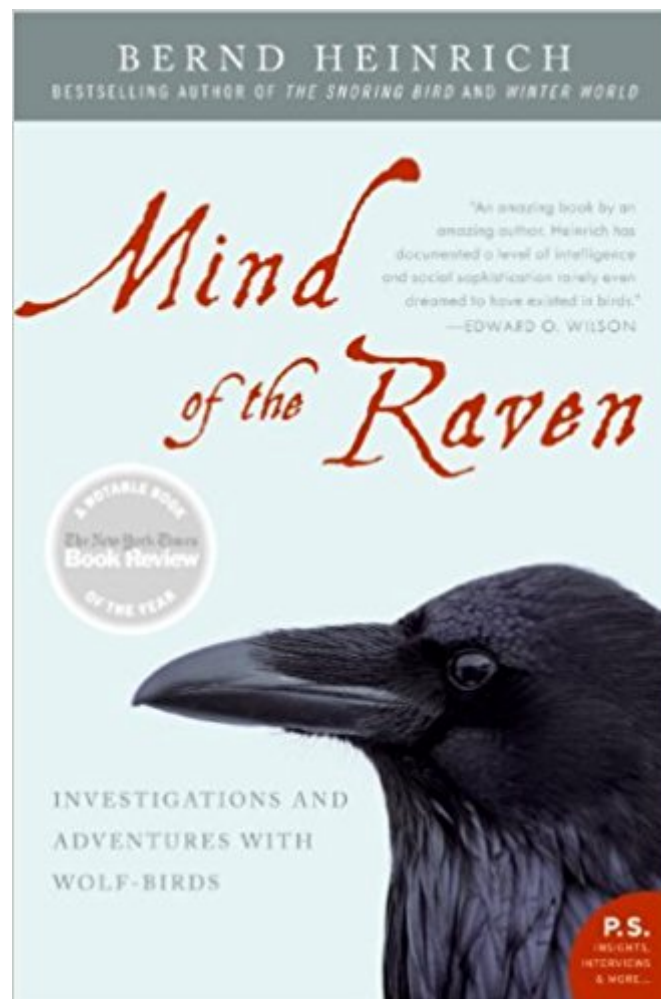




The book was found

Mind Of The Raven: Investigations And Adventures With Wolf-Birds



Synopsis

Heinrich involves us in his quest to get inside the mind of the raven. But as animals can only be spied on by getting quite close, Heinrich adopts ravens, thereby becoming a "raven father," as well as observing them in their natural habitat. He studies their daily routines, and in the process, paints a vivid picture of the ravens' world. At the heart of this book are Heinrich's love and respect for these complex and engaging creatures, and through his keen observation and analysis, we become their intimates too. Heinrich's passion for ravens has led him around the world in his research. *Mind of the Raven* follows an exotic journey—from New England to Germany, and from Montana to Baffin Island in the high Arctic—offering dazzling accounts of how science works in the field, filtered through the eyes of a passionate observer of nature. Each new discovery and insight into raven behavior is thrilling to read, at once lyrical and scientific.

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Customer Reviews

Beyond croaking, "Nevermore," what exactly do ravens do all day? Bernd Heinrich, biology professor at the University of Vermont and author of *Ravens in Winter*, has spent more than a decade learning the secrets of these giants of the crow family. He has observed startlingly complex activities among ravens, including strong pair-bonding, use of tools, elaborate vocal communication, and even play. Ravens are just plain smart, and we can see much of ourselves in their behavior. They seem to be affectionate, cranky, joyful, greedy, and competitive, just like us. And in *Mind of the Raven*, Heinrich makes no bones about attributing emotions and intellect to *Corvus corax*--just not

the kind we humans can understand. He mostly catalogs their behaviors in the manner of a respectful anthropologist, although a few moments of proud papa show through when he describes the pet ravens he hand-raised to adulthood. Heinrich spends hundreds of loving hours feeding roadkill fragments to endlessly hungry raven chicks, and cold days in blinds watching wild ravens squabble and frolic. He is a passionate fan of his "wolf-birds," a name he gave them when he made the central discovery of the book: that ravens in Yellowstone National Park are dependent on wolves to kill for them. *Mind of the Raven* offers inspiring insight into both the lives of ravens and the mind of a truly gifted scientist. --Therese Littleton --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

In a book that demonstrates the rewards of caring and careful observation of the natural world, Heinrich (Ravens in Winter, etc.), a noted biologist, Guggenheim fellow and National Book Award nominee (for *Bumblebee Economics*, 1979), explores the question of raven intelligence through observation, experiment and personal experience. Although he has raised many ravens through the years (beginning with a tame pair that shared his apartment at UCLA in the 1960s), Heinrich focuses much of his attention on four nestlings he adopted from the Maine woods near his home. As he describes tending to the demanding babies, chopping up roadkill, cleaning up after them and enduring their noisy calls for food, readers will marvel at how much Heinrich knows and at how much joy he derives from acquiring that knowledge. As the birds mature, Heinrich details how these and other ravens feed, nest, mate, play and establish a society with clear hierarchical levels. At its best, his writing is distinguished by infectious enthusiasm, a lighthearted style and often lyrical descriptions of the natural world. His powers of observation are impressive and his descriptions of how a raven puffs its feathers in a dominance display, of how a female calls for food from her mate, of the pecking order at a carcass are formidably precise. Toward the end of the book, Heinrich addresses the question implied by the title: To what degree can ravens be said to think? His answer: "I suspect that the great gulf or discontinuity that exists between us and all other animals is... ultimately less a matter of consciousness than of culture." Illustrations. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

