

# Birds, Bees and Educated fleas



Some people describe homosexuality as “unnatural”, despite the fact that it occurs in all countries, all cultures and in all historic time periods.

Homosexuality also occurs throughout the animal kingdom. The most comprehensive account of the universality of homosexuality in animal species is set out in “Biological exuberance” by Bruce Bagemihl.



GCSE



BSc

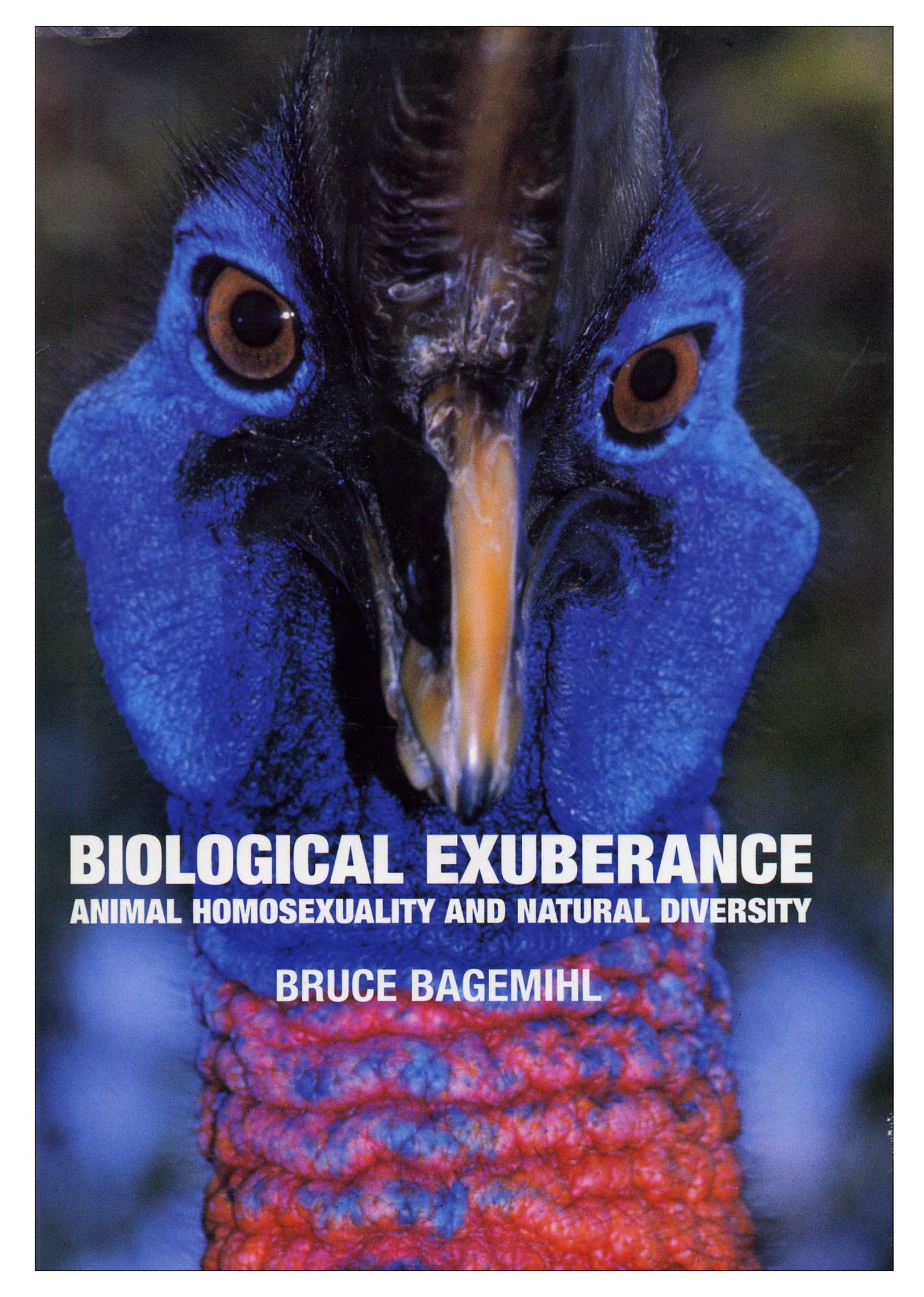


MA



PhD





**BIOLOGICAL EXUBERANCE**  
**ANIMAL HOMOSEXUALITY AND NATURAL DIVERSITY**

**BRUCE BAGEMIHL**

A first-ever museum display, "Against Nature?", which opened in January at the University of Oslo's Natural History Museum in Norway, presents 51 species of animals exhibiting homosexuality.

Homosexuality has been noted in over 1500 species, says the exhibition coordinator. E.g. most dolphins are bisexual - he's not called "Flipper" for nothing.

