



★ **Supernavigators: Exploring the Wonders of How Animals Find Their Way**

David Barrie

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We see them around us every day: crows gathering, bees buzzing, cats prowling. Animals, including humans, are always on the move. And whether their moving takes them on a global journey or just around the corner, finding their way there and back again can be a life-or-death issue.

David Barrie's *Supernavigators* is filled with marvels of animal navigation: bacteria with their own magnetic “compass needles”; shoals of fish that change direction in unison due to pressure-sensitive pores on their sides; bumble bees that detect sonic electrical fields around nectar-rich flowers; amazing feats of memory that allow the Clark's nutcracker to locate seeds it has stored over a hundred square miles of countryside; songs and dances that let other creatures of their kind locate food and suitable “housing”; astounding nonstop long-distance flights over open ocean; and even examples of democracy in action as bees share information, send out scouts, and then, by consensus, swarm to their new location.

Given all this, it seems impossible for humans, the only species capable of holding all others in contempt, to continue to do so. *Supernavigators* makes it clear that the more we learn about the animal kingdom, the less evidence we find to support our belief that humans are distinct, separate, and superior. What does set us apart from all other species is that we are able to influence the fate of every other creature on the planet. Understanding the wonders of animal navigation may help us appreciate the small and large miracles that surround us and the value of all that we are putting at risk, lest we create a “biological holocaust” of epic proportions—one that, in the end, is likely to take us out as well.

KRISTINE MORRIS (May/June 2019)

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