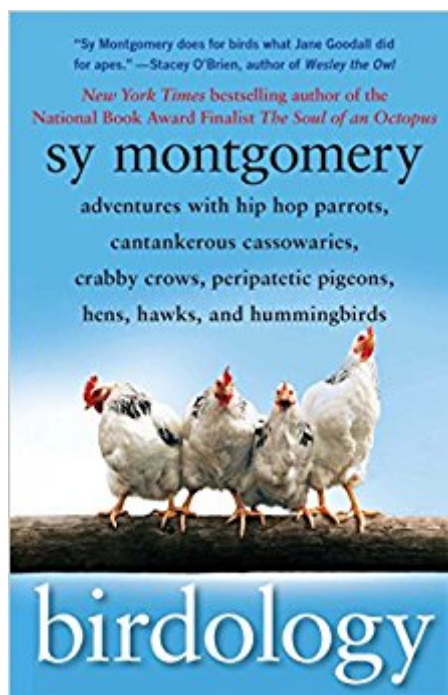




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# Birdology: Adventures With Hip Hop Parrots, Cantankerous Cassowaries, Crabby Crows, Peripatetic Pigeons, Hens, Hawks, And Hummingbirds



## Synopsis

From the author of the National Book Award Finalist *The Soul of an Octopus*. Meet the ladies: a flock of smart, affectionate, highly individualistic chickens who visit their favorite neighbors, devise different ways to hide from foxes, and mob the author like she's a rock star. In these pages you'll also meet Maya and Zuni, two orphaned baby hummingbirds who hatched from eggs the size of navy beans, and who are little more than air bubbles fringed with feathers. Their lives hang precariously in the balance—but with human help, they may one day conquer the sky. Snowball is a cockatoo whose dance video went viral on YouTube and who's now teaching schoolchildren how to dance. You'll meet Harris's hawks named Fire and Smoke. And you'll come to know and love a host of other avian characters who will change your mind forever about who birds really are. Each of these birds shows a different and utterly surprising aspect of what makes a bird a bird—and these are the lessons of Birdology: that birds are far stranger, more wondrous, and at the same time more like us than we might have dared to imagine. In *Birdology*, beloved author of *The Good Good Pig* Sy Montgomery explores the essence of the otherworldly creatures we see every day. By way of her adventures with seven birds—wild, tame, exotic, and common—she weaves new scientific insights and narrative to reveal seven kernels of bird wisdom. The first lesson of Birdology is that, no matter how common they are, Birds Are Individuals, as each of Montgomery's distinctive Ladies clearly shows. In the leech-infested rain forest of Queensland, you'll come face to face with a cassowary—a 150-pound, man-tall, flightless bird with a helmet of bone on its head and a slashing razor-like toenail with which it (occasionally) eviscerates people—proof that Birds Are Dinosaurs. You'll learn from hawks that Birds Are Fierce; from pigeons, how Birds Find Their Way Home; from parrots, what it means that Birds Can Talk; and from 50,000 crows who moved into a small city's downtown, that Birds Are Everywhere. They are the winged aliens who surround us. Birdology explains just how very "other" birds are: Their hearts look like those of crocodiles. They are covered with modified scales, which are called feathers. Their bones are hollow. Their bodies are permeated with extensive air sacs. They have no hands. They give birth to eggs. Yet despite birds' and humans' disparate evolutionary paths, we share emotional and intellectual abilities that allow us to communicate and even form deep bonds. When we begin to comprehend who birds really are, we deepen our capacity to approach, understand, and love these otherworldly creatures. And this, ultimately, is the priceless lesson of Birdology: it communicates a heartfelt fascination and awe for birds and restores our connection to these complex, mysterious fellow creatures.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Montgomery gives herself over so wholeheartedly to animals, and other humans who share her passion for creatures both rare and ubiquitous, that her nature chronicles are uniquely radiant. Mammals, from tigers to dolphins, bears, and one very special pig, have been her specialty, but birds have always fascinated her, hence this gathering of stirring avian encounters. Montgomery assists a hummingbird rehabilitator in the delicate raising of two tiny orphans, and meets the "most dangerous bird on earth," the enormous, razor-clawed cassowary in Australia, one bird whose dinosaur ancestry is blazingly apparent. She also writes from unexpected perspectives about falcons, crows, pigeons, chickens, and parrots, each intriguing tale illustrating one of the "seven essential truths about birds," and all revealing fresh insights about birds, interspecies communications, and environmental concerns. Inspired equally by all that we share with birds—similarities in intelligence, emotion, language, and music—and all that is mysterious (birds "remain fundamentally wild"), Montgomery expresses profound appreciation for the living web of life in a book that both bird lovers and readers new to bird lore will find evocative, enlightening, and uplifting. --Donna Seaman --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"An original, even brilliant, account of seven species of birds—their fundamental strangeness and their strange familiarity—I have learned something from every

chapter. --Living Bird-- "[E]vocative, enlightening, and uplifting." --Booklist

I spotted this book on the shelf of a treehouse B&B and it was love at first sight. I read a chapter there, then went home and ordered a copy. It's so lovely to read - the writer is sweet, funny, informative, and the topics are varied and interesting. Even the chapter about chickens is a delight to read - I feel like I'm in her yard. Gave me warm fuzzies - or should I say feathers? Elicits so many feelings - mystery, adventure, comfort, amazement.

Sy Montgomery is a gifted writer. She has a child's sense of awe, a scientist's analytic mind, a deep curiosity about and appreciation for animals, and she's gutsy. She goes places to see and tell us things that are interesting, fun and thought-provoking. In the process she expands our mental world in wondrous ways. As a fledgling birder I was aware of many of the subjects presented in Birdology. Nonetheless, Sy has a way of presenting information that is fresh as she brings us along on all of her adventures. I recommend Birdology to anyone who has ever looked up into sky and found their heart quicken. To those who wonder: what would it really feel like.....to fly, to take off and soar along a thermal or rip through the sky on a windy day. Or someone who was a child and experienced the thrill of hearing their pet parakeet talk for the first time. In short, for anyone who has experienced, even if just for a second, the beauty and mystery of our fellow feathered travelers.

Birdology is a wonderfully fun book that celebrates the world of birds. Sy Montgomery is a wonderful lady with a great passion for birds and especially her chickens! She holds none of her passion back in her writing. :) It is fun and educational. I highly recommend it. I even read this to two little bird lovers at the ages of 10 and 6 years old! They loved it and we laughed through her stories.

Wonderful book. Informative and beautifully written. A terrific read for bird and nature lovers. Many references to the connection between birds and dinosaurs. Evolution is a fascinating topic.

Montgomery is a easy author to read. Always interesting. This book provides a lot of knowledge about birds in an easy to read format. Very personal style. I liked it a lot.

I was so amazed by the voluminous information I learned about each of these birds. I had never even heard of the causeway. I've always appreciated that birds are a part of our lives didn't realize how much we really do have in common!

This is an interesting book, with lots of personal reflections by the author amid information about various kinds of birds.

I would love to have a little family of hens clucking away in my back yard. My home is situated in an area of heavy traffic on US1, so no hens in my life. This is a wonderful book, so much information on avian species well told with compassion and concern. I have not finished the book but wanted to recommend it as educational but written in a way that will engage the reader from the get go.

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