Editorial

N Sathyamurthy, Chief Editor

Man is a social animal, often, selfish though.

My generation was brought up with the stories of birds and beasts, in the form of Panchatantra and Jataka tales. There was the wise Owl and there was the cunning Fox. The just King Lion would hunt only when hungry. The powerful Elephant could remember and protect. The Crow always invited its kin to share the food it found.

But times and lifestyles have changed and so have human behavior. While the older generation was taught to share and be more inclusive (thanks to the joint families), the younger generation finds these ideas difficult to imbibe (thanks to the nuclear families).

Many of the current instances serve as a reminder that there is much to learn from the animal world, and we need to do much more if we wish to leave behind a better Earth for the generations to come. As Gandhiji said, “There is enough on this planet for everyone’s needs, but not for everyone’s greed.”

I don’t have the expertise to talk about individual selection versus group selection in evolutionary biology, though it is clear that individual excellence is needed for any advancement in the society, provided it caters to the common good.

The issue of *Resonance* in your hand tries to honour an evolutionary biologist from Israel – Amotz Zahavi. He not only studied birds but also fought hard for their environment. In the process, he discovered many interesting behavioral traits and made outstanding contributions to evolutionary biology.

Using peacock, our national bird, as an example, Zahavi illustrated the ‘handicap principle’ and explained Darwin’s theory of sexual selection. The article-in-a-box talks about Zahavi and his

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work.

Zahavi's life and work reminds me of the times when IISER Mohali campus was being set up. During that period, I learned many fascinating aspects of animal life from my environment-conscious colleagues, and we tried our best to preserve the natural environment. As a result, the number of peacocks in the campus increased, testifying the quality of environment in the campus.

The May issue of *Resonance* contains several other interesting articles including mathematics and engineering besides biology. Of special interest is the book review by Raghavendra Gadagkar which sheds light on yet another study of animals.

With this issue, we hope to revive the animal lovers inside all of us. Let us ensure that our grandchildren and their great-grandchildren and their..... have enough friends in the animal kingdom around.