

FROM ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR TO ETHOLOGY: DARWIN REVISITED

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Ethology, the scientific study of animal behaviour is the youngest branch of science. The evolution of this subject into a discrete branch of science has a fascinating history. Few concepts had a more profound impact on the way that ethologists operate than the concept of Natural Selection by Darwin. Being a keen observer, Darwin clearly recognized the central role of animal behaviour in determining the outcome of competition between animals especially during mate choice and reproduction. His various accounts on animal behaviour paved the way for the naturalists to study animal behaviour later from a proper scientific perspective. Indeed the 'four questions' of Niko Tinbergen and the ideas of 'proximate' and 'ultimate' factors that defines the present day ethology, largely owes to Darwin's genius. Darwin's should be rightly considered as the Father of Ethology. Unfortunately, the contribution of Darwin in the genesis of ethology has not been highlighted properly.