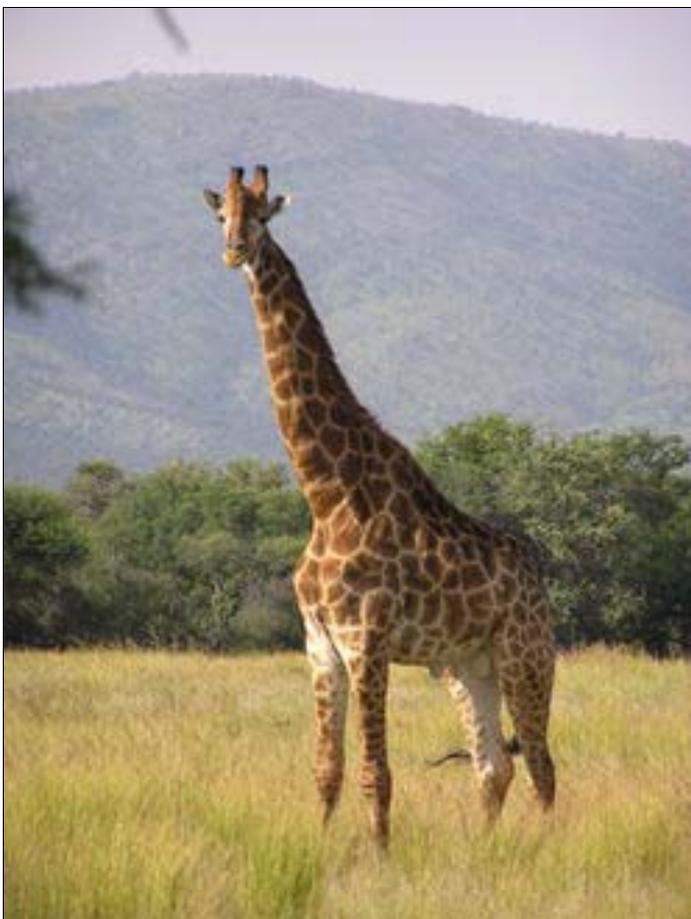


The Great Cormorant is also known as the European Shag.

About 1 in 500 pairs of Cormorants is composed of 2 male birds. It therefore seems that male Shags seldom shag males.

A children's book about two male penguins who hatched and raised a young female named 'Tango' has topped a list of the most challenged books in public and school libraries in the US.

*And Tango Makes Three* is based on the true story of Roy and Silo, who formed a couple in New York's Central Park Zoo.



Homosexual activity is common in giraffes and is actually more frequent than heterosexual behaviour - which may be quite rare. In one study, mountings between males accounted for 94% of all observed sexual activity.

We're not sure how they actually do it.

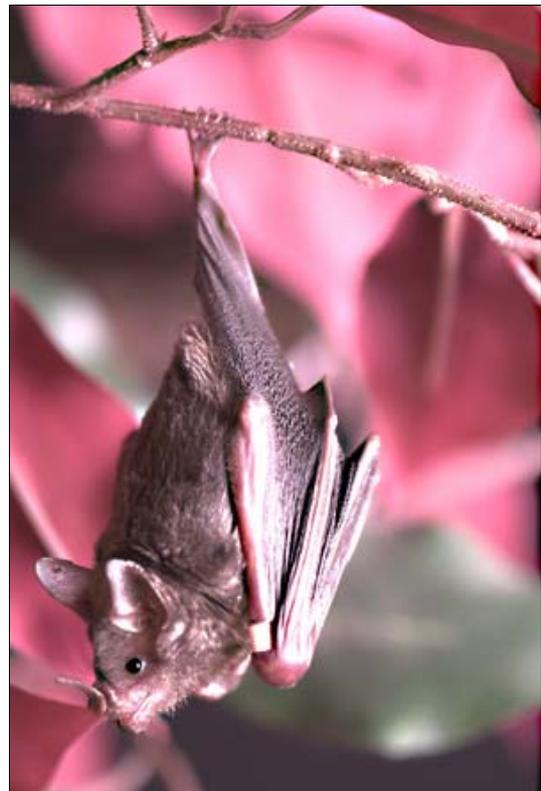
Canadian zoo officials have been worrying about gay ducks. Larry Le Sage, curator of the Vancouver zoo said “I noticed the mallards were gay about 3 years ago, but now the wood ducks have picked it up.”



He believes the wood ducks were corrupted by the mallards and has asked the Canadian Wildlife Service to “sexually re-programme” the gay drakes.

The incidence of same-sex activities amongst bats varies from species to species.

Though observed only occasionally in Flying Foxes and Vampire bats, same-sex activities are very common in Livingstone's Fruit bat.



Carlos and Fernando are two gay, and very pink, flamingos. They have been a couple for several years, during which time they have raised some baby flamingos from eggs stolen from other nests.



West Indian Manatees sometimes have same-sex orgies as part of a social activity called "cavorting", during which they indicate their pleasure with noises described as "chirp-squeaks" and "snort-chirps".



Crab-eating Macaque monkeys are nearly all bisexual. Unusually, they also sometimes have same sex contact with other species.

They have been known to have sex with orang-utans ..... and even foxes.



Over 50% of courtships amongst dwarf cavies are of the same-sex variety.

Females court each other by performing a rumba-like dance while slowly circling each other.

They accompany this with a burbling sound known as “rumbling”.

About a quarter of all sexual activities in Humming Birds is between pairs of males.

The proportion remains the same when the birds are presented with stuffed birds of both sexes.

As they also have been known to try to mate with brightly coloured inanimate objects (e.g. small feather dusters), this does not say much for their powers of discrimination.



The majority of sexual encounters in American Bison are of the same-sex type.

The species also exhibits a transgender form known as the Buffalo Ox, which can be one and a half times bigger than the non-transgender animal.