



animals



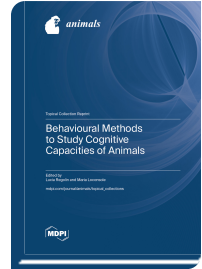
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Behavioural Methods to Study Cognitive Capacities of Animals

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Edited by
Lucia Regolin
Maria Loconsole

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Animal cognition is an independent field of interdisciplinary investigation, featuring specialized methodologies and paradigms tailored to diverse animal species. Different approaches can contribute to our understanding of animal behaviour and cognition. For example, automated and observer-independent techniques, which allow for the collection of vast sets of data, or the study of the neurobiological correlates of mental processes, which requires reference to standardized paradigms. These methodologies pose constraints on the complexity and ecological validity of behaviour. On the other hand, more traditional methods are firmly grounded in species ethology, which is considered crucial to grasp the distinctive qualitative features of the behavioural repertoire. Here, we present a collection of contributions employing behavioural methods to investigate the mental abilities of animals or any other behaving organism and to reflect on the big issue of “asking a question” to non-human animals. Altogether, the articles featured in this collection offer a multifaceted picture of current approaches and challenges when dealing with the complex topic of animal behaviour and cognition. The message is that much knowledge on animals’ minds can and should still be gathered through the development of new behavioural and ethical methods, allowing for new insights into the cognitive worlds of animals.



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