



WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

**UNFORGETTABLE
BEHAVIOUR**



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Polar bears, by Thomas D Mangelsen
Previous page: Japanese macaque, by Marsel van Oosten
Next page: Leafcutter ants, by Bence Máté

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BIG CAT FIGHT

Andy Rouse

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RESPECT

Igor Shpilenok

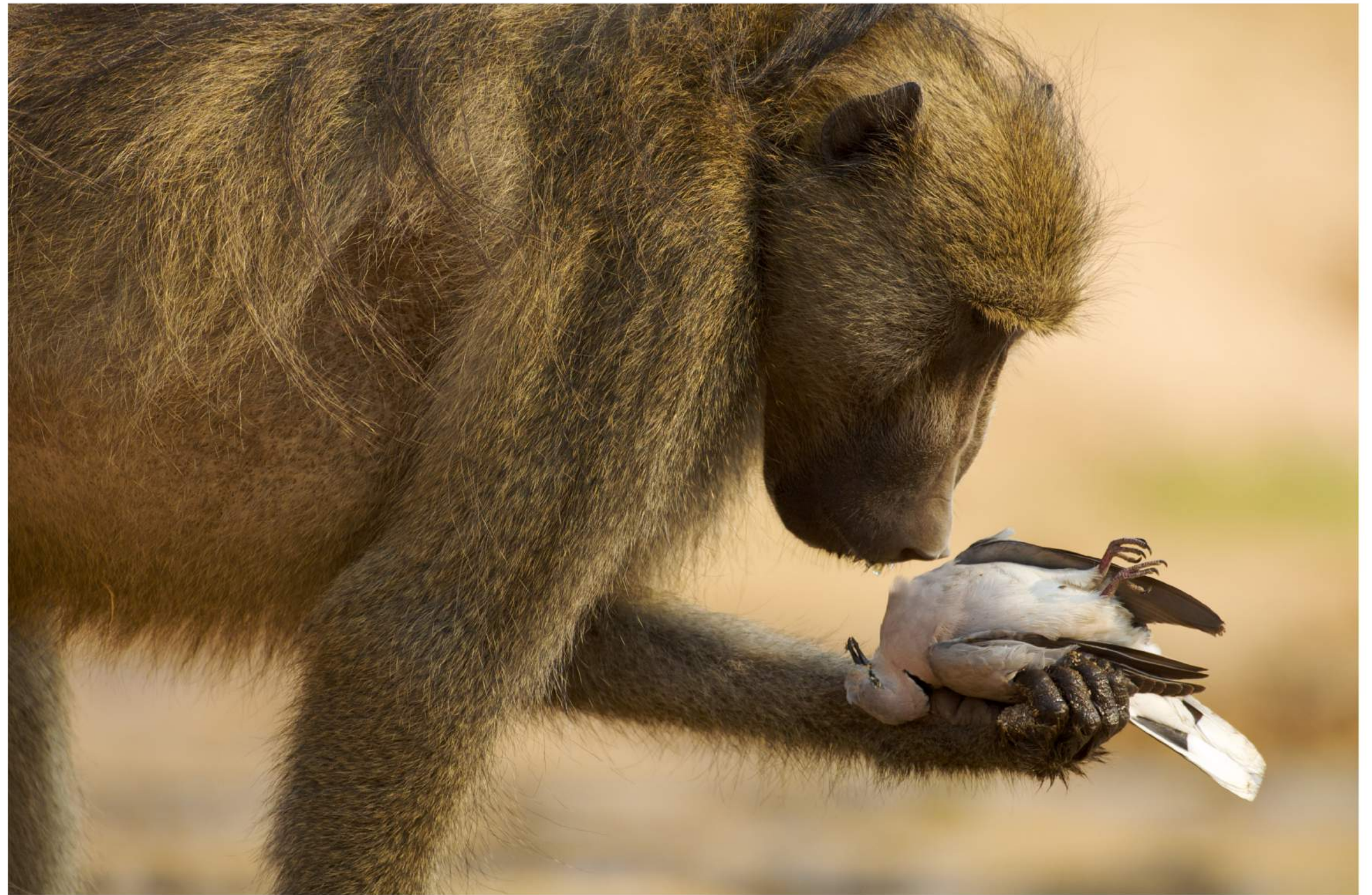
When it comes to territory, small predators can be fierce beyond their size. Here the photographer's cat, Ryska – her name means little lynx in Russian – stands outside their cabin and, with aggressive posturing and growling, warns off a fox. In winter, searching for food, foxes would regularly visit the cabin in Kronotsky Nature Reserve in the Russian Far East. If one peered in at the window, which was possible when the snow was deep, Ryska would sit on the other side, fur raised, and growl. When she was outside, she would hold her ground. The foxes were not always frightened, and so encounters could be a sort of dance, but if a fox came too close, Ryska would probably have attacked it. In the wilds of Russia, foxes and domestic cats seldom meet, but in many urban areas of Europe, they encounter regularly at night – and mostly ignore one another. In the UK, a typical fox territory can be occupied by at least 50 cats, some of them heavier than an average-sized fox. There is little evidence that foxes ever kill cats, other than possibly very sick animals or young feral kittens, and if a fight does break out, it is almost always when a territorial cat attacks the fox, which invariably flees. In fact, it is usually fox cubs, ever curious, that end up with serious injuries from encounters with cats.



