

Humans, Insects, and Their Interactions

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History

Studies have shown that people's perceptions of insects are often determined by childhood encounters, and influenced by environmental preference. Preferred animals tend to be aesthetically pleasing, largely "beneficial to humans" and considered intelligent. These perceptions are the ones that determine and influence our understanding, interactions and management of these species..

Methods

In the study conducted, Lemelin used mind maps, concept maps and personal meaning maps (PMIP) to supply various opinions on an animal topic without fear of judgments. To gain a better understanding of these interactions, 6 minute videos were also used. Subjects included graduate and undergraduate students, gardeners, fishers, and recreationists. The findings from the survey suggest that the love-hate conflict dichotomies that were created to illustrate human interactions with insects, are somewhat limited in providing a deeper understanding of these encounters.

Challenges

From the conducted survey, some participants expressed dislike toward butterflies and ladybugs. These opinions were largely driven by the insects' ability to cause pain such as biting and stinging, the impacts of some pest insect species on flora, the disruption of leisure activities, and the negative interactions during childhood. These perceptions are also dictated by the setting where these encounters occurred, because while some species appeared to be tolerated outdoors, experiences indoors appeared to be less tolerable.

Conclusion

This research paper examined how people's perceptions of insects are often determined and their inconsistencies, inaccuracies, and biases. The main goal of this research was to highlight the positive, negative, dialectic, and uncertain aspects of how insects are perceived. In conclusion, participants tended to recognize and appreciate aesthetically pleasing animals such as butterflies and dragonflies. They also tended to appreciate insects like bees, ants, dragonflies and ladybugs that provide ecological or utilitarian functions. To some degree, the majority of participants did not want the insects in their homes but they showed tolerance of these populations in their garden and backyard. Only three types of beetle received favourable mention such as: tiger beetles, fireflies, and ladybugs.