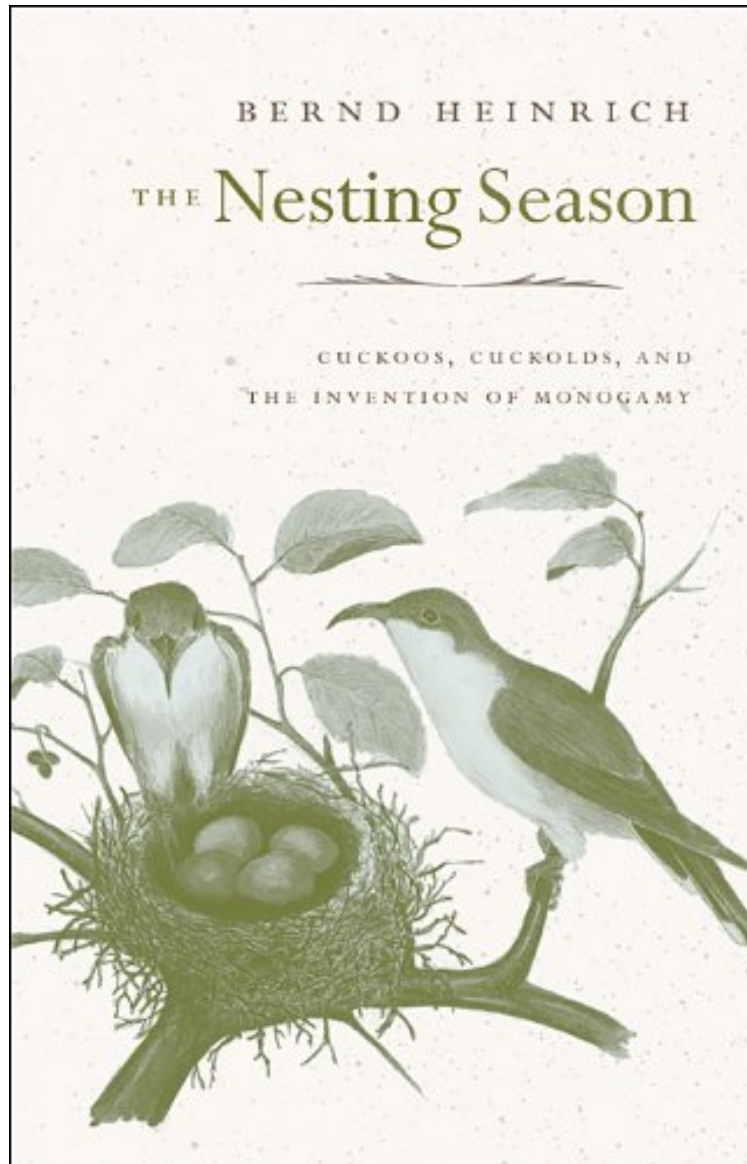


(Read and download) The Nesting Season: Cuckoos, Cuckolds, and the Invention of Monogamy

The Nesting Season: Cuckoos, Cuckolds, and the Invention of Monogamy

Bernd Heinrich

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Bernd Heinrich : The Nesting Season: Cuckoos, Cuckolds, and the Invention of Monogamy before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Nesting Season: Cuckoos, Cuckolds, and the Invention of Monogamy:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Intriguing look into the family lives of birds- and how we're like them
By CissaI first became intrigued with Bernd Heinrich's books because I'm fascinated by corvids. We have a couple of crow families locally, and it's so interesting to watch the adults mature as parents, and the "kids" grow up and set off on their own- sometimes with parental approval, and occasionally in more of a "star-crossed lovers" situation. This one had some corvid content... but lots of information about other species, too, including ones that we (who also live in the US Northeast) see regularly. I think he's right about us being able to share many of the experiences of birds- unlike our alienation intuitively from insects and mollusks, for example. One year we had a new pair of crow parents who hung out in our yard. They successfully reared 3 fledglings. These kids followed them around mercilessly, screaming for food- and a WHINE is just as annoying coming with a crow as it is coming from a toddler! And these kids were definitely whining. By the end of the summer, the poor parents were scrawny and sort of rusty-colored... while the kids were fat and sleek. One time 2 of the kids were on our platform feeder- literally knee-deep in dog food- screaming for the parents to FEED them. Next year the parents had learned, and the kids were a lot less spoiled- plus, they have a couple of older siblings to help with the load. So: whining carries across species- widely across species, if us humans can recognize it in crows! And that's why I love Heinrich's books- he does put things into context, plus is eager to learn always more and try to slot the new knowledge in, too. Plus- he's just a fascinating writer. He combines dry scientific facts with anecdotes and illustrations so much that I just kept turning the pages. The 2 sections of photos and watercolors were wonderful, too. It really helped to be able to see pictures of things, like a cowbird egg in someone else's nest- rather than simply read about it. His speculations on the adaptivity of egg coloring is also intriguing. Birds aren't humans. But in some ways we behave similarly- and knowing how that works for the birds makes me more interested in hearing the stories from the humans, too.
3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Read and learn....
By HelloKittyDr. Heinrich has done it again with this very readable book about the breeding and nesting habits of birds. His insatiable appetite for "how and why" makes me want to own every one of his books (and I do!) In this one, he even goes a bit "out on a limb" to suggest why birds do things that might be thought of as anthropomorphic by other scientists. I love to read his observation details from his many journals kept over the years. If you are new to Dr. Heinrich's writing, do yourself a favor and start with his early books and work your way through. His life - and his work - is fascinating.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By RachelSuch a great book!

