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BOOK REVIEW

Carnivore behavior, ecology, and evolution

Carnivore behavior, ecology, and evolution. J. L. Gittleman, ed. Chapman and Hall, London, 1989. XIV + 620 pp. ISBN 0-412-34360-6.

The aim of the book was to summarize and evaluate the recent research in carnivore biology. The volume is organized in three parts: behavior, ecology, and evolution. Chapters are written by 30 contributors and each section is preceded by an introduction by J. L. Gittleman, the editor of the volume.

The behavioral part of the book deals with the acoustic and olfactory communication in fissiped carnivores, sociality and behavioral development. It contains extensive reviews of literature and concepts (e.g. chapter on acoustic communication by G. Peters and W. C. Wozencraft) as well as new ideas (e.g. chapter on mating tactics and spacing in solitary carnivores by M. Sandell).

In the ecological part, most of chapters have linked the physiological parameters to the ecological adaptations of carnivores, both the small-sized ones (chapter by C. M. King on constrains of small size in weasels) and the large-sized ones (chapter on ecological constrains on predation by large felids by M. E. and F. C. Sunquist).

The chapters in the part on evolution present the problems which often are the subjects of intense discussion and disagreement. Results of molecular and biochemical techniques of studying evolution (chapter by R. K. Wayne *et al.*), palaeontological investigations of fossils (L. D. Martin), and comparative osteological studies (W. C. Wozencraft) provide a comprehensive view of our present knowledge on evolution of carnivores. It appears discursive in many points (e.g. the problems of diphyly or monophyly in pinnipeds), but form a necessary background for our understanding the contemporary ecology and status of carnivore species.

The book is equipped with a species and subject index. The volume will be of great value to researchers, students, conservationists, and nonspecialist readers fascinated with carnivores.

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