An interesting winter's read, I did enjoy this book. Anyone interested in animal intelligence and behavior will no doubt enjoy reading this. The author is scientifically methodical in his methods and research, and reports what he's learned and observed in a lucid and enjoyable style. Having been best friends with a wild bird for nineteen years, I was drawn to this book by its title. (A portrait of that remarkable and beloved friend hangs in a place of honor, in my living room today. RIP Bernie.) Ray B

I bought this for a university class, and could not be happier that this was the assigned reading. If I'd had the book sooner, I would have gladly read it in my free time. It makes me want to start attracting Corvids into my neighbourhood so that I might get a glimpse first hand of Heinrich's world. The way Heinrich writes about the ravens in his studies is obviously passionate, and at times also quite funny. It's such a joy reading about his and other people's relationships with their raven 'spouses' and being able to read in a warm, cozy room about his cold and arduous field studies in the winter. Throughout all of this, we slowly watch the world of ravens unfold before us as it did for him. Beautifully written and incredibly intriguing, this book should not be overlooked to anyone interested in ravens or animal behaviour.

This book was terrific. The author scientifically has studied ravens around the world for years and is scientifically published also. Does that make it boring, NO. He has raised ravens, and observed them in depth, in an aviary and free. He can tell one from another and knows how to correctly interpret what ever they say. I found the book fascinating and enjoyed it greatly. If a reader is sensitive, the talk about collecting road kills, dead calves, etc. might be off putting. But if one is responsible for the care and feeding of any animals including birds, collecting the correct food is a joy, not a burden. I was fortunate in the past to house and feed young ravens once until they were ready for release on my rural property. After, a couple ravens went with my dogs and I on a 4 mile walk each afternoon. Several years after, two showed up with four hungry youngsters. I was thrilled. It was wonderful to learn more about these marvelous birds.

Wonderful book. Three years ago I befriended a pair of Ravens who visit me daily. They have become very approachable (they allow me within a foot of them) and every year they bring their young to meet me when they have left the nest. I was very amazed when I read this book and I realized that it was not always the same two that appeared, but they all greeted me in the same manner, arrived at the same time, knew where I threw the food, etc. So apparently they communicate with one another and are all able to recognize me (they do not allow strangers to approach them). Once while feeding them I was interrupted by a phone call, went inside and forgot that I had left the container of food open on the deck. When I went back out the food was untouched and they were still waiting politely for my return. These are birds that I have watched take a whole plastic bag of garbage from a neighbor's can. Amazing birds!

The beginning of this book started off better than the end, in my opinion. It's essentially a compilation of the writer's own painstaking, sometimes hilarious, and sometimes inconclusive research with hand reared and wild ravens, plus many third hand anecdotes. I learned a lot about the habits, maturation, intelligence and society of ravens. Occasionally the narrative faltered with too much and repetitive detail, especially towards the end. It is a longish book and mostly reads easily, like a novel. Although my final impression is generally favourable, I'm unsure of the book's appeal to the public generally, unless, like me, they have an attraction to corvids.

I have wanted to know more about ravens ever since I visited my brother in Alaska a few years ago, and he pointed out a raven barrel rolling and diving in strong winds, along rocky bluffs by a bay. I learned that climbers, while clinging to icy or rocky climbs, are often visited by these birds. When I saw this book, I knew I had to read it, and I was not disappointed! It validates my long held belief that humans are more closely connected with other animals than we dare present in scientific circles. And, why not? We all evolved together. Not that the book isn't scientific. It most certainly is, in my layman's opinion.

Though I have not finished reading this book, it is exactly what I was hoping it would be. It is very descriptive about Raven behavior and all his experiments that he has done to reveal the raven mind.

Living in the mountains of Colorado, I first became aware of ravens when one followed while I was tracking elk in the back country. It followed me, flying along tree to tree, "talking" to me, cocking its head as if waiting for a reply. With that introduction, I started noticing other odd behavior... huge flocks wheeling, and playing with each other... mimicry of the calls of raptors... and so forth. I saw this book, and thought: its about time I learn something about the minds of these animals. Why do they do what they do? Well ravens are more interesting than I thought. Makes one wonder why social scavenger-hunters (humans, coyotes, ravens) turn out so clever regardless of where they pop out of the animal kingdom. BUT EVEN MORE IMPORTANT... Prof. Heinrich's narrative is totally engaging and entertaining. I found myself laughing over and over again as he quietly dropped comments about famous ornithologists that have died climbing trees, or the risks involved in demonstrating which bumblebees are edible to one's experimental charges (ie showing young ravens what's good to eat). It becomes very clear ethologists are an interesting species in themselves. If you're interested in birds, or have ravens around, or generally interested in

experimental ethology: this one is among the best

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