Why are the eggs of the marsh wren deep brown, the winter wren's nearly white, and the gray catbird's a brilliant blue? And what in the DNA of a penduline tit makes the male weave a domed nest of fibers and the female line it with feathers, while the bird-of-paradise male builds no nest at all, and his bower-bird counterpart constructs an elaborate dwelling? These are typical questions that Bernd Heinrich pursues in the engaging style we've come to expect from him, supplemented here with his own stunning photographs and original watercolors. One of the world's great naturalists and nature writers, Heinrich shows us how the sensual beauty of birds can open our eyes to a hidden evolutionary process. Nesting, as Heinrich explores it here, encompasses what fascinates us most about birds: from their delightful songs and spectacular displays to their varied eggs and colorful plumage; from their sex roles and mating rituals to nest parasitism, infanticide, and predation. What moves birds to mate and parent their young in so many different ways is what interests Heinrich, and his insights into the nesting behavior of birds has more than a little to say about our own.

From Publishers Weekly
Blending scientific research with memoir, Heinrich (*A Year in the Maine Woods*) reveals the complex courtship and mating rituals of birds along with the startling commonalities between certain human and avian domestic arrangements. Since research suggests that similar hormonal activity precedes both human and nonhuman mating, he also argues for applying so-called anthropomorphic labels like love to the behavior of birds. How else can one describe the tribulations that emperor penguins undergo to hatch their lone egg and raise their young? Heinrich also explores how some birds use plumage to attract mates while others use dance, elaborate nests, etc., to attract females, all an attempt to maximize the chances of passing on their genes; the ingenious strategies they use to protect their eggs; how the size of the clutch of eggs depends on whether the species is monogamous with the male helping feed the mother and the young (more babies) or not; and how males who leave the nest, or cheat, risk being cuckolded themselves. Skillfully narrated and illustrated by the author's own photographs and watercolor sketches, this book offers a range of intellectual and aesthetic pleasures. (May) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. A truly excellent and delightful book. Heinrich uses his own observations to teach us what a curious biologist finds intriguing about bird behavior. (John Alcock) Heinrich studies birds in the great tradition of Audubon, and with equal perception. Beautifully illustrated by the author, *The Nesting Season* illuminates courtship, reproduction, and chick rearing. Heinrich's insights into egg colors and patterns alone make the book invaluable. (Richard Rhodes) The intimate life of birds is revealed here by a brilliant naturalist. (Scott Forbes) Blending scientific research with memoir, Heinrich reveals the complex courtship and mating rituals of birds--along with the startling commonalities between certain human and avian domestic arrangements... Skillfully narrated and illustrated

