

How Animals "Talk"

Humans communicate with one another all the time. We talk, phone, write, and email. But animals can't do any of these things. How do they communicate?

We've all heard dogs growl and bark and cats meow and purr. Making sounds is the most common form of animal "talk." Dogs make sounds when they're scared, happy, or angry. They make sounds to warn you. Gorillas and beavers make throaty sounds. Some animals, such as grasshoppers, make sounds by rubbing their legs together.

to show emotion

Other animals communicate through marking. Black bears mark their territory by biting and clawing trees. Other kinds of marking include deer scratching their horns on a tree trunk or foxes spraying urine on a bush.

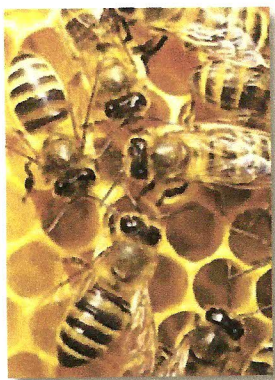
- claim territory - areas

Some animals watch for clues from other members of their species. Honeybees dance to show others in their hive where a new food source is located. Electric eels and lightning bugs flash lights to send signals to mates. Dogs bow to let other dogs know they want to play.

- to tell other animals how to act

Scent is a way that animals communicate, too. Certain female animals send out smells that attract males. And none of us wants to be around when a skunk feels threatened!

Some animals "get physical" to communicate. For example, wolves wrestle to figure out their rank in the pack.



honeybees



cat



grasshopper



dog