



Bird Minds: Cognition and Behaviour of Australian Native Birds

Gisela Kaplan

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In her comprehensive and carefully crafted book, Gisela Kaplan demonstrates how intelligent and emotional Australian birds can be. She describes complex behaviours such as grieving, deception, problem solving and the use of tools. Many Australian birds cooperate and defend each other, and exceptional ones go fishing by throwing breadcrumbs in the water, extract poisonous parts from prey and use tools to crack open eggshells and mussels. The author brings together evidence of many such cognitive abilities, suggesting plausible reasons for their appearance in Australian birds.

Bird Minds is the first attempt to shine a critical and scientific light on the cognitive behaviour of Australian land birds. In this fascinating volume, the author also presents recent changes in our understanding of the avian brain and links these to life histories and longevity.

Following on from Gisela's well-received books on the Australian Magpie and the Tawny Frogmouth, as well as two earlier titles on birds, Bird Minds contends that the unique and often difficult conditions of Australia's environment have been crucial for the evolution of unusual complexities in avian cognition and behaviour.

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