

BOOK REVIEW

CEPHALOPOD BEHAVIOUR

by

Roger T. Hanlon and John B. Messenger

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Cephalopods are considered as being among the most mysterious and phantastic living creatures of our planet. The explanation seems to be simple and plausible: they have a rather secret life and, at least for our -- anthropomorphically trained -- eyes, a really extremely peculiar physical/morphological appearance, which shows a curious "segmentation" of their body with long arms on the head, human-like eyes, a continuously changing form, and perhaps the most important, a capability of performing the phantastic camouflages which includes the combination of the different elements of the body pattern. Behind all of these characteristics, a very complex behavioural repertoire is to be found. The authors, both of them outstanding representants of the cephalopod neuroscience and behaviour research, have presented a beautiful and, at the same time, scientifically high standard book. In 10 chapters, the book contains all important informations on cephalopod behaviour, from the neural, sensory and efferent aspects to the different forms of behaviour. The 10 chapters are the following: 1. Introduction, including the classification, phylogeny and some historical aspects of the study of cephalopod behaviour; 2. Senses, effectors and the brain; 3. Colour change and body patterning; 4. Feeding and foraging; 5. Defence; 6. Reproductive behaviour; 7. Communication; 8. Learning and the development of behaviour; 9. Ecological aspects of behaviour; 10. Nautilus. The book also contains a list of more than 1000 references, and a Subject Index, as well as 115 Figures, including both drawings and photographs. The great majority of the photographs were taken masterly by Roger Hanlon, introducing the reader into really intimate events of cephalopod life. The book can be recommended to neuroscientists dealing with comparative neurobiology and/or neuroethology as well as to readers lecturing neuroscience at both lower and higher university levels.

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