

Special Issue

Behavior, Cognition, and Welfare of Marine Mammals

Message from the Guest Editor

As sentience and cognitive complexity become central themes in modern zoology and conservation, there is a pressing need to bridge the gap between what these animals "know" and how they "fare" in a rapidly changing world. The focus of this Special Issue is the intersection of psychological processes and biological welfare in marine mammals (cetaceans, pinnipeds, sirenians, and polar bears).

We welcome multidisciplinary research on behavior, cognition, and welfare, including social dynamics, communication, foraging, reproduction, problem-solving, memory, self-awareness, emotional intelligence, health indicators, anthropogenic stressors, and enrichment in human care.

By moving beyond purely descriptive ethology, we aim to provide the following:

- Empirical evidence that connects cognition to improved welfare in managed environments and conservation actions;
- New frameworks for assessing the welfare of wild populations through the lens of behavior, cognition, and emotion;
- Integrated perspectives that apply recent advances in neuroscience and sensory biology to real-world conservation challenges.

Guest Editor

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About the Journal

Message from the Editor-in-Chief

Animals is an international, peer-reviewed, open-access journal established in 2011 and published semimonthly online by MDPI. The journal is dedicated to high-quality research across a broad range of animal-related disciplines, including zoology and veterinary sciences, and upholds rigorous peer-review and editorial standards to ensure the publication of impactful work. Indexed in the Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE) within Web of Science, *Animals* has a 2025 Impact Factor of 3.2 (ranks 13/87 (Q1) in 'Agriculture, Dairy & Animal Science'; 15/170 (Q1) in 'Veterinary Sciences'), 5-Year Impact Factor: 3.5.

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