by the author's own photographs and watercolor sketches, this book offers a range of intellectual and aesthetic pleasures. (Publishers Weekly 2010-03-15) Bernd Heinrich, a renowned naturalist and emeritus professor of biology at the University of Vermont, argues in his eye-opening new book, *The Nesting Season: Cuckoos, Cuckolds, and the Invention of Monogamy*, there's little reason to suspect birds don't fall in love just like we do. Love, Heinrich writes, is an adaptive feeling that many animals share, one that causes them to act irrationally for the sake of reproduction. He suggests monogamy among birds evolved in a similar way, as a sexual strategy for rearing young in demanding environments. Drawing heavily on personal observations and evolutionary biology, Heinrich... sheds light on a wide array of subjects, from the prevalence of lesbian albatross in Hawaii to the peculiar dynamics of bird sex. And though he admits birds may love one another, we shouldn't necessarily look to them for ideal "family values." Australian malleefowl, he writes, bury their children in mounds of rotting vegetation and leave them for dead. (Jed Lipinski Salon 2010-05-16) In his new book, *The Nesting Season: Cuckoos, Cuckolds, and the Invention of Monogamy*, Heinrich returns to his first love, and throws himself into an in-depth study of the mating lives of birds. The result is a fascinating exploration of the biological origins of bonding and emotional attachment. (Bruce Barcott Outside online 2010-06-02) A flight through the beauty and brutality of bird life. From songs and displays, plumage, sex roles and mating rituals to nest parasitism, infanticide and predation. (The Times 2010-06-03) A ramble through the home life of birds during the breeding season: a mixture of Heinrich's thoughts and experiences and the scientific literature... The stories he tells are charming and intriguing, and his intimate connection with the birds in the woods and bogs surrounding his home brings it all to life. The text is further enlivened by a large number of superb colour photographs, mainly of nests, eggs and chicks, and by some of Heinrich's own watercolours. (Tim Birkhead Times Higher Education 2010-08-19) Heinrich fans and anyone interested in birds will find his latest book thoroughly rewarding; a volume to turn to again and again. (Lynn Harnett seacoastonline.com 2010-08-29) As Marcel Proust illuminated our understanding of the brain, memory, and the self through artfully obsessive attention to detail, Bernd Heinrich, in *The Nesting Season*, illuminates our understanding of mating behavior through a similar focus on those details of life which most of us never notice... Like his previous books, *The Nesting Season* is illustrated with the author's own drawings, watercolors, and photographs. Like his previous books, *The Nesting Season* is one to read and read again. (Wayne Mones Audubon Magazine blog 2010-10-14) In *The Nesting Season*, Heinrich takes an extended, worldwide look at birds' various reproductive strategies. Birds employ such a variety of nesting behaviors, including polygamy (both polyandry and polygyny), single parenting, multiple broods, brood parasitism (laying eggs in nests of other species), and more, that seeing parallels with human behavior and that of other primates may seem unwarranted. However, Heinrich makes a good case for this in some situations. His belief that anthropomorphism has been over-demonized flies in the face of traditional science and is sure to be controversial. His 20 paintings and 50 excellent photographs enhance this fine, highly referenced, thoughtful book. (H. T. Armistead Choice 2010-11-01) Bernd Heinrich, a veteran U.S. ornithologist, knows better than to draw anthropomorphic parallels between birds and people, and in this beautifully produced and engagingly narrated book on the birds of New England and their nesting and mating habits he avoids any suggestion of simplistic moralizing. Nevertheless, the status of human monogamy is an almost secret subtext that runs through the whole work. (Bradley Winterton Taipei Times 2010-11-21) Perhaps the best natural history book of the year! Heinrich illuminates one of the hottest topics in contemporary biology in a very accessible way. A great read. (Wayne Mones Audubon Magazine blog 2010-12-12) *The Nesting Season* elegantly combines the author's prodigious knowledge of birds with observations gleaned from a life spent close to them, at his home in Vermont, where a pair of geese regularly build their nest on his property, and at a cabin in the woods of Maine, where he for years had a huge raven aviary ("a quarter of a mile around or something") for the study of intelligence in individual birds. The book also contains 52 pages of fascinating and informative color drawings and photographs--of birds, nests, eggs, and young--by the author. (Elizabeth Floyd Mair Times Union 2011-02-20) The latest master work by one of my favorite nature writers. *The Nesting Season* digs deeply into the biology of nesting birds, from monogamy and polygyny to polyandry and cuckoldry. Replete with many color illustrations, Heinrich's latest book answers many of the questions I get this time of year. (Scott Shalaway Charleston Gazette 2011-06-04) The book is illustrated with Heinrich's own drawings and photographs, with which he further demonstrates his prowess as a natural historian. The pictures alone make the book well worth the purchase price. (Sarah Kocher American Scientist 2011-09-01) *The Nesting Season* is referenced throughout, and 21 pages of endnotes provide direction to the literature Heinrich has consulted, making the book useful for layman and professional alike. It will join all of the other Heinrich books on my shelf, and I expect that I will return to this book from time to time, rereading it for the pure pleasure, as I do *Bumblebee Economics* or good novels. A popular book on natural history that also makes a scientific contribution while ranking as great literature is a rare bird indeed. (Ronald C. Ydenberg BioScience 2011-09-01) About the Author Bernd Heinrich is Professor Emeritus of Biology at the University of Vermont. He has written several memoirs of his life in science and nature, including *One Mans Owl*, *Ravens in Winter*, and *A Year in the Maine Woods*, which won the 1995 Rutstrum Authors Award for Literary Excellence.