

**Editorial**

# A Transdisciplinary Method For Increasing Our Knowledge Of Animals In Society: Minding Animals.

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## INTRODUCTION

It is a privilege for me to serve as this volume's guest editor for Animals. The articles in this collection are in line with the goals of this brand-new, progressive journal: <http://www.mdpi.com/2076-2615/1/1/1/pdf>. They are the result of a groundbreaking conference called "Minding Animals," which brought together academics from around the globe representing a wide range of disciplines in July 2009 in Newcastle, Australia ([http://www.mindinganimals.com//index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=210&Itemid=236](http://www.mindinganimals.com//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=210&Itemid=236)).

All of the delegates who traveled great distances to attend this special event had a strong desire to learn more about nonhuman animals (henceforth referred to as animals) from colleagues who are researching them from different angles. These colleagues represented a variety of academic fields, including biology, psychology, anthropology, the social sciences, and the humanities.

I wrote a book titled "Minding Animals," which was also the theme of the conference [1]. "Minding" animals entails acknowledging that they have sentient minds and emotions. In a human-dominated environment where their interests are constantly subordinated to ours, we must also "mind" them as their caregivers. It is crucial for people with different backgrounds and passions to communicate with one another, share our knowledge about animals, and apply that information to improve both our own and their lives. There are numerous approaches to understanding and determining how science and the humanities work, such as those who are interested in environmentalists, conservationists, and animal preservation (whose concerns range from individuals to populations, Our connections with nonhuman creatures are complex, frustrating, ambiguous, paradoxical, and varied,

as demonstrated by the essays included here and other presentations presented at the conference. I tell people that I'm pleased they don't love me when they claim to love animals but then hurt or kill them. We can undoubtedly improve our interactions with both people and animals. In fact, we frequently have similar connections with human animals. As humans "redecorate nature," we study animals, marvel at them, conduct experiments on them, consume them, wear them, write about them, sketch and paint them, and transport them from one place to another.

There is still a long way to go. Unfortunately, current rules and regulations permit the treatment of animals on land, in water, and in the air in ways that denigrate humans as a species. In fact, from the perspective of the Law animals have no legal protection and can be handled like bicycles, couches, and backpacks. We can tell from the animals' own eyes that they absolutely detest this. Naturally, they have a viewpoint. Views of animals that are objective are ineffective. Animals are also double-crossed. I can picture a polar bear trying to swim with her young, completely worn out, and saying, "Where's the ice?" from one ice floe to another, as she had done in previous years, only to learn that climate change has caused the ice to disappear. Despite international efforts to shield animals from torture and needless exploitation, what we've been doing hasn't been effective—"good welfare" is simply insufficient. "Well, it's okay, I'm doing this in the name of science," and "in the name of this or that" are examples of justifications for animal abuse that typically imply "in the name of humans." We are an extremely conceited and egocentric group. "Minding" animals is a good method to increase our compassion footprint and make the world a more compassionate and peaceful place for all animals ([4]; [http://animals.change.org/blog/view/six\\_reasons\\_to\\_](http://animals.change.org/blog/view/six_reasons_to_)

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expand\_your\_compassion\_footprint). People should start considering ways to earn compassion credits in the same way as they do carbon credits (for instance, check <http://www.time.com/time/health/article/0,8599,1709186,00.html>). By incorporating compassion, empathy, respect, dignity, peace, and love into their lives, each person may positively impact all living things. Making more humane decisions about our diet, attire, and methods of teaching, research, and entertainment at the expense of animals is easy.

Since there is an inverse relationship between both indicators, particularly when it comes to our consumption of factory-farmed meat from severely abused animals, greater compassion for animals can easily result in lower carbon emissions (<http://www.ciwf.org.uk/globalwarning/index.html>). As we work to restore animal populations and habitats, we may also emphasize the importance of human life. When we attempt to reintroduce wolves to Yellowstone National Park, for instance, and some wolves perish so that others may survive, is it reasonable to wonder if the life of an individual should be sacrificed for the benefit of their species? Making every effort to live together in harmony and with the utmost compassion is a win-win situation. Because having compassion for animals will increase human compassion, which is what we need going forward. According to a quote by Albert Schweitzer, "Man will not find peace until he broadens his circle of compassion for all living things."

We can always make the world a more compassionate place. In the end, I think having compassion for animals would increase human compassion, incorporating more empathy, dignity, respect, and love into all aspects of our life. Animals are requesting better treatment or our attention; this is their manifesto [4,5]. Therefore, aim to increase compassion whenever you attempt to reduce carbon at the same time. Future human generations and animals will appreciate our efforts, and I have no doubt that we will all feel better about ourselves as a result. It's not all about us, as the film Avatar demonstrated ([http://animals.change.org/blog/view/iavatari\\_avarice\\_and\\_animals\\_its\\_not\\_all\\_about\\_us](http://animals.change.org/blog/view/iavatari_avarice_and_animals_its_not_all_about_us)). We must rekindle our hearts and create pathways of empathy and harmony that embrace all living things. There are other shows in town besides us.

## REFERENCES

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