A11

ANIMAL INTELLIGENCE

by Julian Conde

Read and choose the main idea.

Crows and ravens, members of the corvid family, demonstrate advanced problem-solving skills through tool use. In laboratory studies and wild observations, New Caledonian crows have been seen shaping twigs into hooks to extract insects from tree bark. They can even solve multi-step puzzles that require using one short stick to retrieve a longer stick, which is then used to reach food. This ability to plan ahead and modify objects demonstrates a level of cognitive reasoning once thought to belong exclusively to primates.

What is the main idea of this paragraph?

1. New Caledonian crows prefer eating insects over other food sources.
2. Corvids display advanced cognitive abilities through complex tool use and planning.
3. Primates are the only animals capable of solving multi-step puzzles.

While most high-level intelligence is associated with vertebrates, the octopus proves that complex problem-solving can evolve independently in invertebrates. Possessing two-thirds of their neurons in their arms rather than their brain, octopuses can open childproof jars, navigate complex mazes, and use discarded coconut shells as portable armor. Their remarkable flexibility allows them to alter their strategy when faced with a novel obstacle, making them masters of observational learning and adaptive survival.

What is the main idea of this paragraph?

1. Octopuses show that advanced intelligence and adaptability can exist in invertebrates.
2. An octopus keeps most of its brain cells inside its head.
3. Coconut shells are the primary food source for wild octopuses.

Dolphins demonstrate high-level cognition through self-awareness and social communication. Scientists tested this self-awareness using the "mirror test," placing a temporary mark on a dolphin's body. Upon seeing their reflection, dolphins immediately inspect the marked area on themselves rather than treating the reflection as another individual. This ability to recognize oneself in a mirror is a rare trait shared by only a few species, indicating a sophisticated level of self-identity and mental processing.

What is the main idea of this paragraph?

1. Dolphins react aggressively when they see another dolphin in a mirror.
2. The mirror test is a common exam given to all ocean creatures.
3. Dolphins possess a high level of self-awareness, as proven by mirror recognition.

Elephant intelligence shines through their complex social structures and emotional depth. They show clear signs of empathy, such as comforting distressed herd members with gentle trunk touches and vocal rumbles. Furthermore, elephants are known to mourn their dead, returning to the bones of deceased family members to touch them in silence. These behaviors reveal that elephant intelligence extends far beyond memory—it includes a deep capacity for emotional processing and social cooperation.

What is the main idea of this paragraph?

1. Elephants exhibit sophisticated intelligence through emotional empathy and social bonds.
2. Elephants communicate exclusively through silent trunk touches.
3. Memory is the only type of cognitive skill elephants possess.

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