THE THOUGHTFUL BABOON

Adrian Bailey

In dry-season tropical areas, waterholes, seeps and streams are where the action is, especially in the early morning and at the end of the day. Most birds and mammals need to drink regularly – in the case of doves and chacma baboons, every day. Here an adolescent male, has arrived ahead of his troop at a seep in Zimbabwe's Mana Pools National Park and found the body of a turtle dove there. Flocks of turtle doves descend every morning to drink here, and they attract predators, such as lanner falcons and goshawks, which line up on nearby trees. This dove had probably been hit by a falcon, which abandoned its prey when it was disturbed by the approaching troop. As well as plant material, baboons eat carrion and small mammals, but rather than grabbing the bird as a food item, as any other carnivore would have done, the youngster held it delicately for a good minute, turning it around, smelling it and, according to the photographer, 'gazing at the body as though in deep thought'. Baboons are, of course, highly social, forming strong bonds with each other, and very inquisitive, interested in novel objects – in other words, intelligent. There is no reason to suppose the thoughts were not unlike those of a curious human primate coming across a still-warm body. A bushmeat-hunting human would almost certainly have ended up eating the bird, just as the baboon finally did.



A KINGFISHER IN HIS CHAMBER

Angelo Gandolphi

A male kingfisher takes his turn brooding the clutch of seven almost perfectly round, glossy white eggs on a nest lined with regurgitated pellets (fish bones and scales). He has positioned himself exactly on top of the eggs and is rotating them one by one to make sure they are incubated evenly. The tunnel is an artificial one, constructed by the photographer on the River Scrivia in Liguria, Italy, after the kingfishers' riverbank nest of the previous year had been destroyed. Glass fitted in the wall of the nest chamber and a person-sized burrow created in the bank behind it allowed photographs to be taken. Though the tunnel had to be kept in darkness, the kingfishers paid no attention to the occasional flash or click of the shutter, seeming to feel completely safe in their dark cave. The pair – identical except for the orange-tinted bottom half of the female's beak – took turns brooding the clutch. When one bird arrived at the nest entrance, it would call the other out. On this occasion, before entering the tunnel, the male gave the female a present of a small fish. Once the eggs hatched, 20 days later, the pair took turns bringing fish for the chicks, though the male would do more of the fishing and the female would brood them overnight. That first year, the pair reared two clutches of seven eggs in the artificial tunnel and continued to do so for several more years.



Wildlife Photographer of the Year Unforgettable Behaviour

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- Award-winning images of animal behaviour from past years of the world-famous Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition
- Latest addition to this hugely popular series of books

About the book

These are the most memorable images of animal behaviour from the prestigious Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition. They have been specially selected for this unique book from the hundred of thousands of images received over the last 50 years.

From a flamingo courtship dance to Amazon river dolphins playing water polo, the images show extraordinary, surprising and often deeply moving acts of animal behaviour. Each photograph is accompanied by a short story describing how the picture came to be taken and its importance both photographically and as a record of an unforgettable moment.

The collection gives us a glimpse into an often hidden world of love, death, survival and joy, and many of these award-winning images have inspired photographers and others to better understand the lives of our fellow animals. Capturing animal behaviour as it has rarely been seen before, this beautiful book is a must-have for photographers and all those with a passion for animals.

About the competition

Each photograph featured in the book is a winning or specially commended image from past years of the Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition – an international showcase for the very best photography featuring natural subjects. One hundred of the most innovative and imaginative images are chosen annually by a panel of expert judges. These images form an exhibition at the Natural History Museum, London, that tours worldwide throughout the year. The competition is owned by the Natural History Museum, London.

Related titles

The Masters of Nature Photography: Volume Two (2016), *50 Years of Wildlife Photographer of the Year: How Wildlife Photography Became Art* (2014), *The Masters of Nature Photography* (2012), previous *Wildlife Photographer of the Year Portfolios* (1992 onwards) and *Wild Planet: Celebrating Wildlife Photographer of the Year* (2010).

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