers led Linden to "focus on what intelligence does." This is much more than a collection of fascinating tales of animals coping with life in human-imposed environments; it is a thoughtful exploration of the nature of intelligence in both humans and animals. Recommended for popular science collections.

(Bibliography and index not seen.) Ann Forister, Roseville P.L., CA  
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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 is 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.

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.

Our local newspaper carried a story about octopi and their intelligence and referenced this book. The story intrigued me because I'd never read anywhere that creatures like octopi had much intelligence. Of course, I had to buy the book! And what a book it is! Well written, funny, and very enjoyable, it's also very easy to understand. I particularly like the way it shows that octopi not only display intelligence but a sense of humor as well. Orangutans, of course, are well-known for their intelligence; but I'd never dreamed just how smart these animals really are. If only I could get over their creepy looks...

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!

good

I never heard of this writer before but now I am looking for more of his fascinating work. Huzzah !  
Bravo!

Based on personal experiences with handlers, zoo keepers, trainers, owners, and scientists around the world. This book gives an insightful look into the interaction of animals, both with humans and other animals. Addressing the age old argument, 'are animals sentient creatures'.

A very entertaining and informative account of true animal anecdotes that prove animals can think, remember and have feelings. If you love animals this book is a must.

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