



The Social Behavior of Older Animals

Anne Innis Dagg



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How do young and old social animals view each other? Are aged animals perceived by others as weaker? Or wiser? What is the relationship between age and power among social animals?

Taking a cue from Frans de Waal's seminal work examining the lives of chimpanzees, Anne Innis Dagg in this pioneering study probes the lives of older mammals and birds. Synthesizing the available scientific research and anecdotal evidence, she explores how aging affects the lives and behavior of animals ranging from elk to elephants and gulls to gorillas, examining such topics as longevity; how others in a group view senior members in regard to leadership, wisdom, and teaching; mating success; interactions with mates and offspring; how aging affects dominance; changes in aggressive behavior and adaptability; and death and dying.

At once instructive and compelling, this theme-spanning book reveals the complex nature of maturity in scores of social species and shows that animal behavior often displays the same diversity we find in ourselves.

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